

Walk in Truth, Walk with God-Matt. 5:33-37

³³ “Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO THE LORD.’ ³⁴ But I say to you, take no oath at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵ nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, nor by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING. ³⁶ Nor shall you take an oath by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷ But make sure your statement is, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’; anything beyond these is of evil origin.

Jesus begins with the word again to let us know that this is another _____ of the way that the Pharisees who had been teaching Israel had been departing from God’s original intent in applying the Law to their lives.

So, why is truth so emphasized?

Truth is Fundamental to Relationships

There is a _____ why God gave the Ninth of the Ten Commandments is “You shall not give false witness against your neighbor.” And this _____ means not only that we are to not lie in court, or not lie when we take an oath, but not to lie, period. God gave only 10 commandments on those tablets, so He _____ those which are fundamental to making a relationship with him, relationship with each other, and civilization work. Society cannot withstand a complete _____ for the truth. If people testify falsely in a courtroom, there can be no _____.

And without even a hope of justice, there can be no civilization. Bearing false witness to a crime by accusing an _____ person of a criminal act causes great harm to the accused. God takes false legal testimony so seriously that He calls for those who bear false witness to receive the _____ that would fall on the innocent person if the guiltless individual is convicted (Deut. 19:18-19). There are many important values in society, but if we do not practice truth, we will find that we cannot _____ God’s Goodness and Righteousness and Holiness in our relationships in any way that makes sense. Relationships are what Jesus is concerned with in this section of the Sermon on the Mount, so _____ is very important. Evils in a society arise and spread because of a _____ for the truth. Whether we’re talking about slavery, Nazism or Communism, all of them continually _____ fundamental truth, as revealed by God.

So, Jesus is exposing the Pharisees’ dealing falsely with people and using made-up legal loopholes to justify their actions. Probably the best example is Jesus’ words to them in Mathew 23:16-22. He calls them blind guides and fools, Jesus equates their lack of commitment to the _____ with being spiritually blind, and failing to walk in God’s Way. They were setting up a system whereby they could swear by God’s Temple, with the full intention of breaking their oath without any _____, according to them. But, they failed to see that God was holding them _____ for fulfilling these oaths, and He was not bound by their deceitful interpretation of the law. They were demonstrating their complete _____ for God, and were trying to drag God in by _____ and deceiving in His name. The Pharisees were saying that the material things were what held the power for them to keep their oaths, and saying that the spiritual things—the sacred, the consecrated altar of God’s Temple, and even God Himself, lacked power to _____ them to their oaths. And this is exactly why Jesus uses the examples in Mathew 5:34-36

when He says that we should take no oath at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, nor by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING. 36 Nor shall you take an oath by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. Notice that every Example that Jesus uses upholds that everything that we might swear on is _____ in God’s power. Circumstances that may cause us to break our oaths are often _____ our control. Swearing in this way betrays a certain presumptuousness and arrogance (James 4:13-15).

Walking in Truth is Walking with God—So, why do Jesus and James give this such a priority in their teaching? Well, apart from it’s importance to our relationships with each other, a complete commitment to the truth and to honesty is _____ in our relationship with God.

Isaiah calls the Lord “**the God of truth**” in Isaiah 65:16. Jesus says He is the truth in John 14:6. And Jesus calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of truth in John 16:13. So, we see that the triune God that we worship calls Himself the God of truth, and the _____ of all truth (1st John 1:5). If everyone can choose what ethics or beliefs he or she prefers to follow, then we are following the example of Israel in the book of Judges: 25 **In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.** And this was one of the darkest times in Israel’s history in their relationship with God. We cannot _____ a Savior who says “**I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me**” (John 14:6) & seek to cling to the moral relativism found in our culture.

Doctrinal truth--Truth is clearly laid out in the Bible, and any departure from this truth will ultimately lead to _____, which is why God gave us this truth to begin with. God’s Word is truth (John 17:17). It is reliable & never changes. It is crucial to not believe everything we hear, but to test whether doctrine & teaching lines up with Scripture (1 John 4:1-3). **We should not be “tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes”** (Eph 4:14), but **stand firm in the truth** (2 Tim 3:14-15; 2 Thes 2:15; 2 Peter 1:12).

Moral truth-Truth is about _____ God’s truth to our lives (James 1:22) us: **22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves.** Allow God into those places in your heart where you feel _____ in sinning, and let Him change your heart. Since God is utterly trustworthy, we _____ should be as His children: **All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; There is nothing crooked or perverted in them.** (Proverbs 8:8). We must not bend the truth to our own advantage, or bear false witness against others (Proverbs 6:16-19. In the New Testament, in Colossians 3:9-10, Paul urges us as born-again believers to walk in the New Life that we have been given and put away that old practice of lying saying: **9 Do not lie to one another, since you stripped off the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created it—**. In other words, the Holy Spirit continually renews our mind to understand truth, so we must speak the truth, and practice the truth, so that we become more like Jesus, who is Faithful and True.

In the sermon on the mount, Jesus is _____ us to live as Citizens of Heaven, as His disciples. And when David describes a Citizen of Heaven in Psalm 15, we read in verses 1-4 **Lord, who may reside in Your tent? Who may settle on Your holy hill? 2 One who walks with integrity, practices righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart. 3 He does not slander with his tongue, Nor do evil to his neighbor, Nor bring shame on his friend; 4 A despicable person is despised in his eyes, But he honors those who fear the Lord; He takes an oath to his own detriment, and does not change;**

Speaking the truth is sometimes hard. It may cause us to suffer loss as David says, or suffer pain, or harm our reputation or career or relationships, but it should still be _____. There are occasions on which we should _____ speak the truth even when others don’t appreciate it or don’t want to hear it. In 2 Corinthians 7:8-9 about His words in 1st Corinthians. **8 For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it—for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while— 9 I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us.** Paul, like Jesus was correcting people so that they would repent and get closer to God. We must live our lives in conformity with God’s _____ truth. We must stand firm in the truth of God’s Word, teach the truth plainly, and receive it into our lives in such a way that it transforms us.