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## Let Your Yes Be Yes

Matthew 5:33–37 (NASB)

Full Manuscript

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### Introduction – Integrity

#### Greeting

Pinky swear (this won't be convicting sermon)

Cross my heart hope to die stick a needle in my eye ( I won't pick on all of you today)

Handshake ( I'll be nicer than Pastor Steve)

Fingers crossed- walk back up on stage.

So how many of you have lost a pinky, or an eye lately.

How many of you have trust issues? A lot of us see the Bible as a history lesson but it's not. It's a living and breathing guide for our daily lives. Trust me the Bible is better than any therapist you could hire. If you want help with depression look to the Bible, if you have an anger problem look to the Bible, and now Jesus is going to show through His Word how to deal with trust issues.

Have you noticed that words don't mean a whole lot anymore and trust has become almost non existent .

That's why when Jesus says in Matthew 5, "*Let your yes be yes, and your no be no,*" to a lot of people it doesn't mean much.

Jesus is talking about **honesty**.

He's talking about **integrity** — He is talking about our heart, our core, who we are when nobody's watching.

How many brought your Bibles?

Jesus is teaching about the **HEART** of the Law, which is much deeper than the **letter** of the Law. His teaching was in preparation for the New Covenant of Grace that Jesus **introduced** at the “Last Supper” which was **fulfilled** through His Blood on a cross, followed by His death and Resurrection and then **initiated** 50 days later, on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came to live inside every believer, because the Holy Spirit is the one who produces TRANSFORMATION. These PRINCIPLES Jesus taught are HOW believers, saved by the GRACE of God should seek to live out daily, in their Christian faith!

Let's start with reading the passage in Matthew 5:33-37 and as we spend this morning together we will unpack what this all means.

Matthew 5:33-37

<sup>33</sup> “Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.’ <sup>34</sup> But I say to you, take no oath at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup> nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup> Nor shall you take an oath by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> But make sure your statement is, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’; anything beyond these is of evil origin.

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## Historical Background – Of Promises With Loopholes

To understand why Jesus said this, we need to understand the time and the place, the people He was speaking to.

“**The Pharisees**” had developed an elaborate system of promise making.

**The question wasn’t, “*Is this true?*”**

**The question was, “*Is this binding?*”**

If you swore by God’s name, that counted.

But if you swore by heaven, earth, Jerusalem, the temple, the altar, or even your own head your camel, your goat, your 1<sup>st</sup> born child, your wife. those were considered less binding.

So people learned how to sound sincere without actually being truthful and accountable.

They were using this as truth with escape clauses or loopholes.

The old version of crossing your fingers behind your back while saying, “*I promise.*”

Jesus is not rejecting the Old Testament Law here.

He is restoring its heart.

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## Exposition – Matthew 5:33

### The 10 commandments...

#8 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does that mean? **DON'T LIE**

This is **kid** stuff right? Kids lie, **not adults** / adults should know better at least that's what I think but in all actuality it seems as though adults lie just as much or more. **Example News media.**

### Leviticus 19:12

<sup>12</sup> and you shall not swear falsely by My name, so as to profane the name of your God; I am the Lord.

### Numbers 30:1–2

“Then Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of the sons of Israel, saying, ‘This is the word which the LORD has commanded.

**If a man makes a vow to the LORD, or takes an oath to put himself under a binding obligation, he shall not break his word; he shall act in accordance with everything that comes out of his mouth.’”**

### Deuteronomy 23:21–23

**“When you make a vow to the LORD your God, you shall not delay to pay it, for the Lord your God will certainly require it of you and it will be sin for you, and the LORD your God will surely require it of you.**

**However, if you refrain from making vows, it will not be sin for**

you.

**You shall be careful to perform what goes out from your lips, since in fact you have vowed a voluntary offering to the Lord your God, whatever you have promised.**

So far we have learned that we are all **Murderers, Adulterers, and now (sorry) Liars.**

The more honest we are the more God builds what in us? INTEGRITY / CHARACTER

**Remember Integrity is who we are when no one is looking.**

**Websters definition is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness**

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### **Why Substitute Oaths Fail (Verses 34–36)**

How does **Jesus eliminate the loopholes?**

Matthew 5:34-36

But I say to you, take no oath at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God, nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, nor by Jerusalem for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING. Nor shall you take an oath by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black.

He says heaven is God's throne.

Earth is His footstool.

Jerusalem is His city.

And then He gets personal — “*Don’t swear by your head.*”

Why?

Because you can’t even change the color of one hair.

In other words, you don’t control nearly as much as you think you do.

You can’t even guarantee your hairline, *just look at mine*. and you’re swearing on your head?

Jesus is making the point that / *everything already belongs to God*.

You cannot swear by anything that removes your accountability before Him.

As believers we are to live a life *above reproach*.

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## Simple, Trustworthy Speech (Verse 37)

Titus 2:7-8

<sup>7</sup>*in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, <sup>8</sup> sound in speech which is *beyond reproach*, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.*

Then Jesus gives the standard:

*“Let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no.’”*

That’s it, no less no more. That gives us so much freedom, no more promises or I swear. *It’s really very simple*. Get rid of the fine print.

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## What Oaths God Allows and Supports

Now this is important — Jesus is **not banning all promises**.

God Himself promises in Scripture — not because He might lie, but to strengthen our assurance.

### Example:

God promises Abraham that he will greatly bless him and multiply him.

Hebrews 6:13-14

<sup>13</sup>For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear an oath by no one greater, He swore by Himself, <sup>14</sup>saying, “Indeed I will greatly bless you and I will greatly multiply you.”

God promised David in the Psalms.

Psalms 89:2-4

<sup>2</sup>For I have said, “Lovingkindness will be built up forever;  
In the heavens You will establish Your faithfulness.”

<sup>3</sup>“I have made a **covenant** (promise) with My chosen;  
I have sworn to David My servant,  
<sup>4</sup>I will establish your seed forever  
And build up your throne to all generations.”

Or what about giving us the Holy Spirit that lives in every believer,

### **John 14:16-17**

“I will ask the Father, and **He will** give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive... but you know Him because He abides with you and **will be** in you.”

Or Martha concerning Lazurus

**John 11:23** “Jesus said to her, *‘Your brother will rise again.’*”

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### **Yes–Yes, No–No, and Maybe–Maybe**

Now what if I’m not sure if I can say yes or no? **maybe** I don’t have all the information, **maybe** my calendar isn’t in front of me, **maybe** my days are really full this week.

*“What about maybe?” Is that okay?*

**My answer is Well maybe...**

**Our kids** hate maybe. But Debbie and I will not say yes if we don’t know just the same we don’t say no if we don’t know. And the kids know that.

If Deb and I said yes or no and it didn’t happen or work out we would be liars in their minds for the rest of their natural lives.



A **true** and honest **maybe** says,  
*“I don’t know , but I’ll let you know.”*

A **dishonest maybe** says,  
*“Please stop asking.”*

Maybe is fine — unless it turns into an **excuse** to avoid an honest yes or no.

Then it’s just a no that sounds prettier.

Integrity means:

- Saying yes when you’re actually going to do what you say you’re going to do.
- Saying **NO** when you don’t (no is just as important as yes)  
**expound**
- Saying maybe only when you genuinely don’t know or don’t have all the information — and then clarifying A.S.A.P.

Psalm15:1-2

**15** O Lord, who may abide in Your tent?

Who may dwell on Your holy hill?

<sup>2</sup>He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness,  
And speaks truth in his heart.

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## **Marriage Vows – A God-Honoring Oath**

Is marriage a maybe?

One of the clearest examples of a God-honoring promise is marriage.

You may think that marriage vows are just a promise to each other but make no mistake, **YOU ARE PROMISING GOD 1<sup>st</sup> and your spouse second. THIS IS THE KEY TO A SUCESSFUL MARRIGE.**

## **INTEGRITY -Who you are when no one is watching**

Isn't this really what this is all about.

Here are four points that will help each of us believers maintain our integrity.

### **1. Integrity of your Heart**

Who you are when it's just you and the Lord

- Who I am before God
- No hidden self

### **2. Integrity of Speech**

What I say and promise

- Honest yes/no
- No exaggeration, or manipulation.

### 3. Integrity of Action

What I Do

- Obedience when costly and not easy
- Being faithful in the little things

### 4. Integrity of Accountability

How I live before others

- Above reproach Remember what Pastor Steve said, phones, cpu's, etc.

### **Ed's fence ( the 2<sup>nd</sup> Trump wall)**

Last summer our family built a 8' tall 300' foot long cedar slat wall. We planted the posts 3' deep and put hundreds of boards on it. Do you all remember the wind storm we had last month? The one with 70 mph wind gusts? What do you think happened to that solid cedar wall? Part of it fell. The weird thing is that a lot of the posts didn't break it just fell over, the ground gave way.

Now how does this relate to Integrity you might ask. Picture you as the fence, the storm as life, and your integrity as the dirt that holds you up. Are you going to blow over when life hits hard or stand firm on your integrity through God.

### 2 Corinthians 8:21

“For we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”

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## **Illustration – Your Word Is Your Bond**

There was a time when a handshake meant something.

You looked someone in the eye, gave your word, and that was enough.

If someone broke their word, they didn't just lose business — they lost trust.

Do we all trust a handshake now days?

How do we get that back? We have to bring it back, we have to be that example again.

We have to teach the people that didn't get to experience that handshake.

What do we have to lose that isn't already God's?

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You know who my best friends are? The people that their yes means yes and their no means no. the people that are straight up and honest, EVEN IF IT HURTS MY FEELINGS. With those type of people I can always know exactly where I stand. They are genuine, good , bad, or ugly. Somebody that I can count on.

## Application

Is it always easy to tell the truth or to be accountable? No sometimes it sucks. Debbie and I try our best to live by this and let me tell you it's not always easy to admit when I've been a complete and total LOSER I can tell you for sure that there is no way that I could even have a chance in my own ability. Trust me when I say it's all the Holy Spirit.

Integrity cannot share the same space that self centeredness and dishonesty live.

Can we be people of integrity without God?

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## Gospel-Centered Wrap-Up

Now let's bring this home.

When believers hear Jesus say, "*Let your yes be yes,*" most of us immediately think of the times our yes hasn't been yes.

That's why this passage ultimately points us not to ourselves — but to Christ.

Jesus never spoke carelessly.

Every promise He made, He kept.

And when Jesus said, "*It is finished,*" John 19:30 He meant it.

**salvation produces integrity.**

Our integrity does not earn salvation.

## **2 Corinthians 1:20 (NASB)**

“For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.”

As we prepare for communion and we take time to speak to the Holy Spirit I challenge you to say yes to Jesus. Yes to his guidance, yes to His direction, and yes to His calling.

## **Luke 22:19–20**

“And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’

And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, ‘This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.’”

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## **Prayer**

Father, thank You that You are a God who keeps Your word. Thank You that our hope does not rest on the strength of our promises, but on the certainty of Yours.

Where our integrity has failed, meet us with grace.

Shape our hearts so that our words reflect Your truth and Your love.

We trust You, because You have never failed us.

In Jesus' name, amen

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