

**“KEEP YOUR WORD”**  
**The Power Zone VI**  
**Matthew 5:31-37**

**INTRODUCTION**

- A. We live in a world of broken promises.
  - 1. Promises by husbands and wives are shattered.
  - 2. Promises by parents to children.
  - 3. Promises by individuals in government, business, etc.
- B. *“Remember the Scripture that says, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him do it legally giving her divorce papers and her legal rights’? Too many of you are using that as a cover for selfishness and whim, pretending to be righteous just because you are ‘legal.’ Please, no more pretending. If you divorce your wife, you’re responsible for making her an adulteress (unless she has already made herself that by sexual promiscuity). And if you marry such a divorced adulteress, you’re automatically an adulterer yourself. You can’t use legal cover to mask a moral failure. And don’t say anything you don’t mean. This counsel is embedded deep in our traditions. You only make things worse when you lay down a smoke screen of pious talk, saying, ‘I’ll pray for you,’ and never doing it, or saying, ‘God be with you,’ and not meaning it. You don’t make your words true by embellishing them with religious lace. In making your speech sound more religious, it becomes less true. Just say ‘yes’ and ‘no.’ When you manipulate words to get your own way, you go wrong” (Mt. 5:31-37, The Message).*
- C. Jesus speaks out on the need to keep promises.
  - 1. Don’t say anything you don’t mean.
  - 2. Just say “yes” and “no.”
  - 3. When you manipulate words to get own way, you go wrong.

**I. A LITTLE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.**

- A. The Way It Was in Old Testament Times.
  - 1. Jewish men were marrying women for their dowry.
  - 2. Once used up, would turn woman out and search for another.
- B. The Need for a Certificate of Divorce. Dt. 24:1-4
  - 1. Question arose concerning “...anything displeasing...”
  - 2. The certificate gave the woman a little legal refuge.
- C. Word Games with the Word “Displeasing.”
  - 1. Shammai, the conservative scholar, dealt with virginity.
  - 2. Hillel, the liberal scholar, dealt with anything.
    - a. Burned biscuits, gained weight, not as beautiful, etc.
  - 3. What would Jesus’ answer be? Mt. 5:31-37
    - a. Maybe a connection between divorce and vows.
    - b. Keep your word. Say what you mean, mean what you say.

**II. SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR LEARNING.**

- A. God wants folks treated right, because God loves folks.
  - 1. Mt. 7:12 – “Do unto others...”
  - 2. Jn. 13:34-35 – “...if you have love...”
  - 3. Jn. 3:16 – “God so loved the world...”

- B. God wants us to do what is right.
  - 1. Jn. 8:31-32, "...if you abide in My word..."
  - 2. Mt. 5:41, "...go the second mile..."
- C. Trust is the glue that makes a relationship possible and productive.
  - 1. Pr. 3:3-4, "...bind them around your neck..."
  - 2. Acts 24:16, "...maintain a blameless conscience..."
  - 3. 2 Cor. 4:1-2, "...manifestations of truth..."
  - 4. 1 Pet. 2:12, "...keep behavior excellent..."
  - 5. When trust dies, a relationship becomes difficult at best, impossible at worst.
- D. The devil is a liar and the father of lies, Jn. 8:44.
- E. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, the Life, Jn. 14:6.
- F. Keep your word. Say what you mean, mean what you say.
- G. The Spirit of Truth lives within us, Jn. 16:13.

## CLOSING

- A. Are we being truthful with God?
  - 1. We made a commitment to Him, Rom. 6:1-7.
  - 2. Are we remaining true to that commitment?
- B. "All to Jesus I Surrender."
  - 1. *All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give.  
I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live.  
All to Jesus I surrender, Humbly at His feet I bow;  
Worldly pleasures all forsaken, take me, Jesus, take me now.*
  - 2. Can we truthfully sing the words to the song?
  - 3. Are we playing word games?