

Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' 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. Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil. (Matthew 5:33 - 37 ESV)

MISUNDERSTOOD SCRIPTURE

“It is the Lord your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.” (Deuteronomy 6:13 ESV)

“If a man vows a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.” (Numbers 30:2 ESV)

MISUNDERSTOOD SCRIPTURE

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.”
(Exodus 20:7 ESV cf. Leviticus 19:12).

TRADITION OF OATHS

Over time, the Jewish leaders created a great number of intricate ways of making vows, oaths, and promises without exactly inciting the name of God.

JESUS' ARGUMENT AGAINST THE TRADITIONS

1. Jesus explains that we ought not take any oaths at all.
2. Just because you aren't using God's name doesn't mean you aren't dishonoring Him.
3. The reason they are using oaths in the first place is for evil.

WHY JESUS' WAY IS A BETTER WAY

“...the presupposition behind the taking of oaths is that there are two types of statements, one of which demands commitment (the oath), one of which does not (the statement unaccompanied by an oath), Jesus enjoins commitment to every statement, that is, invariable honesty and integrity.” –W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, Jr

WHY JESUS' WAY IS A BETTER WAY

“But let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes’, [or] ‘No, no’. And the thing beyond these is from the evil one.” (Matthew 5:37 DLNT)

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

1. Do not refer to God except in a way that is serious, considerate, and worshipful.
2. Do not *seek* to make an oath.
3. Don't resist oaths.
 1. Jesus did not resist responding to one (Matt. 26:63, 64)
 2. Jesus commanded an angel to swear (Rev. 10:4–6)
4. Let everything you say be as if it were an oath.

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

“I can find, therefore, no better rule than that we regulate our oaths in such a manner that they be not rash or inconsiderate, wanton or frivolous, but used in cases of real necessity”

–John Calvin

