

Questions for Gospel Harmony #33 – The Sermon on the Mount (Part 8)

Matthew 5.33-37

1. Is Jesus citing a man-made tradition in this place, or is He quoting from the Law of Moses? If He is quoting from the Law, what specific scriptures, and what do they mean? Does the New Testament indicate that there were erroneous, man-made traditions about swearing oaths in the time of Christ? If so, what was wrong with these traditional theories? (Verse 33)
2. Explain the statement: “Do not swear at all.” Why does Jesus list “heaven,” “God’s throne,” “earth,” “Jerusalem,” or “your head” as things you should not swear by? What reasons does Jesus give for why one should not swear by these things? (Verses 34-36)
3. What does it mean to “let your yes be yes and your no, no”? Explain the phrase, “anything more than this is from the evil one.” (Verse 37)

Special Question: The following examples are supposed to be New Testament cases of scriptural swearing: Matthew 26.63; 2 Corinthians 1.23; Romans 1.9; Galatians 1.20; Philippians 1.8; 1 Corinthians 15.31; Revelation 10.5-6. If this is true, how do we reconcile these examples with Jesus' command to "not swear at all"?

Special Question: Would these verses prohibit a person from taking an oath to tell the truth in a courtroom setting? Is there a difference between saying "I affirm" and "I swear"? Would these scriptures prohibit making wedding vows? If not, why not?

Special Question: If these verses are making a contrast between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ, what is it?