

Daily Devotional, January 22, 2021

“Let Your Yes Be Yes”, (James 5:12, NKJV)

“But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.” (James 5:12)

Truthfulness seems to be increasingly rare these days. It used to be that a man’s word was his honor. Up until recently in America, contracts were sealed with a handshake. In Bible days, in the days of the Judges, men would seal an agreement with a shoe covenant. *“Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging, to confirm anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel” (Ruth 4:7).*

How might we apply this? Our text says, *“Do not swear any oath.”* Whenever I hear somebody preface a statement by the words, “To tell you the truth,” it leaves me to wonder whether everything else they say is a lie. The person who tells the truth all the time does not need to speak under oath. Their word is good because it is just and right to speak truthfully. It is part of their character. I would that all Christians would have such character! *“But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,””* is the rule for the Christian. Keep your speech simple. Be to the point. Minimize misunderstandings with concise communication. Don’t be a fool. *“A fool’s voice is known by his many words” (Ecclesiastes 5:3).* *“Lest you fall into judgment”* of God and men. Do not leave wiggle room in your communications, that you might reserve the right to call them back later. If you do this, you will be found out by one wiser and more discerning than you. Christian friend, keep your word! Did not the Lord Jesus Christ keep His word at all times? Let us follow His example, as the Apostle Paul wrote, *“But as God is faithful, our word to you was not Yes and No. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me, Silvanus, and Timothy—was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes. For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee” (2 Corinthians 1:18-22).*