

James: A Letter from Jesus' Brother **Lying — James 5:12**

What does James call us NOT to do?

James calls us not to swear by heaven or earth. "Swearing" meant confirming the truth of what you said by appealing to a higher authority (like what witnesses do today in courtrooms).

But the Old Testament (Deu 6:13) and the New Testament (2Cor 1:23) approve of swearing; so how does this fit James' disapproval?

The answer is in Matt 23:16-17. Some of James' readers thought that if you swore by God then you had to tell the truth, but that if you swore by heaven or earth then you could lie.

So James is calling us to not lie.

What does James call us to do?

Let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no. To always tell the truth.

How does James motivate us to not lie?

By warning us that if we continue in a pattern of unrepentant lying we face God's condemnation.

This is because lying means forgetting about God; choosing not to know Him (Isa 57:11; Jer 9:3)

When we lie, what is it we are choosing to forget about God? Promises like Psa 84:11 — that if we walk uprightly, God will give us everything that would be good for us.

When we lie it's because we think there's some good thing that we can only get by lying. But if we think this, then we are choosing not to trust promises like Psa 84:11 — where God promises to give us everything that would be good for us as we walk uprightly.

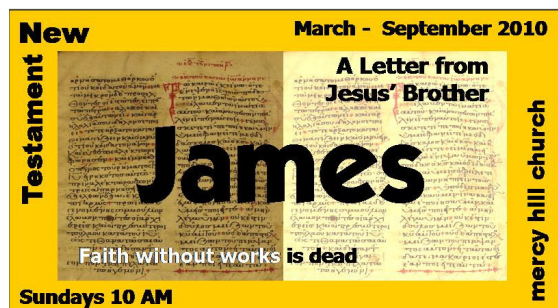
That's why a pattern of unrepentant lying brings God's condemnation.

How can we stop lying?

This is also found in Psalm 84:11.

"Walking uprightly" does not mean being perfect; it means trusting Jesus to forgive me, guide me, and change me.

So as I walk uprightly (including telling the truth), I can be confident that God will bring me everything that would be good for me — so I don't need to lie.



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

What was the Holy Spirit saying to you Sunday through this passage?

What questions, ideas, objections, encouragements did you come away with?

What sort of lies are you tempted to tell?

Have you ever considered that a pattern of lying could mean facing God's condemnation? Why or why not?

Does it make sense that every time I lie I'm forgetting about God and choosing not to know God?

Can you see how every lie is an attempt to gain some good? Can you see how trusting Psa 84:11 would keep you from lying?

What's your take-away from this message? What are you going to do differently? When? How?

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.

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A Letter from Jesus' Brother James

Faith without works is dead

Sundays 10 AM

mercy hill church