



## Chapter 5:33-37

- Matt. 5:33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.'
- Matt. 5:34 But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by **heaven**, for it is God's throne;
- Matt. 5:35 nor by the **earth**, for it is His footstool; nor by **Jerusalem**, for it is the city of the great King.
- Matt. 5:36 Nor shall you swear by your **head**, because you cannot make one hair white or black.
- Matt. 5:37 But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and your "No," "No." For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

### Context

The Pharisees were infamous for making oaths at the slightest provocation. For example, they would swear an oath to affirm that what they said was true. **But**, they left themselves an out by claiming that they weren't obligated to keep their oath because it wasn't actually made in the Name of God...therefore, wasn't binding! Case in point, the Law said oaths were binding when made...

*"to the Lord" ~ Matt. 5:33 & Deut. 23:23*

So the Pharisees twisted the meaning of the Law to meet their own desires by saying that they weren't lying or bound to what they promised or said was true because it wasn't made "to the Lord". Rather, they had sworn by...

*"Heaven, earth, Jerusalem, or their head"*

...so, they believed they could break their promise without violating the Law!

Jesus didn't buy it.

## Observations & Discussion

1. In vs. 34 Jesus said, “*But I say to you, do not swear at all.*” However, in Gen. 26:3 God confirms that He swore an oath to Abraham & in Numbers 5:19 God instructs the priests to require the accused to take an oath. Clearly then Jesus isn’t placing a total ban on oaths—what then did He mean here in vs. 34?

2. In this section of Scripture Jesus deals with the importance of integrity—specifically the integrity of our **words**. Why is the Lord so concerned with what we say?

3. How do your words and the commitments that you make impact your witness for Jesus?

4. Apply Jesus’ instructions in vs. 37 to any contract or commitment that you have made (for phone service, a student loan, to rent an apartment, or a to purchase a car over time). Why is it important to keep your commitments?

5. Give an example of a situation when you didn’t tell the truth; why did you lie and what did you learn from that experience?