

## SWEARING AND TAKING OATHS

Jesus said that when we should not take oaths. Christians say he meant we should be so honest and truthful that we should not need them. This is in the context of the book of Proverbs where God says he hates lying lips and singles out lying as one of the six things he detests. Jesus in John 8 demonises the Devil by saying that the Devil is his sin of lying so there is no room for saying Satan is a being and his evil is not truly a part of what he is. The sinner is not the sin. He says the Devil did not stand in the truth for the truth is not in him and when he speaks he speaks lies for the lie is spoken from his self - evil is his self. So much for CS Lewis saying Satan is good as a being and has good things but abuses them! A lie is an attack on the truth and if there were no truth there would be nothing to be abused by lies. Lies are parasitic on the truth and thus they are vulnerable for fleas never overcome the dog.

My comments in red.

**Matthew 5:33-37 (NKJV) goes:**

33 “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.’

34 But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; **In other words you insult God's throne by swearing. The implication is that swearing is always disrespectful.**

35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; **You insult his footstool by swearing.** nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. **It is up to the king to tell you what to do, swearing by him or his city implies they are under obligation to back up what you swear to.**

36 Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. **In other words, only swear by what you have full control over. So that excludes God. Since you have no full control over anything it follows that you must not swear.**

**Some in those days when they took oaths would have sworn religious oaths by things other than God. They might swear by Heaven or somebody’s grave. Jesus is saying that will not do for the things are so connected with God that swearing in the name of God is still involved. You cannot swear by your head for you cannot control the colour of a single hair but God can so to swear by your head is indirectly to swear by God.**

**Jesus talks as if he contradicts the rule. He does not. He only says you must be so truthful that it will not be needed.**

37 But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one. **No doubt this is all meant literally.**

The Quakers and other groups are right to condemn the Protestant and Catholic approval for taking vows and oaths.

Priests take an oath never to marry or to tell what they hear in confession.

The pope takes an oath to safeguard the whole faith.

Catholics are condemned for the sin of perjury should they lie in court. But according to Jesus, telling the truth under oath is as evil. If you cannot be trusted and you need to swear then there is something hypocritical about oaths.

Though you swear on the Bible in court, this is not really an act of deference to religion but an insult to it. Yet it is disguised as respect for religion.

It is extremely evil of the Catholic Church to say that a person who swears a false oath should suffer for it forever in Hell. It cannot teach that it loves such persons and hates their sins and keep a straight face.

It is said that though beliefs such as that God will reward you if you keep your word etc are helpful for you will probably keep your word and make those who you make the agreement with feel more secure. Belief in God enables your promise to be secured. But there is a dark side to all that. It implies threatening consequences should you not keep your word. How do you measure if it is all worth it? You cannot. And do you want to hold that believing such things about God is good? It is not for it implies people should believe whatever nonsense makes them behave themselves. That is dangerous and denies people the proper chance to be spontaneously good.

In court you need to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Austin Cline writes, "Usually they swear an oath 'to God' and with a hand on the Bible. Such scenes are so common that most people seem to assume that it's required, but it's not. You have a right to just 'affirm' that you will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. No gods, Bibles, or anything else religious need to be involved." Jesus seems to have put this teaching out in his own way.