

THE MOUNT MESSAGE: THE VOWS MADE PART 2

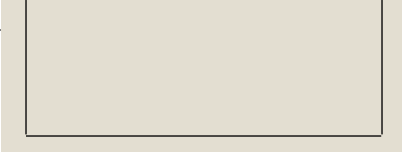


The EXPERIENCE Bible Study
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RECAP: GREATER RIGHTEOUSNESS (VS. 17-32)

1. Righteousness demonstrated through moments of anger, adultery & divorce.
2. Focus placed on continual journey toward God's judgment; the importance of reconciliation over worship & the condition of one's heart.



DISCIPLESHIP APPLICATION: THE VOWS MADE (VS. 33-37) LESSON 7

1. This section begins the second set of three antithesis
2. Identified by the word "*also*" (NLT) or "*again*" (NIV)
3. Emphasis is on the TRUTHFULNESS of love.

THE CONTEXT OF A VOW

1. In both Gentile & Jewish worlds, a vow invoked the deity to guarantee the truth of what was said, or to punish the one taking the oath if what was affirmed was not true.
2. Oaths involved communication between two parties - with the name of God (or a valid substitute) invoked as guarantor.

VOW CONTEXT (CONT.)

3. Vows were made directly to God & what was affirmed by an oath had to be true and what was vowed had to be done.
4. Concept comparable to legal proceedings in a court room between statements made under oath & other statements that are not. False statements under oath is a crime.



SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

It is better **not** to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it. Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the [temple] messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? Much dreaming and many words are meaningless. Therefore stand in awe of God. (Ecclesiastes 5:5-7 NIV)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE #2

It is better to ***say nothing*** than to make a promise and not keep it. Don't let your mouth make you sin. And don't defend yourself by telling the Temple messenger that ***the promise you made was a mistake***. That would make God angry, and he might wipe out everything you have achieved. ***Talk is cheap***, like daydreams and other useless activities. Fear God instead.
(Ecclesiastes 5:5-7 NLT)

TEXT HIGHLIGHTS (VS. 33-37)

1. Jesus summarizes OT teachings about oaths (Lev. 19:12; Psalm 50:14) but then **RULES** it out by his command that his followers take no oath at all.
2. Jesus abolishes the distinction words that must be true & those that must not; between words the individual will stand by & those they won't.

TEXT HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

3. Jesus calls for speech to be **TRUTHFUL** – this is a demand for the truthfulness of all our words.
4. Jesus' command was absolute, rejecting both false or unnecessary oaths, but he even eliminates any effort we may use to bolster our claim to truth (vs. 34-36)

TEXT HIGHLIGHTS (CONT)

5. Jesus challenges the disciples to ***make their own*** situational applications as they attempt to be guided by his call to speak truth – He does not tell ***how to*** make this applicable.

6. Matthew lets the theological responsibility ***rest with*** the disciple & not with Jesus.

TAKEAWAYS/CHALLENGES

1. There will be moments when candor **violates** the greatest command of love to God and neighbor.
2. There will be moments when a lie must be told in the service of love & truth and those moments are **left up** to the disciple & their theological responsibility to God.



PRAYER

Lord God, the God of truth. This lesson challenges us on so many levels because it forces us to discover our own truth. Empower us to live a life where our love for You guides our mouths. Empower us to remain faithful to the truthfulness You demand, so that our love for both God and neighbor guides us to a life of honesty and integrity. In Jesus name, Amen.