

TODAY'S VERSES:

James 5:12

James 5:9

Ephesians 4:25

Matthew 5:33-37

Romans 8:38-39

Matthew 26:63-64

Exodus 20:7

Leveticus 19:12

Numbers 30:2

Deuteronomy 5:11

Matthew 23:16-22

THIS WEEK, I CAN APPLY THIS LESSON
TO MY LIFE IN THESE WAYS:

MY NOTES:

JAMES

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART SEVENTEEN: JAMES 5:12
THE PILING ON OF WORDS

JAMES

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART SEVENTEEN: JAMES 5:12 THE PILING ON OF WORDS

Today, James tells us something that Jesus first said, *"let your yes be yes and your no be no."* How easy is it now to add a few words to a statement trying to strengthen what we say? How often do we try to quote statistics (that may or may not be true) or use words like "they say..." when we don't know who "they" are? When James talks about oaths it would mean to invoke some supernatural power in support of what we are saying.

In court proceedings people will say, "I solemnly swear," as a reminder that they are meant to tell the truth as perjury is a serious offense. Even in a secular world, where most people don't believe in God, swearing an oath is still important. Following Jesus is meant to lead us to what it means to truly be God's image bearers, which means our speech should be honest even without oaths.

In the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus tells us that our yes should be yes and no should be no, Jesus is moving us to understand our place as salt and light in the world; we are meant to be trustworthy and a blessing to those around us. Jesus is teaching us how to live in God's world in a trusting, non-anxious, Christ honoring way. When He speaks of oaths He first speaks about forgiveness, restoration, lust, anger, our past, and our present in order to show that all of life (including our language) should show how we trust God.

James is now saying what Jesus had said previously. There are proper ways to use words and language and then there are other ways to use language. If we cannot convince others by the believability of how we live and love Jesus, many times our words aren't going to help.

- **Words are not for filling in gaps of character.**
- **Words are not for manipulating other people into agreeing with us.**

Kent Hughes writes, *"We must remember that for Jesus words are sacramental—an outward sign of an inward condition..."*. Because of the Gospel, our language should be an authentic representation of who we are in Christ. The point of language is to communicate honesty because our God has communicated clearly in the person of Jesus.

Read James 5:12 and Matthew 5:33-37.

- What is a promise someone made to you and broke?
- What's a promise you have made and broken?
- What excuses have you made to justify breaking them?
- Why do you think our words matter to Jesus?
- When are you tempted to lie?
- How trustworthy are Christians, generally speaking?
- Why is our "word" so important?
- In what ways can you improve what you say?
- How does true, Godly understanding of commitment transform our words and actions?
- How have your words revealed your character?
- How have you used words to manipulate others into agreeing with you?
- What if nobody at Element lied, and instead followed Jesus by letting their yes be yes and no be no? What would be different? What would the rest of Orcutt/Santa Maria see and experience through us?
- How can you practice speech this week that honors Christ?
- If words do not fill the gaps in our character, then what/who does? How?