

A WORLD OF LIARS

Matthew 5:33-37

INTRODUCTION: It is beyond question that we live in a world that is filled with deception: Romans 3:4; Romans 10:10-18. In our nation even a lot of our humor is based upon deception. Even in our churches we have come up with a phrase to explain our half-truths: “Evangelistically speaking!” Politicians call it “Putting a spin on it.” Businessmen call it “hedging the truth” or “finessing it.” At times it seems our style of speaking becomes more important than the truth itself.

I. IS YOUR YES, YES AND YOUR NO, NO?

Our Lord gets right to the heart of this issue of truth and lies in our own hearts. Jesus let them know that their outward obedience to the law with no change of heart was nothing but a lie that would be exposed in due time. In regards to murder the Jews of Jesus day thought as long as I don't actually kill someone it doesn't matter what I think in my heart about them: Matthew 5:21-22. The Jews of Jesus day thought as long as they did not commit actual adultery it did not matter what they thought in their hearts about women: Matthew 5:27-28. The Jews of Jesus day thought it was ok to divorce their wives for any reason but Jesus told them that was a lie: Matthew 5:31-32.

II. SINFUL DUPLICITY OR SIMPLE HONESTY?

The Jews of Jesus' day thought they could take an oath in any name other than God's Name and it would not matter: Matthew 5:33-37. We have two main points in these verses. The first four verses talk about sinful duplicity. The last verse, verse 37 talks about simple honesty and these two points are set in contrast with each other. As Jesus spoke here the Jews were filled with pride because in their view they had kept the third and ninth commandments: Exodus 20:7 and Exodus 20:16. When people observe only the outward form of obedience, and it is all ritual they devise systems of getting around the true intention of the commands. They would not take an oath but would swear by all sorts of things. The only thing they would not swear by was the name of Jehovah. Matthew 5:34-36

III. DO NOT SWEAR AT ALL IN ANY NAME OR ANYTHING!

Jesus knew the duplicity of the Jews and He told them not to swear at all: Matthew 5:37. If we are telling the truth we do not need to swear by anything: we are simply to let our yes be yes and our no be no! Jesus said anything more comes from the evil one: John 8:31-44. Apparently truth in Jesus day was as rare a commodity as it is today. What our Lord Jesus is saying is that sinful duplicity—saying one thing and meaning another—ruins fellowship with both God and man. Jesus told them and us that our duplicity will cost us. Matthew 12:36-37. Most people in Jesus' days and in ours manipulate others using stories we know are not true and believe that God does not care. People lie even to themselves in their duplicity: John 8:31-36. Satan is a thief and a liar and he wants to rob us of our ability to fellowship with God and with man: John 10:10-11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Revelation 21:7-8; Ephesians 4:29; Ephesians 4:15. Proverbs 28:13-14; Matthew 5:37