

Reflecting the Truth

Matthew 5:33-37

I. God is the God of truth.

- A. All his words are true (Psalm 18:30-31; Psalm 33:4).
 - 1. He equates his Word with his own character (Psalm 138:2).
 - (a) Jesus is the Word in flesh.
 - (b) Jesus is God, the exact representation of the Father's being.
 - 2. Not only is God's Word true, God is the truth.
 - (a) "I am the way, the truth, and the life..."
 - (b) So, not just, I speak the truth. I am the truth.
 - (c) It's a way of saying, "everything about me is true."
 - (d) There is nothing false, fake, or deceitful in me.
 - (e) I am the source and the measuring line of all truth.
- B. The Hebrew word for truth (emeth) also means faithfulness.
 - 1. Faithfulness is a key character quality of God.
 - (a) Covenants are promises of faithfulness.
 - (b) God's character is expressed in covenant faithfulness.
 - (c) So God is a truth teller and a promise keeper.
 - (d) These are not just things he does. They are who he is.
 - 2. This is why God is always trustworthy and dependable.
 - (a) He is always faithful.
 - (b) His Word is always true.
 - (c) You can stake your life on it.
 - (d) If you are a Christian, you already have.
 - (e) That's what saving faith is.

II. God calls us to be like him, people of truth.

- A. Speak truthfully (Ephesians 4:21-25).
 - 1. "the truth that is in Jesus."
 - 2. "put on the new self, created to be like God."
 - 3. "put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbors."
- B. Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).
 - 1. The truth is a double-edged sword.
 - (a) Sometimes it affirms.
 - (b) Other times it corrects.
 - (c) But always, the motive and method should be love.
 - 2. The truth is sometimes used as a club.
 - (a) You may be speaking truth but not in love.
 - (b) Your motive is wrong. You are being harsh.
 - 3. So, before you speak, consider your heart.
 - (a) Check your motive (why am I saying it?)
 - (b) Check your method (how am I saying it?)
 - (c) Don't speak unless it is in love. All else is sin.
 - 4. Speaking the truth also requires relationship.
 - (a) Don't go around correcting people you don't know.

(b) You need relationship for there to be sufficient trust.

III. Why is it so important that we be speakers of truth?

- A. It all begins with God.
 - 1. What if it was possible that God might lie?
 - (a) How would we be able to tell truth from false?
 - (b) How would we be able to trust anything God says?
 - 2. Because God is always truthful, we can always trust him.
 - (a) If we don't trust, the problem is not with God.
 - (b) It is with us. It's an issue of faith (trust).
- B. The God of truth calls us to be trustworthy, too.
 - 1. Our character is supposed to be becoming like his.
 - 2. If we are not truth tellers, how can we be trusted?
 - (a) How could our spouses trust us?
 - (b) How could our children trust us?
 - (c) Our employers, teachers, coaches, friends...?
- C. Today's passage:
 - 1. Do not swear that you're telling the truth.
 - (a) "Cross my heart and hope to die."
 - (b) "On my mother's grave."
 - 2. When you swear by something you are saying, "I can't always be trusted."
 - (a) But this time you can trust me, because I swear...
 - (b) But if you don't always tell the truth, how do I know when you are telling the truth?
 - (c) You have admitted that you are not trustworthy.
 - 3. So let your yes be yes, and your no be no.
 - (a) Let people trust in your character.
 - (b) Become known as a trustworthy person.
- D. Times when we may be tempted to not speak truth.
 - 1. When you are in conflict, do you tell your side accurately?
 - 2. Do you exaggerate to make yourself look good?
 - 3. When we get defensive, feel threatened.
 - (a) My confession.
 - (b) When you catch yourself in a lie, be accountable.
 - 4. We want to be like Nathaniel (no guile).
 - (a) "a truthful Israelite"
 - (b) We want to be like Jesus (trustworthy, faithful).