

February 28, 2021
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
James 5:12

“Stop Swearing”

XIV. Stop Sinful Swearing & Speak Sincerely (5:12)

A. Who – “But above all, my brethren,”

B. What

- 1. Negative Command – “do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath;” (cf. Genesis 22:16–17; 26:3; Lev. 19:12; Num. 5:19, 21; 30:2-3; Dt. 23:21, 23; Ps 89:3-4; 132:11; 2 Sam 7:12f; Mt. 5:33-37; 23:16-22; 26:63-64; Heb. 6:13-18)**

- 2. Positive Command – “but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no,” (cf. Mt. 5:37)**

C. Why – “so that you may not fall under judgment.” (Mt. 5:37; 1 Tim. 3:6)

So What?

Discussion & Application:

1. Did your personal trials, difficulties, injustices, or persecutions increase or decrease in recent weeks? Were you **godly and patient with your eyes fixed on the soon return of Jesus**? Often, when studying Scripture, the enemy of our souls attacks us in the very areas we are studying, and/or our loving heavenly Father takes us through trials to strengthen our faith and help us apply His truth. Think back on some impatient moments under stress recently. How could you have handled it differently? How would focusing your mind on the soon return of Jesus have helped you handle those situations in a godlier way? If by chance you handled a situation in a sinful way, go back to the people involved and humbly ask for their forgiveness. Explain to them that you want to handle things differently in the coming days to please your Lord and Savior.
2. Think back over the past 12 months. In all of the trials you have experienced, how did God demonstrate to you that He is **full of compassion and merciful**? Was it hard to believe it at the peak of those trials? What lessons can you take from the past 12 months to help you face the next 12 months with confidence that God will always be full of compassion and merciful toward you?
3. Some commentators believe James 5:12 goes with verses 7-11. If that is the case, what point is James making?
4. Some commentators believe James 5:12 goes with verses 13-20. If that is the case, what point is James making?
5. Some commentators believe that James 5:12, although connected with what comes before and after it, was intended by James to stand alone. If that is the case, what is his point?
6. What kind of “**swearing**” is James NOT directly referring to in this verse? What kind of swearing is he commanding them to stop doing? Give some examples of ways that people might swear sinfully.
7. Many people throughout church history have taken this statement by James (and the one by Jesus in Mt. 5:33-37) to mean a believer in Jesus should **never swear at all**, not even in a court of law. Is that what Jesus and James were saying? What biblical support do you have for your answer?
8. What is the **positive command in James 5:12**? [Note: it is a present imperative meaning that it is something that believers should continually do] What are some rationalizations people might have for telling lies (or fibs, white lies, etc.)? How might this show up in marriage? At work? At school? Around friends? In church?
9. Why is it so important for a follower of Jesus to always have **integrity** in what they say? Apply this to high profile scandals with “Christian leaders” in recent times (i.e., Ravi Zacharias and others). What biblical passages come to your mind when you think of a believer having integrity with their words (see Ps. 15 & Eph. 4:25 to get started). What positive impact can honesty, transparency, and integrity have on the people around us at home, in our neighborhood, at work, at school, and at church?
10. What kind of **judgment** is James referring to in 5:12? What ultimately happens to people who are characterized by lying? (see Rev. 21:8, 27; 22:14-15)
11. Are you **characterized** by being honest in your speech? Are you faithful to carry through to the finish with the things you promise? What steps will you take this week to choose your words more carefully and follow through more diligently?
12. **Memorize James 5:12** and become a doer of it for the glory of God and good of those around you.