

Watch Your Language

Third Invitation and Third Higher Law from Our Savior

- 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)

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. Am I true to my oaths and the words I think and speak?

Yes No Sometimes

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?
