

"Truth Of The Matter Is".

Open with prayer to God for wisdom.

Someone is saying something to you that's important, and they add, "I'm going to be honest with you . . ." or "To be frank . . .," or "Truth of the matter is . . ." I've done this many times myself. People I know to be honest folks have done this with the best of intentions. The problem is that these figures of speech can lead those who are listening to wonder, "do you mean you weren't being honest before?" In Jesus' time, making oaths were often figures of speech, (such as "by thy life," or "by my head,") and others were used to avoid responsibility (as in our "the check's in the mail"). Jesus wanted people to stop making oaths, stop making promises, and instead, actually be the person they were created to be. Here's the heart of the matter - why would a person promise to tell the truth if that same person always told the truth - and was known by others to do so? Then there would be no need for the promise. Oaths are needed for a sinful world, but believers are meant to take a more noble path. We either say "yes," or "no," while we constantly live the will of the Lord.

Read Matthew 5:33 - 37.

Questions to prayerfully consider or discuss: How does the idea of trust apply to what Jesus tells us in this passage? If we fail to do what we say we'll do, how might this failure relate to our reflecting who Christ is to those who don't know Him? What other kinds of damage may happen when we rely on an oath?

Close with prayer in thanks to God.