

# The Sermon on the Mount 07 – Oaths, Retaliation, Enemies

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## Matthew 5:33-48

### Oaths

33 “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.’ 34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.

An Oath – a promise to tell the truth, or to do what we say we will do

Deuteronomy 6:13

Psalms 63:11

Jeremiah 4:1-2

Leviticus 19:12

Numbers 30:1-2

Deuteronomy 23:21-23

2 Corinthians 11:31

Frivolous Oaths in common speech

“Here is a great eternal truth. Life cannot be divided into compartments in some of which God is involved and in others of which he is not involved; there cannot be one kind of language in the Church and another kind of language in the shipyard or the factory or the office... The fact is that God does not need to be invited into certain departments of life, and kept out of others. He is everywhere, all through life and every activity of life. He hears not only the words which are spoken in his name; he hears all words; and there cannot be any such thing as a form of words which evades bringing God into a transaction. We will regard all promises as sacred, if we remember that all promises are made in the presence of God.” (Barclay’s Study Bible Notes)

“We are not to swear in support of evil, that is, to support falsehood, or to swear when there is no need or use. But we should swear for the support of good and the advantage of our neighbor.” (Martin Luther, Large Catechism)

Matthew 23:20-22

James 5:12

Psalms 15:1-4

Proverbs 10:19

Ecclesiastes 5:2

(Legal Oaths are not included)

(over)

## **Retaliation**

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42 Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

## **The Law of equal retaliation (*Lat lex talionis*)**

1 Peter 2:21-23

Isaiah 50:6

Lamentations 3:30

## **Love Your Enemies**

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Romans 5:10

## **Oaths**

1. Tell the truth
2. When untruthful, confess and ask forgiveness
3. Simply say what you’ll do
4. In failure, confess and ask forgiveness
5. Let your words be few

## **Retaliation**

No part of your life!

## **Pray for your enemies**

Romans 13:8

Questions for Next Week

## **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18**

1. Jesus discusses the religious practices of giving, praying, and fasting. What images of the hypocrites mentioned here are conjured up in your mind?
2. What might a modern day equivalent of these people look like?
3. What deeper sin is a desire for others to know our religious activities a symptom of?
4. Describe what good, humble and effective prayer would include? Exclude?
5. What does fasting mean to you? Have you ever fasted? If so, how did it affect you?
6. How does studying these practices inspire your thinking about your own life? How aware are you of your attempts for others to know what you accomplish?