

# Speaking with Christ as Witness

## 2024.02.04 Morning Sermon in Matthew 5:33–37

<sup>33</sup>“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ <sup>34</sup>But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; <sup>35</sup>nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. <sup>36</sup>Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”

**Main idea:** Speech is for Christ, so Christians must always be truthful as speaking before God, and reserve oaths and vows only for solemn occasions like worship, covenanting, and judicial testimony.

**Introduction:** That which was preached to them as Scripture, both to justify the liar and to manipulate the worshiper.

1. More bad hermeneutics, v33
  1. The good: their combination of Ex 20:7, 16; Lev 19:12; Deu 23:23 to recognize the significance/holiness of the Name of YHWH
  2. The bad: their using this not to exalt truth in all speech but to excuse falsehood in any speech that didn’t specifically enunciate that Name.
  3. The ugly: using this to inflate the value of financial contribution to the “church” (cf. 23:16–22).
2. Christ’s authority in the matter, v34–36
  1. Christ is YHWH, Who proclaimed all these things in the first place, and Whose Name it is.
  2. Christ is the great King, Who makes heaven heavenly, earth worthwhile, and Zion glorious.
  3. Christ is the One to Whom our life belongs by right of ownership and by power of providence.
  4. Christ is the One to Whom all of our words belong.
3. Christ-honoring speech in covenanting, court, and conversation, v37
  1. Oaths and vows are appropriate to solemn occasions
    1. God uses them (Ps 110:4; Heb 6:13–18)
    2. Christ speaks under oath (cf. 26:63–64)
    3. We are taught to use them as worship (Ps 66:13, Eccl 5:4)
    4. We are to use them to bind ourselves in covenant (Num 30:2)
  2. But we are always to be truthful
    1. Don’t cheapen vows by using them too frequently. Deu 23:22, Eccl 5:5, Pro 20:25
    2. Don’t cheapen vows by using them in common conversation —not for every “Yes” and “No”

3. Don't so weaken your word by dishonesty that you are tempted to use this swear/oath formula for your already flimsy word.

<sup>4.</sup>  
**Conclusion:** behold what Christ has done so that we might draw near to God in words, edify one another with words, and evangelize the lost with words. And remember that you and your words properly belong to Him. So, in all your conversations, use your words before His face, in dependence upon Him, for His glory. And when it comes time for some solemn use of words, make your vows before God in humility, seriousness, and reverence.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

Matthew 5, beginning in verse 33 and going through verse 37, Let us take heed that we Hear this word. As an act of worship for it is. The word of God. Again, you have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not swear falsely.

But shall perform your Ovos to the Lord. But I say to you, do not swear at all. Neither by heaven for it is God's throne. Nor by the Earth for it is his footstool. Nor by Jerusalem for it, is the city of the great king. Nor shall you swear by your head because you cannot make one hair white or black?

But let your yes, be yes. And you're no, no. For whatever is more than these. Is from. The evil one. Amen. Please I'll be seated.

As our Lord Jesus. Continues to preach to his disciples in this sermon that he is preaching to them on the mountain. And as we continue hearing his word, preached week by week through this sermon throughout this Sermon he has been dealing in these last couple weeks. Uh, with some of the most important parts of our life.

Uh, there's little, that is more important than marriage and the design and Providence of God. Certainly little that is more important for the family which God has instituted and the church which God has instituted and the society, the nation which also is an institution of God. And then our daily life.

There is little, that is more important than our conversation. Are speaking. God has made us. Speaking creatures, indeed, he created and he spoke showing something about himself. He and the Son, and the spirit, the Father, the Son, and the spirit one God. Being the original and yet. The sun being called by scripture the word.

Uh and God then giving us words that we might even thereby understand something of the The Triune got. By his being one who speaks to us and we being those who speak And so much good can be done. Uh, by the tongue. I hope you didn't miss that a couple chapters ago.

I know we're racing through the Book of James, but steering a ship by a Rudder is a good thing. You lose your Rudder, you have problems. Much good can be done by the tongue but

also Much harm. Is done by the tongue. Particularly, since we are created for the praise of our God.

And so The Lord Jesus here. Giving us samples. Not just of how we should handle his word, but praise God, he is doing that for us. So that we don't have to be papists who say, well sure the word is Is in Authority over all things, but there are so many ways of interpreting it and uh and therefore you need to have an authoritative interpreter and you sneak the sovereignty of the church into the back door.

Over the Bible. But the Lord Jesus has not left us to that, he has given us his own model in how to handle. Uh, his But as he gives us these samples, he's also addressing the most important parts. Of Our Lives. And so he addresses them again. Again, he's highlighting what he is saying.

Uh, what he is referring to, in this case as scripture. Remember last week when he said, furthermore, it has been said and we saw that What he quoted that they have often heard and he growing up in the synagogues had often heard was not actually from the Bible. It was a twisting of scripture back there in verse 31 from last week.

But here That which is, uh, quoted is scripture. It's a combination of Of several texts. You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not swear falsely. But shall perform your Oaths. To the Lord. And so this combination of texts, which we'll consider when we come, To the first.

Was something that was being misinterpreted misapplied. Uh, in the preaching in the synagogues and the preaching by their rabbis. The scribes and the Pharisees. Uh, both in this case to justify lying on some occasions. And as we'll see by comparing with chapter 23, not only were they Pandering to the crowd.

Everybody wants to have preaching that tells them that they don't need to repent of anything and And they may do whatever ill they want. Uh, my dear bride. And I once were grateful when the Lord delivered us from, Um, obligation to Attend a church. Uh just in the part of every sermon where it would really start to get convicting.

The minister would say something like but I know that this isn't true of us. And he didn't mean it sarcastically in a way, that it was more convicting He was actually. Um,

Pandering to the crowd. Uh, well not only Had the teaching been pandering to the crowd as we'll see, but it was being used to manipulate the the worshiper. The flatterer, the one who is always. Telling you what you want to hear? Uh, that's more politician than friend dear congregation.

Uh, that person is interested in manipulating you. And we often are easily manipulated. And in this case, the manipulation is pretty ugly. Uh, which we'll come to as we study then in the first place. More bad, hermeneutics. Uh, in verse 33 as understood. And expounded upon by looking at the texts that he is quoting and the teaching that he is, Contrasting.

More bad hermeneutics. And we'll see. That which was good. And that, which was bad. And as we have already said that, which is ugly. Uh, and then we'll see Christ's unique Authority in the matter, of course, Christ has Authority. He is the one who by his First Peter, chapter 1 prophesied, through those who wrote the scriptures and by his Spirit carried along, men who did not speak from themselves.

Second Peter. Chapter one, he is the Lord, the one true God, and he is particularly the son, the word who eternally proceeds from the father and so, It is, he who thundered with his voice in

the hearing of all Israel on Mount Sinai? It is he who gave to Moses, what he was to write down.

It is he who breathed, who, from whom the spirit proceeded and The boy whose Spirit he breathed into our life. In our first father, Adam breathed into his nostrils, the breath of Life But it is, he especially Who is with us? His name, remember is Jesus. To fulfill the word.

The prophecy that he shall be called Emmanuel God With Us. It is he who? It's not eavesdropping dear congregation. He's dropping is when you don't belong in the conversation. And is he who is witnessed? And participant. All of our conversations. Is he for whom all of our speaking was created in the first place?

And to whom we owe, not only when we're vowing. But all the time that we speak, And so, we'll see in the second place. Christ's Authority in the manner in the matter. And we'll see in the last place. Or the third place Christ, honoring speech. In covenanting in. And in conversation, Uh, Christ honoring speech and Covenanting court and conversation.

Which we will consider from verse 37, especially. And for those of you who have been, Memorizing that this week. Um, Praying that the Lord. Will bless to us are hiding his word in our heart. Not that it would remain hidden. But that it would be employed in all of our conversations, then So in the first place, more bad, hermeneutics.

Again, you have heard it, heard that it was said to those of You shall not swear falsely. But shall perform your Oaths. To the Lord. Now, this is a combination of several texts. In Exodus 20, first of all, especially Verse 16. You shall not bear false, witness against your neighbor.

But they were combining verse 7 with verse 16. By bringing in Leviticus 19:12. And Deuteronomy, 23, 23. So you shall have Um, Sorry, you shall not take the name of Yahweh. Your God in vain. For y'all who will not hold him guiltless. Who takes his name in vain. And then applying that not, especially to worship as we have seen, the first table of the law, primarily touching worship, and then being applied to the rest of life.

Uh, but in combination with verse 16, you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. And so they're taking that. And then, Leviticus, 19 verse 12. And you shall not swear by my name, falsely. For you shall nor shall you profane the name of your God? I am Yahweh.

And then Deuteronomy, 23 verse 23, That which has gone from your lips. You shall keep and perform for you. Voluntarily vowed to Yahweh your God. What you have promised with your mouth. And that they have all combined together. Now to You shall not swear falsely. But shall perform your Oaths.

To y'all and praise God. That is true. Oh, this is one of the reasons why it. Uh, been a standard in our own culture, not just For the few small centuries. In which our nation has existed. But even in those Nations, from which our nation has come, Uh, for the better part of a millennium.

And perhaps longer. To say so help me God. When taking a vow, Because God is witness. To all of our vows and all of our O's and God as our help for keeping those vows. And our O's and God is judge When we break, Our vowels, and our O's.

And so they had the name of Yahweh, put upon them and they were even to take the name of Yahweh into their mouths particularly when they swore Oaths and vows And so you see the name of Yahweh and Leviticus 19:12 and you see the name of Yahweh in Deuteronomy 23 verse 23.

And by bringing in the third commandment into the ninth commandment they saw even explicitly the name of Yahweh in the ninth commandment as well. Now, this is good. To consider these scriptures together to see that they are all. They're all addressing the same aspect of life, the promises that we make, and especially those in, which we make a solemn vow before the Lord himself, even perhaps taking the name of the Lord as As a reminder to ourselves and to all who witness these vows that uh, that the the Lord is Participant and witness to that, which is promised.

To that, which is spoken. And to say because of the greatness of the Lord because he alone is God because he is our creator because we are made in His image because he is Our Redeemer because he has put his name upon us, saving us for himself. How very important it is that we must keep all of our oaths, all of our vows, all of our promises Which is.

Without importance, is it, that Jesus immediately follows his teaching on covenanting in marriage, And God's hatred of divorce. With his teaching on vows and Oaths, and truthfulness. And the Lord has witness Some of you perhaps are aware. Of things that have occurred recently. In broader culture and even narrower reformed culture, Where there has been a complete misunderstanding.

Of the fact that it is the Lord first and foremost, who is witness, not the culture and not the At a wedding. And so, Two people. Are solemnly, promising. To hate one another. To sin mortal sin against one another. For the rest of their lives. The Christian must not call good.

What God calls evil. He must not try to be loving according to the eyes of men. And because he understands that marriage is a covenanting before God. He must not allow himself. To be solemn witness. To promises. For evil. Made before the eyes and the ears. Of the Living God.

That is not love. It is not evangelism. Your hope, for the Salvation of those who do such things is not that they will think you nice enough that they might listen to you. But that the Lord God. Against whom they are sinning. Might have mercy X to open their eyes.

And you dare not provoke him yourself. If you are hoping in him. For their salvation. And so it is good. That they take these verses together. This is something that we have often learned. We've been seeing it not just in the Lord's. Speaking have we we've also been seeing it often in Romans where The Apostle Paul will take not just one Old Testament text as he's preaching, the gospel of Christ from the Old Testament which all good Presbyterians like Paul do preach the gospel of Christ from the Old Testament.

And he doesn't just take the one text, but he takes the one text. And as, as we look at that text in the context, in Romans, what have we seen? He's bringing in the full context actually. Yeah, at first you see a little bit of why that particular verse is there.

But then when we go back to the to the original location from which he is quoting and we take the passage as a whole, it, it opens. Like a blooming rose and the sun shines upon it. And and the fragrance comes and the the passage is so much richer because God is expanding upon expounding upon his own word, but he doesn't just do it with one.

He does it with several Old Testament texts at a time and that's been some of the riches that that we have enjoyed. This is, this is good what they are doing as far as using scripture to interpret scripture, God is his own interpreter, not just with Providence, not just with what he does in the world.

But with what he says in the word, Scripture with scripture and in each scripture, we look at the full context and as we understand each part better, we it enables us to understand the other

parts better and the more our understanding of the the whole is increased. The more our understanding of each part is increased and there's this wonderful virtuous cycle with how Jesus teaches us.

To do, hermeneutics. In the name of the Lord here. Is greatly important. And the Lord Jesus, of course, is going to make application. That is in line with that. But that's the good. But here's the vat. They were not using. The teaching of these three texts in their context.

To teach their congregations. That they must speak truly in all of their speech. Because they're created by Yahweh and they were redeemed by Yahweh and they're always independence upon Yahweh, and they are to be devoted unto Yahweh. Rather than exalting, truth and exhorting, truth in all speech. They actually use these passages to excuse falsehood.

In some speech. This is they said you see all this passage all these passages. Where it teaches you that you have to keep your promises. And that you have to tell the truth. Notice about all these passages that it says you have to keep your promises made in yahweh's name.

And you always have to tell the truth when you speak in yahweh's name, But if you swear by something less, There's a lesser obligation. To keep the truth or to keep the promise to keep the vow to keep the oath. And they actually created this hierarchy of things by which you may swear.

Increasing or rather. More properly, decreasing obligation. Of keeping your promise. Even to the point where they would tell you that some things. Some things that are obviously connected to the Lord himself. Swearing by those things is nothing. It's almost like the Muslims. Right. What western Nation? With an ounce of historical awareness.

Would enter into a treaty with a people who for 1400 years. Have had it as a principle of their Theology and their society that you are permitted to lie in all of your promises to non-muslims. That's insane. But here, the rabbis were teaching them and Jesus. When he comes to pronounce woes upon them in Matthew 23, When it comes to pronouncing, he pronounces woes upon them for the same thing.

Matthew 23 beginning in verse 16 woe to you, blind guides. Who say, whoever swears by the temple. It is nothing. The temple wherein God has made his worship to Center that that favor and fellowship. That we have heard preached through Leviticus about the Tabernacle and the temple, being a greater step, still the temple.

Where God gathers, his people, the temple that is to be superseded obsoleted fulfilled by Christ himself and his people in him, whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing. But whoever swears by the gold of the temple. He is obliged to perform it. Fools and blind. For which is greater the gold, or the temple, that sacrifices the gold and they say, Whoever swears by the altar.

It is nothing.

But whoever swears by the gift that is on it. He is obliged to perform it. Fools and blind. For which is great. Are the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore he who swears by the altar swears by it and all things on it? He who swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it and he who swears by Heaven swears by the Throne of God and by him who sits on it,

You see? How bad the hermeneutics were. That they took passages. That should have taken the one created by Yahweh in the image of Yahweh Redeemed by Yahweh, redeemed for

Yahweh to depend upon him and be devoted to him and to Delight in him. So that every word that comes out of our mouth belongs to him, in a unique and glorious way as his creatures.

And as his redeemed and they take those passages and they say You see how it says, Yahweh and all those passages it means you only have to really be honest. If you're saying that name If you're making those syllables. And so they quickly go, don't they From good, hermeneutics.

The way all of scripture teaches us to interpret the Bible with the Bible to again. Those sin driven hermeneutics. Those sin-driven. Remember from last day, hermeneutics the science of interpreting scripture, how you how you go about interpreting and understanding the Bible to sin driven interpretation. Uh, coming to the Bible, looking for it being clever, even with it.

Uh, to justify doing what they want. And if you have a whole group of people, Who really want to go back on their promises? Really want to get divorced, really want to justify lying. You know, they want to go into the business deal and shake their hands and cross their fingers and say, oh yes, I swear upon the temple that I will fulfill my obligation.

And they've got their Rabbi in church. Saying, don't you read your Bible? If you swear by yahweh's name, you'd have to do it. But if if you only swore by the temple, that was nothing. And then it gets really ugly, doesn't it? And a portion that we read because what were the things that they said were something?

The. And the gift. Those who have been misinterpreting the Bible, whether it's these, rabbis, whether it's the papists with their whole Indulgence system that By which the they financed this Cathedrals. With the blood money of the souls of God's people. And so, don't take your Um, Oh, what do they call that classical education?

And look at those Cathedrals. And wish that the reformed could have houses of worship like that, our house of worship is in heaven, which was purchased for us by the blood of Jesus. Not by the indulgences of those who Twisted scripture to divorce to destroy Souls, so they could raise money.

And still it's done today. By the celebrity preacher. Is to be on the cable TV channels. And I had a seminary Professor. Once who said, what do you think is the first channel that we get blocked when they install the cable? And, of course, there were students who Gave the obvious cultural answer.

Even the obvious answer for those who struggle with particular sins, And he said it's the Christian preaching Channel, I forget what it was called, TBN, Or whatever it was. Because it's full of so much error. Preached to those who want to be manipulated, in order to make Rich, whoever will preach it to them.

And souls are destroyed that way. Are those who even do it in the local context? Keeping in mind who the wealthy are and the congregation not wanting to offend those who tithe. Well not wanting to speak boldly for the sake of the souls, who are in front of them, let alone for the glory of God, because we might thin the congregation and not be able to do the building projects or or pay the minister

Oh, how ugly? When once we start to interpret the Bible, according to our desires, And so, may, the spirit help us to hear and heed the Lord, Jesus Christ, Our King, who's redeemed us? For his kingdom. Who now by his word is doing that work, in which he fits us for the kingdom for which he has redeemed us and even gives us the privilege of living in this world as those who are not conformed to the world, but who have our minds, renewed by his teaching and offer our bodies as Living Sacrifices to him.

So that the whole creation can begin to see and the whole world can begin to see and enjoy some benefit from even before the new heavens and the Earth. Looks like because if anyone is in Christ, there is New Creation. And at the, Of being those who belong to our King even in this world and this age.

Is reading and submitting to, and understanding and applying his word rightly. Because it's Not ours. Didn't belong to those, rabbis didn't belong to the scribes and Pharisees, it belonged to Christ, and that's why his teaching was different than anything they had ever heard. And that's why all Christian preaching and teaching.

Want to be different. Than what the rabbis do. So and so interpret, its this way and so and so interprets us this way and so on. So no, what does God's word say about that? Part of God's word. What does Christ say? About his own word, and that brings us to the second.

Because he answers what they have heard and how they have heard these passages preached to, which he's referring in verse 33 with this wonderful now, familiar response. But I say to you, But I say to you, do not swear at all neither by heaven for, it is God's Throne.

The same God in whose Providence as we Hear and pray and sing, serially through the Psalms. And hear and read and hear preached serially through Matthew. Gives us to hear Matthew 5, 34 preached on the same day that we read and pray and sing from Psalm 110, The Lord said to my Lord sit at my right hand.

Until I make your enemies a footstool. For your feet. The throne. Of Christ is what makes Heaven Heavenly. The Throne of Yahweh. Who says to his son, who is also Yahweh David's son by the flesh, God's son by his his divine nature and he says, to him Take your seat upon the throne.

If they understood who it was, who was speaking to them, and you understand who it is, who is speaking to you now? And who was speaking to them, then he is saying, he's saying, don't swear by heaven for. It is my throne. It is God, the king. Who is saying that?

And so, in addition to being the Lord himself who had spoken all scripture by His prophets, Jesus, reminding them that everything in heaven and everything on Earth and all that they are belongs to him. Everything in heaven, don't swear by heaven for it is God's throne nor by the Earth for it.

Is his footstool

He's making some reference a couple times in the Hebrew scriptures. There would be Heaven is his throne and Earth is his footstool, and you can hear how that would be interpreted, right? If someone, if someone came to and heard, Jesus preach, do not swear at all, neither by heaven for it is God's throne.

If we are going to interpret Jesus's words, the way the rabbis were interpreting Jesus's other words, the whole Bible is red letter. It's okay to own a red letter, copy of the Bible. That's not a sin. You just need to remember that the black letters are as authoritative as the red ones.

You know, it's just making that First Corinthians distinction for you. And Paul tells you where he's quoting what Jesus said in his Earthly Ministry and he says I not the Lord or the Lord. Not I But if they interpret, what Jesus is saying here, the same way they interpret, what Jesus said there, what are they going to do?

When he says, do not swear by heaven for it is God's throne. They say oh Well. If swearing by the throne obligates us, then we can swear by the footstool. Maybe in the footstool that's that's like Gentile Nations right? He throws his feet on. Uh Oh, I've forgotten which it was Moab or or Edom or one of them.

I want to say Moab doesn't matter. But you see the logic of the hermeneutics that could come to this. And Jesus says no Heaven is mine. And Earth is mine. Yes, his footstool. All of his enemies are being made a footstool for him. Because, Earth is his footstool. Everything needs to be brought under his feet, but it's his feet.

It's not what the footstool is. It's who's the footstool is And if you're going to swear on, on the things that do not belong to the Lord or are not rightfully his, you just ran out of things, didn't you? Because all of Heaven and Earth is And especially ourselves.

Do you think you belong to yourself? I swear on my head that's that's the next thing that he treats, isn't it? Oh no Jerusalem nor by Jerusalem for it. Is the city of the great king. If it's not heaven or or all of the earth and Jerusalem because Jerusalem is theirs, Jerusalem was was belonged to the Jews.

The Jews. In Jeremiah's time, in ezekeil's time, you remember, they would say the temple, the temple, or they would say Jerusalem is the patent. We are the meat Uh and so this idea of swearing by Jerusalem was an idea that they were swearing by themselves upon themselves and their own specialness.

But the specialness of Jerusalem was not the Jews. It was Jesus.

Nor shall you. Swear verse 36 by your head. You cannot make one hair white or black. And perhaps you have a little wicked flesh. Fleshliness, that immediately responds. Well, we've got hair dye now. But of course, he's saying you can't make your head produce. Uh, either blonde hair or black hair?

Or. As eventually comes through, for all of us, white hair. He says, you can't swear on your own life, your life doesn't belong to you. You weren't the one who gave it to yourself. You're not the one who who continues to give it to yourself now. You know, that's one of the things that when we look in the mirror in an unbelieving way and God begins to Crown us with With for our wisdom, which we hope he has given us by Grace, by that time.

And, and the grace starts to appear. And we look at it with nervousness and distaste. No. The one who made you and redeemed, you is changing the color of your hair. And is reminding you that he still sustains your life. You didn't decide on the color he did. And so, You remember?

Oh look, more gray. The Lord Jesus is reminding me that I belong to him. And my words belong to him. And I mustn't, swear upon my life or as the, the wicked often. I swear on my mother's life, I don't know why. Uh, one of the last ones to You know how dishonoring to your mother but she belongs to you from Christ Christ appointed her for you Christ.

Commanded you to honor her Christ. Forbids you to swear by her that way. Christ is the To whom Heaven and Earth belong, to whom the church belongs to whom you belong. Authority ownership over you and over all your words. So, we see. We saw in the first place more bad hermeneutics.

And the need to interpret Scripture with scripture under submission to Christ, automatically suspicious, Whenever we, we want to be confirmed and doing something that our

consciences. Is already troubling. About. Uh we saw in the second place Christ's Authority in the matter because Heaven is his and Earth is his.

And the church is his and we are his and all of our words are his And therefore, Christ, honoring speech and covenanting in court, and in conversation. And it's the last of these Um, that he addresses directly in verse 37. He says, but let your yes, yes. Or but make your yes, yes.

And your no, no. For whatever is more than these. Is from the evil one. Now, one of the things that we must immediately, remember again, interpreting, scripture with scripture. Is that there are right occasions for O's and vows. Now, the believer must not lie, scripture tells us God cannot lie.

God does God, always only says what is truth? And as this verse also reminds us and Jesus says, even more explicitly in John 8, 44, the devil is a liar and the father of it. And so, Uh, so Christians must Uh, must take their cues especially from God and especially from Christ.

One of the first things that we do when we have a part of God's law and we're wrestling with how to submit to it, not with what I can get away with doing, according to it. But what is, what is required of me here. So that I may do it with all my heart and serve the Lord from the intentions, and from the motivations, and into the speech, and into the actions, one of the things that we can often do is come back immediately to Christ and see what he did.

Because we know that he always kept the word of God perfectly. Our Everlasting hope, depends not only on Christ's suffering for our sins on the cross. But for the act of obedience of his doing all, that was commanded of all, that is commanded in the moral law and never breaking at once.

And vows. The Lord Jesus has just been making allusion to Psalm 110, which we are. We are going to uh, to Now, we are going to we just read and sang. Yahweh has sworn an oath and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever. According to the, Order of Melchizedek.

And so God uses. Earth and vows. God, swore upon himself to Abraham. Uh, and Hebrews 6 makes an extended treatment of that. Now, the Lord doesn't And doesn't give. Doesn't swear O's. Because, His word at other times is somehow less true. And he doesn't swear O's because his word at other times is somehow less important.

He does it for our sake, doesn't he? We are the ones. In whom there is a tendency to unbelief. And so it's for Abraham's sake. Who is weak in faith? That God adds an oath as a mercy. Not not condemning or punishing. The weakness of Abraham. But stooping down and confirming for him.

The words that he Prone to disbelief the Lord does that for you. Dear Christian at this table. Week by week, doesn't he because we are so slow of heart, and, and dull to believe that we are his to believe that he is giving us by his grace, from his own life, for our own life, every week and he comes and he reaffirms his word by a sign and a seal.

It wasn't for the Lord Jesus's sake. That the Covenant of redemption between the father and the son, and the spirit from all eternity is described in Psalm 110 as an oath, swearing it was for David's sake. And for our sakes. So that we would be absolutely sure of the priesthood of Jesus Christ that it continues now because we see him not And yet not having seen him by his grace.

We love him. And still how many of us bring into our Our daily life. This absolute certainty. That the one who died and rose again for me is by the power of that indestructible life, making

intercession for me. And he is able to save me to the uttermost because he always lives to intercede for me.

And I know that this is true, not just because his word says it, But I know this is true because his word gave it to me in the form of an oath and so I don't just know that it's true. I know that I am weak and slow to believe it and that my God is merciful and patient with my unbelief your God is merciful and patient with your unbelief.

And he gives you an oath. Christ himself. Recognizes the. The force, the obligatory nature. The authority of an oath. Remember in his trial in chapter 26, And he's not answering. He's not answering, he's not answering. And then, They say to him, I put you under oath. Then he answers.

Yes. And you shall see the son of man? Coming on the clouds. In his glory.

So there are God uses those Christ, recognizes the validity, the rightness of taking an oath and being under oath. If if that wasn't true, then you wouldn't be saved. Because the Lord Jesus did it. At his trial. We're taught to use them as worship. Psalm 66 13, Ecclesiastes, 5 4.

Those are just a couple of examples. When in the worship of God, we are taught to make vows to him and to pay the vows that we make to him as as a part of worship. Even. In a few moments time, we're going to take vows together again as a congregation Christ.

As witness or don't take a break from worship. Uh, whether it's for membership, vows or ordination ordination. Vows no, that is an act of worship. That is being done in his presence and the gathered assembly recognizing that he alone can enable the keeping of those vows and that he ultimately is the witness Of those vows and that they are kept, first and foremost unto his glory and under out of obligation to him.

You know, you don't promise anything in your membership, vows that isn't already required of You by the Bible. You don't promise anything in your marriage vows that isn't already required of You by God's God's instruction for in design. But he he knows that we are not just slow to believe him.

We're slow to keep our own word. And so he has given us one way of worshiping him. That actually helps us in those things that are most weighty for us and most solemn and most serious for us. We are even to use vows to bind ourselves in Covenant. Your numbers 30 verse 2.

Uh speaks both of that which is unto God and that which is unto one another if a man makes a vow to Yahweh or Swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement. He shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth and So it's important to read verse 37 in that context, olds and vows are appropriate to solemn occasions.

And just having very briefly and quickly, surveyed a little bit, we can see some of the good purposes for which God has given us to use solemn O's. Column vows. Therefore, we are always. To be truthful. It cheapens vows to use them in non-solumn, non-weighty occasions. You know, whether you're using them as Um, an act of worship or you're using them in covenanting with one another.

Or you use them in? Because in court, God is called to witness many times already we've seen. Haven't we in Leviticus that? That in cases of judgment, God is the ultimate judge. And it's actually the responsibility on Earth to reflect what is what is being seen and decided and and concluded by the judge of Heaven.

And we use them. Uh, we so we use them in worship, we use them in covenanting, we use them in court. But we must not use them then in ordinary conversation. If, if everything is weighty, Then nothing is weighty. If everything is worship. Then nothing is worship. Everything is to be done in a spirit of worship.

All for your bodies. As living sacrifices, something you do continually But if there is not God's public worship at God's ordained time, Which means on on God's ordained day, if there is not that particular Gathering that Christ leads from Heaven. Then offer your bodies as living sacrifices makes no sense.

Do that as an act of worship makes no sense. And so we mustn't cheapen, our vows by using them too frequently and the Lord, Jesus actually uses the context of Deuteronomy 23. And, Uh we'll look at a couple other passages which teach the same thing. This is not a new thing.

That he's saying here to to reserve oneself from swearing at all except for those occasions that are For which it is solemn and appropriate in light of The word of God. You see, they had quoted from Deuteronomy 23 23 that which has gone from your lips. You shall keep and perform for you.

Voluntarily vowed to Yahweh, your God, what you have promised with your mouth. But if they had, Uh, two verses earlier to verse 21, they would have picked up the context when you make a vow to Yahweh. Your God, you shall not delay to pay it for if Yahweh for Yahweh, your God will surely require it of you and it would be sinned to you and then verse 22.

But if you abstain from vowing, It shall not be sent to you. Zeus says. You know, don't make this a graded. A list of. Of things that you can promise by. If you don't know, if you can do it, or if you are going to want to do it, just don't promise

In Proverbs 20 verse 25.

It is a snare. For a man to devote rashly something as holy, And afterwards to reconsider. His vows. And so you don't make a promise, you don't make an oath, you don't make a vow lightly and you know kids

Some of the worst violators of this principle are parents. Because we will say, Oh, I promise, honey.

But also children. Don't need to learn from their parents to do that either. You know, one of the One of the fastest ways to spot a liar. Is the one who's always having to say I promise. I swear. This is the gospel truth. On my honor. What are they saying?

They're saying. I speak falsely frequently enough. That unless I add one of these oath statements, I can't really be trusted to to be telling the truth. But do you know what you liars. If you have to use one of those o statements, Then that the other person has any wisdom at all.

They won't believe you. Anyway, Because they already know. That you don't always mean, yes. When you say yes, and you don't always mean no, when you say no. Jesus, here is addressing. Ordinary regular conversations, not the, not the big vows of life, those those things to which he commits us, that we are slow in keeping our commitment.

And so he, he has given us this way of honoring, uh, honoring him and helping our unfaithfulness, he's talking about all of the yeses and no's with which daily life. Are full. So kids,

let's get into the nitty-gritty. Don't lie about washing your hands. If you didn't wash your hands say no, I didn't go back in there and wash your hands.

Don't lie about whether you brushed your teeth. Don't lie about whether you made your bed. Don't lie about what you're doing. And don't say nothing because you're never doing nothing. Yeah, maybe I was daydreaming like a fool Mama. I'm sorry. So that sounds like nothing, but it's not nothing because There's something you should have been doing.

Please save that illustration for later. But make your yeses yeses and your nose nose. And speak honestly and speak truthfully. You know, you're you have gospel households and gospel families. Even if you sinned, not just forgot to do something, even if it was something Wicked and you're asked about it, that's the opportunity that you've been given in God's Providence with a brother and sister who trusts in Jesus.

Both of them to say, oh I did I sinned against you and the other one uh to say I forgive you and for both to be grateful that we've been forgiven by Christ and for a husband and wife who trust in Christ to do that together and parents and children.

Are the last people on Earth, who need to lie. Because the one who knows the full truth of us and we don't even know it of ourselves. Has given himself to redeem us for himself. And is preparing us now to be with himself forever. Let your yes, be yes.

And you're no, no, and do not cheapen olds and vows by taking them all the time to compensate for untruthfulness in your ordinary conversation. But by Converse in those things, where we take olds and we make vows Receive the full weight? Of something that Jesus has obligated you to do and something that Jesus has brought you into in his Providence and something that Jesus has designed as his own institution, whether it's marriage or the church or Justice or whatever it is.

We should be the ones who keep the vows the best. Because we know, Upon whose name they are all made. Regardless of what the rabbis say. And don't weaken. Your word by dishonesty. Children, if you want your parents to believe you. If you want anyone to believe you. The only way.

To strengthen that is to keep telling the truth. As soon as you start telling any lies whatsoever, It becomes very difficult even those for those who love you, dearly, Because they love you. They don't want you to be dishonest, but how can we know? The Lord Jesus knows, but only, he knows.

And you will lead yourself into a life. If you are a liar, if you're a liar as an adult, it's obviously not just for children. You will lead yourself into a life where you disregard. Christ, knowing you and knowing the truth and knowing what is in your heart. And you will begin to do and say, just whatever you think you can get away with with men.

And then don't be surprised. If you don't know him in your reading and you don't know him and you're praying and you Gather in the public worship and you don't know him, you don't feel anything, you don't have any experience of him. Because he's the one you've been denying by only caring about what men hear No, it is.

Christ's interpretation of the Bible, Christ's Authority in the matter. And in this last place it is Christ. Honoring Speech, for which we must strive. Whether in worship or covenanting or court and even and perhaps, especially in light of verse 37, especially in our everyday, Conversation.

See what the Lord Jesus has done. He died. In Jerusalem. Remember, he's wept over Jerusalem and said, Prophet can't die anywhere else. Ever since there's been a Jerusalem, that's been the the go-to execution, For profits, he died as our priest. He was not only the priest Forever After the order of Melchizedek, he offered himself as the sacrifice because there's no other sacrifice.

That could be the basis for his eternal priesthood. Jerusalem is the city of the great king, as he says here, The king who died? For the subjects of his kingdom. This is who Jesus is. And so behold what Christ has done? So that in himself he might draw us near to God in his words.

That's one thing maybe if you were worshiping somewhere else before. And you come to to Hopewell. And there are a lot of words But Christ has given us words. As a means by which we draw near to God. He's given us words by which we edify one another Why do all you hopewellians?

Listen to what your Elders teach and study, Theology and read the Bible? Well for many, many good reasons. But here's one of them. So that you may speak the truth to one another in love. So that every as every joint supplies something and every member does, its share the whole of the body, builds itself up into Christ.

He's given us words by which we evangelize the lost. Oh, how precious are our words? We've got a limited amount of them that we can say in this life and he uses them to save others. You and your words belong to Christ. And so in all of your conversations, Remember that you are using your words before his face.

Independence upon him. And for his glory, And then when it comes time for those solemn occasions, In which scripture teaches us by precept, an example. To make vows and take Oaths. Do so before God in humility and seriousness, and reverence Knowing that every oath really is. An oath in Jesus name.

Man, let's pray. Oh Lord. We pray that you would help us. For the inflation of the currency of words. In our culture. And, And many of our own homes and many of our own mouths. Oh, God have mercy. Has been worse than the inflation of the currency. Of Mammon of money.

And so we pray that you would make us. To be slow to speak. To be truthful in our speech. And not to swear lightly in occasions where your word doesn't teach us, that it is appropriate to do so. Lord help us to keep the promises that we make in such circumstances.

How we thank you. That you teach us to make good promises. For marriage and for Participating in being part of your church and the way that you have designed for the members of the body. And For speaking the truth and matters of Justice. What? Great privileges and you have bestowed upon us.

What great gifts you have given to us? Oh, forgive us. O Lord. For How likely we have often taken them. And help us by your spirit and glorify Us by making us more and more like Christ. Until indeed, we see him coming in the clouds. Whether with him? Or rising to meet him.

Work in. For your glory, we ask in his name. And your people here, say, Amen.