

Avoiding Evil
Matthew 5:33 – 42
The Laurel Center
April 8, 2016

Main Idea: By not taking oaths and not seeking vengeance we avoid evil.

Introduction

We live in a world that highlights different values than we do as Christians. There are rules in the world for how we react to stressful situations and to failure. It is common to take oaths when we do not have the character to do what we're saying we will do. These cover up flaws in our character I highlighting someone else that we believe in to cover our character debt. It is also very common and human nature to react to enemies with hatred and malice. We treat our enemies as enemies and react in that manner. Jesus teaches us a new set of values, heavily values, that we as Christians are expected to follow. Let's take a look at how we respond to these situations.

Matthew 5:33–37

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.

I. Oaths open a door to evil speech.

- A Don't swear it, do it.
- B Honor your yes and no.

Matthew 5:38–42

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.

II. Vengeance against evil belongs to God.

- A Do not avenge evil people.
- B Let God decide their punishment.

Conclusion

We have seen that oaths steal a person's character and use it as capital for another person's character deficiency. This hurts other people and covers up the lack of character in those who take them. Jesus expects Christians to stand on their own character and let their yes be yes and there are no be no. He also calls for us not to take oaths at all because our character as Christians should stand on its own.

When we avenge ourselves we go against godly kingdom values. It is not up to us to defend ourselves, rather to let God of vengeance in his time and in his way. We do not have the power to fully punish people who deserve punishment. God can punish them perfectly and completely and his perspective is greater than ours. We need to leave these decisions up to God and avoid evil practices that perpetuate evil in our world.