

Community Group Discussion Questions

“Kingdom Proof” Matthew 5:33-37 Sept 21, 2019

Getting Started

The weight of our words are measured not by the number of them, but the value in them.

How well do you do at keeping your promises?

Who in your life has earned your trust because their words are always true?

Going Deeper:

The Context of the Command: “Again you have heard that it was said to those of old” (Vs. 33)

Plain Observation:

Exodus 20:7: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain” (**3rd Commandment**) see also Numbers 30:2, Deut. 5:11, 23:22

Exodus 20:16: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (**9th commandment**) see also Leviticus 19:12, Proverbs 6:17, 19

Proper Application:

As you were growing up, what did you learn about your words?

Who taught you that they mattered as a reflection of your integrity/honesty?

Or, who taught you how to lie and deceive so you could look honest but still do wrong and not get in trouble?

The Corruption of the Command: *“You shall not swear falsely but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.”* (Vs. 33)

Heart of the Matter: False Vows (Perjury)

Seemed so Flippant

Sought to be Flagrant

Hope of the Message: Fulfilled Vows (Perform)

Strive to be Factual

Seek to be Faithful

Tell us about a time when you felt you were deceived by a person or company because they made false vows?

What companies do you like to do business with because they back up their spoken or written words?

The Caution in the Command: *“But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.”* (Vs. 34-36)

Testifying (UNDER) Oath: (Matthew 26:63–64, 2 Cor. 1:23)

Bear Witness to Substantiate

Bear Witness to Authenticate

Taking (AN) Oath:

Don't Manipulate the Truth

Don't Fabricate the Truth

Don't Exaggerate the Truth

You may remember as a child that if your parent told you 'Maybe' it really meant 'No'. 'Maybe' gave you hope, but it was usually an insincere answer given to make you stop asking for something and was designed to keep you from whining. Or your experience may have been the opposite. When you heard 'Maybe' it may have meant that you were probably going to get what you asked for, but your parent wanted to keep you in suspense so you could enjoy the anticipation of waiting for it.

At the time these words were written, it had become commonplace among Jesus' contemporaries to hedge their commitments by using a variety of different vows. The four vows given in Jesus' example above (v. 34-36) showed four different levels of sincerity from 'I'm really going to do it even if it kills me' to 'Chances are I won't do it, but I'll at least think about it'.

Why would a system like this cause problems for you in your relationships?

The Consideration in the Command: *"Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil."* (Vs.37)

Sincere in your Speech: *"simply"*

Practice what you Preach: Say what you mean, mean what you say!

Don't overextend your Reach: *"anything more"*

Ask someone who spends a good amount of time with you to start listening to your normal speech. Give them permission to call your attention to anything you say that sounds less than completely honest. You may be surprised to realize how often you hedge your commitments or tell 'little white lies' to keep from hurting the feelings of others. Share your results with your group next week.

Take Away: Living a life of character with consistency causes credibility!

We want people to believe our words, so they believe our words about Jesus.