

Third Invitation and Third Higher Law from Our Savior

So I went to the %@!*ø? mall to buy a pair of !*&ø@/ boots and a ø&±&€ purse. You would not believe the %@!* that I had to deal with in the @!* parking lot. There are just too many rude and annoying people. When I got inside the ø@!\$ mall, the @!€ø help looked at me like I was just common street trash. You wouldn't believe the ø&±&€ that ±&±&€ gave me! I'm a %@!*ø lady!



WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

- 33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:
- 34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:
- 35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.
- 36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.
- 37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Matthew 5:33-37

The third invitation and third higher law involve honoring our commitments and being true to our word. A modern-day apostle wrote in "The Mortal Messiah" that "Under the Mosaic law the taking of oaths was so common and covered such a variety of circumstances that, in practice, little verity attended statements that were not made with an oath. ... Under the perfect law of Christ every man's word is his bond, and all spoken statements are as true as though an oath attended each spoken word."¹

In this third higher law it's also important to consider the language we use. The third commandment states, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7).

Profanity is the disrespectful use of the names of Deity or the use of offensive or indecent language. Profanity separates us from our Heavenly Father while clean, reverent language brings us closer to him.

The words we speak out loud and to ourselves always matter. Living the third higher law means we not only avoid stating out loud those words that are offensive to the Lord. Living this third warning also means that we don't even allow offensive words to pass through our thoughts.

When our thoughts and communication is pleasing to the Lord, and we are true to our oaths, it blesses us and protects us from evil.

Application Exercise

In matters of honesty and integrity, there are no shortcuts, no little white lies or big black lies. There is only the simple, honest truth spoken and lived by.

Consider how a skyscraper that can take years to construct can be brought down in seconds with a series of well-placed detonations. The process is called an implosion, in contrast with an explosion.

We develop and nurture our lives over a period of years, yet it is the highly charged circumstances when mistakes are made that our true selves appear. The yes/no question to ask yourself is, am I true to my oaths and the words I speak or not? This is either a yes or no answer. If you said sometimes, then this is an area to work on.

When our action compromises the oaths we make than we compromise ourselves, and ultimately there will be an implosion, then a cloud of dust is all that is left until we correct ourselves through the power of repentance. Where do you feel you could do better to be true to your word?

William Shakespeare said: "To thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man."² How is being true to your word help you honor your commitments? What happens over time when you don't do what you say you are going to do?

Hold a dictionary in your hands and talk about all the good words that are available to use when we speak. Point out that even though we have more good words than we could select from to count, we at times will choose words which are not good, words which are vulgar and have impure meaning.

Reread what Jesus said about swearing in the first part of Matthew 5:34, "But I say unto you, Swear not at all." Then read and discuss an earlier verse in Matthew 5 where Jesus explained why we should not use vulgar language, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man" (Matthew 5:18). How does swearing defile us? What effect does our swearing have on those who hear us swear?

Lastly, what does it mean to take the Lord's name in vain? (see Doctrine and Covenants 63:60-64 to help answer this question). How can you position yourself so that you only use the names of Deity in a worshipful, respectful way?

¹ Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah*, 4 vols. [1979–81], 2:140

² *Hamlet*, act 1, scene 3, lines 78–80