

XXIII. Matthew in Biblical Perspective  
A Royal Manifesto of the Kingdom from the King  
“The Third Commandment: Truth and Truthfulness”  
Matthew 5:33-37  
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July 11, 2010 – Morning Sermon

This is our 22nd or 23rd sermon on The Sermon on the Mount. We are in Matthew 5. We'll be looking at a couple of passages. Tonight we will have the Celebration Winds and they will encourage you with their music. It will be a great time of fellowship. One other brief word, after last Sunday's sermon a number of you asked me about the impact of the church and Christianity on our founding fathers. A wonderful book written recently and you maybe hearing much about it right now because so many people are using it, is called Forged in Faith; How Faith Shaped the Birth of the Nation 1607-1776 by Rod Gragg which talks about the impact of Christianity upon our Founding Fathers. We will have this book in the Briarwood Bookstore and I think you'll enjoy this as a personal study. One other word, is I had the privilege to pastor a young man very briefly in Charlotte, North Carolina and he is now serving the PCA. Many of our kids get entrusted to him during the year and he pastors at Trinity Presbyterian over in Tuscaloosa, Alabama and Dick Cain is here with us today. Thank you for caring for so many of our covenant children throughout the school year because we are very grateful for it.

Let's look in Matthew 5. Our study is in the third commandment on the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 5:33-37 says **33** *“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’* **34** *But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.*

The grass withers. The flower fades. This is the Word of our God. It abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

We are going to jump right into this. I have really enjoyed looking at this text and I want to give you one reason I have enjoyed looking at this text. In fact, before we jump into it I'm going to give you four reasons why I think this is an interesting text. Number one what is said right here will be highly developed and expounded by the Apostle Paul particularly in the book of Ephesians and the book of Colossians. The second reason why I love this is this obviously made an impact in the life of Jesus' brother, James, who wrote in your Bible the book of James. In James 5 he actually quotes this text. The third reason has to do with a conversation. Note this conversation, “Pastor I really love Briarwood and I'm having the greatest time but I can't join.” “Why?” “It is because you all do this thing called ‘membership vows’ and you take membership promises, covenants and vows. Jesus tells me I'm not to make any vows.” Then they will take me to this passage/text.

We had baptism vows this morning for covenant children. Did we lead those people into sin this morning in which they weren't supposed to do that, where Jesus said

not to do that? Is that what we are told in this text? Some believers will get a subpoena to go to court and say to me, "Pastor, can you help me?" "With what?" "I have to go to court and they are going to ask me to swear and make a vow to tell the truth and I can't make a vow." Then they will quote this passage. So Paul develops this, Peter develops this, James quotes it and many believers in a sensitive conscience in which I admire them deeply in their desire to be faithful to God's Word and everything Jesus teaches, have even taken positions that you don't ever take a vow or an oath. The fourth reason I love this text is there is a saying that goes, 'honesty is the best policy' and as a pastor and a Christian I don't believe that. So do I believe dishonesty is the best policy? No, but if you'll hold on for just a few minutes I'll tell you why I don't believe that and it has everything to do with this text of Scripture. I hope that you won't cut this off until I get to the end of this study but I will tell you why I don't believe honesty is the best policy.

We are going to look at the text for this study but since it's been a couple of weeks I want to make sure we don't take a text out of context because then it becomes a pretext so you would be misusing it. This is one of six sermons recorded in the Scripture of Jesus. This is the first one He delivered. It's the longest one that's recorded. Of the six five are in the book of Matthew. This first one is in Matthew 5, 6, and 7 and it's called the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus goes up on a mount, sits down and takes the position of a teacher. Everyone gathers and He opens His mouth and He begins to teach. As He teaches we have now covered a couple of sections. We are in the third section of this sermon.

The first section of this sermon is called the Beatitudes and that's the section that talks about how the Gospel does its work in our hearts individually. The first section is on the work of the Gospel in our personal salvation and reformation and how it saves us and we're blessed in Jesus Christ and how it changes us. He gives eight character traits of those who have been brought into the Kingdom of heaven by the work of the Gospel.

Then He goes to the second section which deals with those of you who have been saved personally and you are being changed personally, you now have a Gospel ministry of evangelism and transformation. So that means you are salt and light. You are in a corrupt world so I am using you as salt. You are in a dark world so I am using you as light. I'm going to use you to hold back sin and I'm going to use you to rescue sinners to come Jesus Christ and He describes how we are salt and light.

Then He says, "Now let's talk about the use of the Law." There was another mountain called Mount Sinai where another prophet went up and took a seat and God came down and gave him Ten Commandments and his name was Moses. Now how can that be properly understood? Let me also tell you how it is being taught and I want you to understand how the Law has a Gospel use. The Law searches you out and it informs you that you are a sinner and under the judgment of God. Then it sends you to Jesus who came under the Law, paid your penalty, performed a perfect righteousness and gives it to you that you receive by faith so that you can have eternal life in Him. That's the right use of this Law so don't relax the Law. Use the Law lawfully; first to send people to Christ and then Christ says, "Now let Me tell you how this Law can be used in your life, not for power because there is no power in the Law, because the power is in the Holy Spirit and grace, but for direction. If you love Me you'll keep My commandments. Now let Me tell you where these really go."

Jesus doesn't relax the commandments, does He? We are in our third commandment. In fact what He will now do is He develops ten commandments from this mountain for us. The first five fall under this category of exceeding righteousness. We who have received righteousness that's perfect, how do we pursue righteousness for the Savior who has saved us? So He gives us five commandments that guide us in exceeding righteousness and what He does is He goes back to the Old Testament Ten Commandments and says, "Now let Me show you how these impact your life if you have come to Me for salvation. You talk about murder, let Me tell you where that commandment is really taking you. It's not telling you simply not to take a sword and not stick it in somebody's heart. It's taking you to your heart because murder has an embryo and it's called anger which is in your heart and that's where we need to go." So He comes to the heart with the Law so that again we are brought back to Christ for forgiveness and the power to be changed not from the outside in but God, I want You to change me from the inside out so that I don't even kill with my words much less with a sword.

Then He takes us to another commandment which is 'don't commit adultery.' He says, "Let Me tell you where this is taking you..." He affirms the sanctity of marriage and He affirms the right place of the enjoyment of sexuality in the sacred marriage but says any sexual activity, promiscuous or perverted, outside of marriage is to be abhorred and hated because it brings nothing but death. Just like murder is born in the heart of anger, sexual immorality is born in the heart of lust in which there is idolatry of either a sexual experience or a sexual person in which we would use them for our own gratification. So He again goes to the heart and He also again affirms the sanctity of marriage.

Now He takes us to a third commandment. This time we are going to a number of Old Testament commandments and two of which are in the Ten Commandments – don't take the name of the Lord in vain and you shall not bear false witness. We'll have five more commandments on how you practice this righteousness. You don't practice it before men but you practice it from the heart before the Lord. Right now we are in the third commandment of these exceeding righteousness commandments. Jesus says to look back at what the Old Testament says, the Law, and now I want to show you the Gospel expansion of it and then how you can embrace it in your life. He does this in each one of these and we're doing it again in the third one.

Let's look at the Law in Matthew 5:33 that says *Again you have heard that it was said to those of old (back in the Old Testament), 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.'* There are numerous commands. I went back and counted nine already and gave up after that. There are all kinds of other passages in which God warns us about taking oaths with falsehood, not to do it, and even if you have sworn to your hurt you have to pay what you vow. So we have responsibilities to be faithful to what we have vowed. Jesus has said that you have heard it said that and I'm not diminishing that but let Me tell you where it really takes you.

So He goes to the second point which is from the Law to the Law expanded. This is what Jesus wants you to understand. Matthew 5:34-36 says **34** *But I say to you, **Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.*** You can see why some

people are kind of sensitive about this because that's what Jesus just said about not taking an oath at all. So why do we let these people who baptize their covenant children take promises? I know they are all found in the Bible but why do we do that? Why do we have membership vows and marriage vows? Perhaps when you became a believer and said that Jesus was now Lord and you made that vow? Maybe our courts shouldn't be having us make promises to tell the truth. At first blush that seems like what it is saying but what Jesus is doing in His rabbinical method of teaching is He is pushing us to this point in order that we understand something.

So let's again put things into context. First of all Jesus is not saying that taking an oath is wrong or sinful. If He did He would be calling His Father sinful because God has taken oaths Himself. In fact, He informs us that He has taken oaths. I would like to show you just one. Not only has God commanded us to take oaths and you can see this when you go through the Old Testament because He told us many times to do that. Why would He have done that if it was a sin? It would have been sin then as much as it would have been sin now if it was wrong. Sin is defined by the character of God. The character of God hasn't changed. If the character of God told me to do it then it wouldn't have been sin then so then we'd understand that it wouldn't be sin now. God Himself not only commands oaths and vows but God Himself takes oaths and vows. I want to show you one incident of this in Genesis 22. This is the wonderful moment where God spoke to Abraham and told him to take his only son up to the altar, the son of promise that I gave to you. God told him to be ready to sacrifice him. Abraham goes up to the altar ready to sacrifice his son, Isaac, and God says, "I know" and intervenes. God brings through the message of an angel, a testimony of His grace and mercy saying, "The Lord will provide." Then He puts a ram in the thicket to take the place of Isaac and that is an amazing statement of the Gospel that we are learning about where God gives His Son and how Abraham believed the Lord and His promises.

Genesis 22:15-17 says **15** *And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven* **16** *and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,* **17** *I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore.* Here God takes an oath and He takes an oath by His own Name. "I have sworn by My Name..." There is another time when He makes the covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12 and 15. There are numerous instances in the Bible where God takes an oath so clearly taking an oath or vow in and of itself isn't sin.

Remember when we were talking about marriage in our last study and how God hates divorce. Why does God hate divorce? It is because of sin. You wouldn't have divorce without sin. Either the divorce is sinful or even if it is a Biblical divorce it's there because of sin. So God hates divorce because it's only there for that reason but divorce in and of itself is not sin. Again, if you say that then you are calling God a sinner because Isaiah and Jeremiah tell us God said, "I've given to Israel a writ of divorce because she has been unfaithful to Me" (Isaiah 50:1, Jeremiah 3:8). So again you would be calling God a sinner if divorce in and of itself was sin. God commands taking a vow and actually does it. Let's look back at Matthew 5. In this context what did Jesus just say that you are to hold sacred? It is your marriage vows and covenant.

Jesus in His own life observed the presence of vows. Do you remember when Jesus was betrayed and arrested? Within 12 hours He was put through six trials. What

was His posture in almost every trial? How did He respond to the questioners and accusers? He was silent except when Pilot put Him under oath and He said, "I am." And in the house of Caiaphas, when Caiaphas put Him under oath and this is found in Matthew 26, Caiaphas said, "I adjure You in the name of God, are You the Son of God?" Jesus had been totally silent up until that time and once He went under oath He said, "It is as you have said." So Jesus affirms the use of oaths in His own life. There is God commanding them when used appropriately so clearly taking an oath or a vow is not sin.

So what is Jesus actually saying and why is He saying it so forcefully to us? Here is the reason why. What had happened since the teaching of the importance of taking an oath in the right way for the right purposes and being faithful to it, a bunch of rabbis begin to do some teaching and they put some stuff together in a thing called a Mishnah. In the Mishnah they had worked out a way to take oaths but don't have to do them. They would say, "If you take an oath in God's Name you have to do it but if we could take an oath some other way that really sounds good but is not in God's Name then you really don't have to do it." Remember when you were a kid and you had your buddy there and said, "Let's make a deal. If you do this then I'll do that. Let's shake on it." "Do you promise, cross your heart, hope to die?" We kept trying to make it so they wouldn't back out of it. "Do you swear on your mother's grave?" "She hasn't died yet." "But if she had?" We could always get out of it if we were kids if we 'crossed our fingers' behind our back.' The rabbis have worked out some finger crossing and Jesus reveals that to you in this text.

He says, "I know how you are doing this. Some of you stand up and take your oath and your vow in these sacred moments and you say 'by Jerusalem' and you think you get out of it because it's just Jerusalem but let Me tell you that the reason there is a Jerusalem is it belongs to the King. So when you said Jerusalem you brought the King. You didn't get your fingers crossed. Some of you do it by creation, by the earth and by the sun, but guess who made the earth and sun and to whom it belongs? Some of you even say 'by the hair on my head' and who put the hair on your head and can you make it white or black or more of it or less of it? So you are reaching for all kinds of ways to take the sacred vow but it really isn't sacred and you think you have a way out if you really don't want to do it later."

Jesus even develops this a little bit more in Matthew 23. Jesus does some 'woes' on the Pharisees. He gives seven 'woes' to them. Matthew 23:16-22 says **16** "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.' **17** You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred? **18** And you say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing, but if anyone swears by the gift that is on the altar, he is bound by his oath.' **19** You blind men! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that makes the gift sacred? **20** So whoever swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. **21** And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by him who dwells in it. **22** And whoever swears by heaven swears by the throne of God and by him who sits upon it. He is just quoting from the Mishnah and the various ways they were making sacred oaths that really weren't sacred that they could get out of and He is showing them the ridiculousness of that because God is Lord of all and over all. I think it was Abraham Kuyper that said, "There is not one inch of everything in this entire universe that doesn't belong to Him and if you name it, you have named Him."

After expanding the Law and confronting their use of it in that day, what does Jesus now lead us to? He then not only takes the Law expanded but He tells us how to embrace this expansion of it. Matthew 5:37 says *Let what you* (plural, His people, those who know Jesus Christ, who live in the Kingdom) *say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.* If you have to resort to oaths as a Christian to make your word true that tells you there is a problem – either in your embellishment, exaggeration, or your emphasis. Jesus says, “My people don’t need to swear by anything because every time they speak God’s Name is upon it. So they don’t need to embellish with oaths.”

So here is the takeaway. While Christians are allowed for various reasons to take oaths, we are to live and speak the truth in such a manner that to do so would be unnecessary. While it’s appropriate for us to do it, then one may say, “Harry, why is it appropriate to have oaths?” We are in a fallen world in which people want to have a modicum appearance of truth but not tell the truth and keep an escape route from the truth, so since we are in that kind of a fallen world of sinners then it’s fair and appropriate to have something called oaths and something to call promises in which one makes a commitment and we’re telling people “Listen this is something you are committing yourself to do” so in a fallen world it’s appropriate to set up oaths and covenants. But those in the Kingdom in this world, our lives ought to be growing in grace in such a manner that while it’s appropriate in a fallen world to do that and we live in a fallen world so we will participate in the courtrooms and in the ceremonies because you need that in a fallen world, but in reality in our lives it’s totally unnecessary. I can understand why when I sit at a table and buy a house there are going to be 17 pages from a lawyer to sign in which it says I’m buying a house and I promise to pay but among believers while I understand in the world we do that, a handshake is enough to pay you. A yes is a yes and a no is a no. If we have to go beyond that then something is wrong. I’m in a world that is all wrong so I understand why I have to have oaths and covenants.

Here’s another reason for oaths and covenants. It’s God’s way to communicate importance. It’s God’s way to indicate to us something that is important. If God says I want you to do this under oath and with a promise and with a vow then He is telling us that relationship is important. Some people want to know if I prioritize things in my life and my answer is absolutely. I have to have first things and second things. Harry, what are some clues for me to make decisions on what is a first thing in my life? Anything that you have ever taken a vow for and anyone you have ever taken a vow to is a priority. My marriage vows are a priority. My baptism vow is a priority. In the church of Jesus Christ I am not going to treat the sacred institution that Jesus purchased with His own blood and make vows that I’m not going to be committed to fulfill in attendance upon worship, in engagement, in the use of my gifts, and the use of my resources. No, no, God You have allowed me to participate and in that relationship I want to pay what I vowed only by Your grace and strength can I do it, but I want to do it.

These baptismal vows for these covenant children in our church are not a Kodak moment. That is a sacred covenant and we just made promises. We just made promises to that family and they just made promises before the Lord for their child. That is a sacred moment. When you make an employee/employer relationship and you sign a contract that you put your name on, you’re a Christian so let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no’ because you just made vow and you’ll not rob from your employer just because you want a bigger profit. You’ll not take something away from your customer

just because you want to make a little extra money. When we made a vow even if it hurts we're going to follow through with it because it's not our word, it's God's word because every time we speak God's Name is on it and we don't cross our fingers behind our backs – not when we get married, not when we come into the body of Christ, not when we make contractual relationships as a Christian, not when we have made commitments – we don't cross our fingers. It's fair to have oaths and vows, we'll participate but among us it ought to be unnecessary.

What ought to happen is when an unbeliever goes into a contract with a believer the unbeliever ought to already think that the believer's word is as good as gold because the believer will do what he said he would do. Oh that God would just grant me that. I'm so glad that God has granted me grace whenever I failed it. Our word is our bond so I want to leave you with some helps here and I'll conclude with these.

To do this we need to flee three things whenever we open our mouth. Number one is we need to flee the hypocrisy of duplicity. That's when you say things in a way to create multiple meanings so you can have an escape route. Here is the way one elected politician did it under oath. He said, "It depends upon what 'is' means." For a believer 'is' is 'is' and that's the way we need to treat it. It's fair for people to put us under oath. Today as we look at the issues of corruption in our society, and by the way this is trans-partisan so I don't have to worry about people thinking I'm partisan on this, our politicians will do things or preachers will do things or other people are doing things and in our culture of lies and deceit today we say, "I don't know if he really means it or not but boy if we could just get him under oath maybe we have some assurance." We live our lives under an oath to God. Do not bear false witness. That means we don't want to speak duplicitous or dishonestly.

So secondly we don't want to speak dishonestly. Dishonesty is to hide the meaning and thirdly we don't want to speak deceitfully. That's when you take something that means something and you try to masquerade it by being technically true but your masquerading what's actually true. God, would You allow us not to do that? Our 'yes' is 'yes' and our 'no' is 'no'. What does he mean by 'yes'? And did he mean 'yes' or did he really mean 'no'? Was he being honest or dishonest? When Harry said 'yes', was he saying 'yes' for this or for that or what? No, our 'yes' is to be 'yes' and our 'no' is 'no'. So we flee the hypocrisy of duplicity, the hypocrisy of deceitfulness and the hypocrisy of dishonesty.

So what do we then pursue? If we flee that then we need to pursue three things. We need to pursue speaking the truth, then speak it truthfully and then speak it with truthfulness. So we speak truth, speak truthfully and speak truthfulness. Why have I said that? Is that just repetition? No, the truth is content. I want to speak the truth truthfully. I want to express the content in a way that's faithful to what I'm saying. Truthfulness means I want to make sure the other person that heard me understands it truthfully. Christians take the burden not just to say the right thing in the right way but they say it so that the person that hears it understands it truthfully.

I want to show you what I mean by looking at Ephesians 4. I love this section of Scripture. It's such a challenge and it tells me of God's grace that forgives me and then says to me that you who have been saved by grace, by My grace, I want you to go to another level in living for Me. You have received My righteousness and I want you to pursue righteousness. Ephesians 4:25 says "*Therefore, having put away falsehood, let*

*each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.”* Among us it ought to be very clear, when we speak to the world we speak the truth in love and when we speak to one another we are truthful and you can see it and sense it. Let’s go one step further. Ephesians 4:29 says “*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*” When we speak people shouldn’t have to weigh through what I mean. I am speaking the truth and speaking it truthfully and in truthfulness where I want you to understand. We speak for the benefit of the hearer not for the benefit of ourselves.

Have you ever done that before? I know I have done it. I have said to someone, “I have something I need to tell you.” Maybe they don’t need to hear it. “I am going to get this off my chest.” Maybe they don’t need it on their chest. Am I giving the right words at the right time for the right reason? God’s Name is on it and I want this person to be edified. I want them to receive grace by hearing it even if I have to deal with something tough. I’m not talking about brutal honesty. I’m talking about loving with the truth and truth-ing with love. We ought to be marked out by it among ourselves.

I hope you have hung in long enough to hear this. No, I don’t believe honesty is the best policy and I don’t believe dishonesty is the best policy. Why don’t I believe honesty is the best policy? Is it the next to best policy? No, I don’t believe honesty *is* a policy. It’s a commandment and a conviction. It’s not a policy to get along with people or to manipulate people or to communicate with people. It is a commandment from the Lord in how we deal with one another. He says to put away falsehood. Speak the truth in love. That’s not a policy. It’s a principle. It’s a commandment. It’s a conviction. We ought to be able to count on that in each other’s lives.

Here’s the last thing and I just love to tell you this. There’s a commercial out there that says “Honest Abe tell the truth” and his wife comes up and says “Does my dress make me look big?” Now there’s a challenge right there. “What a nice dress honey.” How do you work your way through that? You have to speak the truth in love but it doesn’t necessarily mean I have to answer every question that’s been given to me. There’s a time for silence also. Men, we above all people need to learn that but speaking the truth in love and knowing when to do it is crucial. I look at all I’ve done and I’m so grateful that God forgives me of my sins and even the sins in this area but I also want to thank Him that condemnation has been removed but He’s given me some conviction. Now God would You let me consecrate my tongue so that I might speak in a way where ‘yes’ is ‘yes’ and ‘no’ is ‘no’ and people will know that You have taken a deceitful sinner and You are changing him to tell the truth in love. So that my wife will know I’ll be there to the end. I took a vow. My children will know that wasn’t a Kodak moment for me. I want to raise you, my children, for Jesus Christ and in Christ so that God’s church doesn’t have to wait for me to show up.

In God’s Name I took a vow and I want to be there for Him and His people. When I have made a deal with somebody they won’t have to wonder if I’ve made a bad deal but they’ll know that I’ll go through with it and do what’s right, that I’ll do what I’ve promised to do. They only way I can do that is because God has made an oath. God made an oath and a vow. Remember that vow we talked about earlier back in Genesis 22 let me show you how He explains it in Hebrews 6. That same event is what the writer of Hebrews talks about. God made a promise. He swore an oath. Hebrews 6:13-18 says

*13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, 14 saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." 15 And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. 16 For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. (So it's a useful purpose.) 17 So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, 18 so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us.*

You have a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner place behind the curtain and that is God made a promise to save His people. God made that promise in His own Name. He swore by Himself and God's oath was not only God's oath, God fulfilled the oath. The promise was God Himself, His Son, who went to a cross to save us and change us that we might know Him who is Truth and might speak the truth simply for Him – yes, no.

I preached a mission's conference at Columbia Bible College which is now called Columbia International University when I was in Charlotte, North Carolina. Dr. Robertson McQuilkin was the president then. I got home and not long after that I got word that Dr. McQuilkin was resigning from Columbia Bible College. So I went to find out why. Dr. Robertson McQuilkin began to notice that his wife very subtly began to have some changes and it deeply concerned him. He would watch the changes and she would forget things. She had become discomfited and so he began to take more time with her. In the evenings he would have to help her for bed and one evening he noticed her feet were cut, bleeding and bruised. Then someone informed him why her feet were like that. The person said, "Dr. McQuilkin you don't know this. When you leave you are the only thing physically that she's got a touch on and not long after you leave in the morning for work she walks the two miles to the University from the house, many times in her bathrobe almost always barefoot. She'll stand beside your office just to hear your voice. That's how she gets through the day. She'll do that 8, 9, 10 times a day." This woman's life was gradually coming into the shadows and darkness of Alzheimer's. He took her and got her tested and they confirmed it was Alzheimer's.

He went to the board of directors of the University and said, "Gentlemen you need to find my successor." They said to him, "Wait do you know how many missionaries we turn out? We will increase your salary so you will be able to put her somewhere and she can be cared for." I think they were well meaning when they said that. They said, "Look at all the people you are influencing." He said, "The only reason I have been able to influence them is because of Valentine's Day in 1948 when she said 'yes' and for 42 years she has been faithful to me and I took a vow before God in sickness and in health, till death do us part." They said, "Well, we sense that you have to do this." He said, "No, you don't understand. I don't have to do this and yes it's a vow but I want to uphold my word. You don't understand but I get to do this because the God who fulfilled His vow to save me gave me her. Now He has given me to her to finish to the end." Yes is yes and no is no because God's grace is sufficient and His oath is fulfilled in Christ. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together. Thank You that we have such a wonderful glorious Savior in which we have a sure hope, Your vow fulfilled in Your Son. Would You make us people who function in a society understanding the importance of vows in a fallen world but living in such a way that for us they are unnecessary. Our yes is yes and our no is no, truth in love, I pray this Father, in Jesus through His Name, inviting any reading this who has never yet come to the One who is Yes and Amen and who will save you from your sins, to Him I invite you now. Jesus do this work in our hearts I pray, Amen.

An outline for the Sermon on the Mount:

*Introduction: (Matthew 5:1-2)*

*I. The Christian, The Gospel and our Character (5:3-12)*

*II. The Christian, The Gospel and our Ministry (5:13-16)*

*III. The Christian, The Gospel and the Law (5:17-48)*

*IV. The Christian, The Gospel and our New Life (6:1-18)*

*V. The Christian, The Gospel and our Perspective (6:19-34)*

*VI. The Christian, The Gospel and our Relationships (7:1-20)*

*VII. The Christian, The Gospel and Commitment (7:21-27)*

*Conclusion: (7:28-29)*