

**Promises, Promises**  
*How to Project Integrity*  
Matthew 5:33-37

**Introduction**

- The saying, “Promises are made to be broken \_\_\_\_\_” rings true in our society.
  1. P\_\_\_\_\_ break their promises
  2. D\_\_\_\_\_ is so common that many couples have prenuptial agreements.
- Christians ought to be people of integrity. How can we project integrity in a world that expects broken promises?

**Integrity does not come by f\_\_\_\_\_ promises (33-36)**

- Jesus reminds His disciples of the traditional interpretation they h\_\_\_\_\_ concerning the laws on vows found in:
  1. Lev 19:12 – this law forbids one to make a false promise by the Lord’s n\_\_\_\_\_.
  2. Deut 23:21- this law requires no d\_\_\_\_\_ in fulfilling vows to the Lord or else God would bring judgment.
- The above vows could be classified as s\_\_\_\_\_ promises.  
When might we make such promises to God?
  1. In a c\_\_\_\_\_ as a witness (“do you promise...so help you God?”)
  2. A politician gets s\_\_\_\_\_ into office (“so help you God?”)
- Traditional Jewish teaching
  1. Promises made in God’s name, **must** be fulfilled – s\_\_\_\_\_ promises.
  2. Promises made NOT in God’s name, **may** be fulfilled – s\_\_\_\_\_ promises (since the law was silent on these kinds of vows).
    - a. Verse 34a – a person makes a promise and omits God’s name but wants to be taken seriously (I swear by h\_\_\_\_\_ myself!). However, Jesus states that omitting the mention of God’s name is not omitting His name since heaven is His t\_\_\_\_\_ (Is 66:1).
    - b. Verse 34b – a person makes a promise and omits God’s name but wants to give reasonable assurance (I swear by e\_\_\_\_\_ myself!). However, the earth is God’s f\_\_\_\_\_ (Is 66:1).
    - c. Verse 35 – a person makes a lesser promise and omits God’s name, swearing by Jerusalem. However, that is the city of God’s great k\_\_\_\_\_ (Ps 48:2).
    - d. Verse 26 – a person makes the least of all vows (may my hair turn w\_\_\_\_\_ if I break my promise!) Jesus calls this

vow u\_\_\_\_\_ since a broken vow cannot change a person's hair color.

- People in our society try to get people to believe them.
  1. Many people say, "I swear to God"
  2. Children often say, "Cross my h\_\_\_\_\_ and hope to die..."
  3. Some say, "I swear on my grandmother's g\_\_\_\_\_...."
- Some make honesty a game
  1. Little kids will make a promise then excuse themselves for breaking it by saying that they had their f\_\_\_\_\_ crossed.
  2. How many times have you heard, "You should have read the f\_\_\_\_\_ print."?

### **Integrity only comes by f\_\_\_\_\_ words (37)**

- Jesus states
  1. *Let your yes be yes and your no be no* – in other words, believers must m\_\_\_\_\_ what they say.
  2. *Anything b\_\_\_\_\_ this* – in other words, believers must not have fine print, or have hidden meanings, or play any kind of trickery. (as far as joking is concerned, make sure people know that you are joking or else it is a l\_\_\_\_\_).
  3. *Is from t\_\_\_\_\_ evil one*
    - a. Translations vary between "from evil" and "from the evil one"
    - b. Both translations are possible and in the end are saying the same thing. If it is from evil, it is from the d\_\_\_\_\_ (Jn 8:44)
- Our practice as believers in Christ
  1. Do not m\_\_\_\_\_ other believers promise – this communicates a lack of trust. It does not guarantee integrity.
  2. It is fine to make an oath when society demands it
    - a. In a c\_\_\_\_\_ (Jesus did this in Matt 26:63,64)
    - b. S\_\_\_\_\_ a tax return
    - c. M\_\_\_\_\_ vows
    - d. Signing l\_\_\_\_\_ papers for a mortgage

### **Conclusion:**

- Jesus did not forbid Christians to m\_\_\_\_\_ promises but to b\_\_\_\_\_ them.
- Jesus's lesson to us is that integrity will never come by making f\_\_\_\_\_ oaths but only by f\_\_\_\_\_ your words every time.