

## **The Oath**

Matthew 5:33-37

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In Biblical Greek, the word for oath is “horkos.” Traditionally an oath calls upon a deity as a witness to a statement. It takes the nature of a self-imposed curse if the oath is broken, and possibly a blessing if it is fulfilled.

There are assertive oaths, asserting what’s true now, and there are promissory oaths, asserting what will be true in the future. It’s hard to define what exactly constitutes an oath, but an oath is *at least* a statement to which we try to add some weight or veracity . . . like when we say, “I promise.”

- When I was a Boy Scout, I took the Scout Oath:

On my honor, I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country and to  
obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong, mentally  
awake and morally straight.

- If you testify in a court of law, you’re supposed to take an oath, usually with your hand on the Bible.

I hereby swear to tell the truth, the whole truth,  
and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

- When I was ordained I took vows.

- We're supposed to ask our elders to take vows. When you become a voting member of the church, there are vows.
- At my wedding I made promises and I took vows.
- Many churches require vows and oaths before a person can come to the communion table.

Matthew 5:33:

*“Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”*

Wow! Jesus says, “Do not swear at all.”

Recently young Andy Mott was riding in a car with some friends when they happened to drive by our church. Being a good little evangelist, Andy asked his young friend, “How come you guys never come to church?” The little boy replied, “I don't know if we should go *there* . . . they use *swear* words there!” (As I heard this, I thought, Oh boy . . . here we go again . . .)

Well, Andy pressed him and asked, “What do you mean swear words?” The boy said, “They say *God* and *Jesus* all the time there.”

Well, if God and Jesus are swear words,  
should we repeat them?

I hope you realize cursing and swearing is not a vocabulary list. The demons in Hell must just get a kick out of us American Evangelicals. We curse and swear all over . . . but pride ourselves on our clean vocabulary.

I think my Scout Leader would say that being moral and a good citizen is at least not cussing or swearing. So when I took my Scout Oath, I swore not to swear. And I swore to be a good citizen, which includes: testifying under oath and pledging allegiance. So I *swore* not to *swear* while I *swore* to *swear*.

Do you realize that if you take an oath to live by God's Word, you're swearing not to swear? Because to swear ("omnyo") is to make an oath ("horkos"). So should I renounce the Scout Oath? Refuse to testify under oath? Rewrite my marriage vows? I don't know . . .

Most commentators basically say, "Well, surely Jesus is only prohibiting casual swearing where you don't really mean it." But that sounds like saying, "Casual adultery is wrong . . . but if it's formal adultery in a court of law, and you *really mean it*, it's OK."

This is all very confusing for several reasons:

1. At places in the Old Testament, people are even commanded to swear oaths.
2. It's hard to define when something becomes an oath. Paul said, "As God is my witness . . ." That sounds like an oath, yet isn't God always our witness?
3. Is a promise an oath? Are ordination vows and wedding vows oaths? Is the Scout Oath really even an oath, or only a promise?

4. Is responding to an oath the same as making an oath? In Matthew 26 Jesus appears to respond under oath in court.
5. Is worrying about scout oaths and the nuances of ordination vows a bit like “straining at gnats and swallowing a camel”? Where’s the camel? Well, if there’s a camel, I suppose it has something to do with this sixth complication . . .
6. God seems to swear all over the place. In fact, in a very real sense the entire Bible is an oath. It’s the Old Testament and the New Testament. A testament is a covenant; a covenant includes an oath.

In Luke 1 Zechariah prophesies, “God has remembered His covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham.”

So people say, “If God swears, then surely I should do it.” Well, maybe there are certain things God does that I *shouldn’t* do . . . like curse and swear: that is, judge the world. And maybe there are certain things God does I can’t do or wouldn’t *want* to do . . . like save the world or myself. And if I thought I could, it would be like swallowing a camel.

Well, I can’t strain all the gnats and explain every detail, but I can help you ask some questions and ask *the* question: Do I believe?

On the surface in Matthew 5:33 Jesus is at least making some rather obvious points:

First of all, when we “swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,” aren’t we confessing that most of the time we don’t? Or at least that you can’t count on most people to do so?

If you go around feeling the need to always make promises, it probably means you’re not too trustworthy. Have you ever hung around an alcoholic or a drug addict? Talk about promises, vows, and oaths! And the more they promise, the more you’re convinced they’re lying and hiding from truth.

Well, we’re all “sin-aholics.”

“I’ll do better, I promise.”

“I’ll try harder.”

“Look at my New Years resolutions!”

Secondly, when I “swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me God,” I’m under oath. And that assumes there are places I’m *not* under oath . . . places where God witnesses and places where He doesn’t.

The Pharisees were rightfully concerned about casual swearing, that is, taking God’s name in vain. So they used “kinnuyim”—surrogate objects—by which to swear. The Pharisees had all sorts of rules about various oaths and how binding they were. To swear by heaven or earth or Jerusalem or their head certainly wasn’t as binding as swearing by God Himself.

Jesus points out,

“Look, it’s God’s heaven, earth, and city. It’s all holy.”

Folks get so concerned about what we do in this room: the vocabulary we use, the movie clips we watch, the jokes we tell. Yet I know they wouldn’t be concerned at all if we were at the park. The park is *God’s park!* And we are His sanctuary.

“To him who is holy, all things are holy,” Paul said.

John Ortberg says, “God is not concerned with your spiritual life. He’s concerned with your life.” There is no place that God is not a witness. It’s like we’re always under oath. And not just us; the *entire world*. God said, “The soul that sins shall surely die.” Every lie merits death. Adam and Eve hid themselves where they hoped God would not see. They became a lie. Maybe we died long ago . . . a dead lie.

So here’s another problem with our oaths: How can they be true? “I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” Let’s be honest. That’s got to be a lie! Does anybody know the *whole truth*? Maybe some facts, but truth?

Who’s guilty?

Who’s innocent?

What’s good?

What’s evil?

What’s really going on?

Jesus said to some Jews, “You are of your father the devil. He has nothing to do with truth, for there is no truth in him.” Well, the devil can certainly recite facts, which we’d call true.

“Eve, your eyes will be opened . . .”

“Jesus, the Scriptures do say . . .”

He can be accurate with facts, yet he doesn’t speak a bit of truth. What is truth? What *is* truth? If you define it, how do you know your definition is true? Modernists say truth is what can be verified scientifically. How do they know that statement is true? It can’t be verified scientifically.

Truth is something you have faith in or don't have faith in.

Truth is not like fruit hanging on a tree that you can pick and verify. It's not like facts you can master.

Truth is a man hanging on a tree, crucified, who picks you and verifies you . . . masters you.

Truth tells *you* before *you* tell *truth*.

You can't define truth; truth defines you. Truth reveals Himself to you. Jesus said, "I AM . . . the truth." John tells us He is the Word of God—God's true Word—the Word that is Truth. Paul writes, "In Christ all things hold together." Jesus, the Truth, is like the fabric of reality. So when we tell a lie, it's like cutting ourselves off from reality and life, and choosing death, insanity, and Hell . . . utterly alone.

Someone said, "The chief punishment of the liar is not so much that he is no longer believed but that he can no longer believe." Truth can only be known by belief, that is, faith. When we lie, we deny Truth. We say, "I don't know Him." We deny Jesus. And we imprison ourselves in death and Hell.

C. S. Lewis said, "The door to Hell is locked from the inside." But praise God that the Truth Himself died and descended into Hell for the love of you!

"Speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." I think the closest you could ever get to doing that would be to whisper a name: "Jesus . . . Jesus . . ." Is that a swear word?

Well, there are assertive oaths and promissory oaths. Assertive oaths assert what is true; promissory oaths assert what *will be*

true. Scouting is great . . . don't misunderstand . . . but I must confess: I broke the Scout Oath the moment I took it (because I swore not to swear), and every day since then. Honestly, has there ever been a day when I "did my best to do my duty to God, and helped other people at *all times*"?

Have any of you ever fulfilled the Scout Oath? *Liars!*

You know, we can argue whether our promises and vows are oaths, but they are at least lies. "I vow to be your loving and faithful husband as long as we both shall live." And Jesus just said, "He who looks upon a woman to lust has committed adultery in his heart." Well, then, I broke that vow pretty quick.

When we just say "yes" or "no," it's assumed that we're saying we *intend* it to be true. When we promise and vow, we're saying, "It will be true, and I will make it true."

How could we be so stupid to promise anything? Our promises must be lies, for we don't know the future . . . we can't make one hair black or white. And why would we make a promise to God? He's eternal. He already knows the future and every sin you'll ever commit.

"God, I vow never to touch alcohol again!"

Why are you telling *Him*?

Are you trying to con Him? convince Him?

That's insanity!

I used to sing [singing] . . . "I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus . . . Though none go with me, still I will follow, Though none go with me, still I will follow . . ." And I love this song: "Jesus, lover of my soul . . . Jesus, I will never let you go . . ." Often I don't sing that last line, because

every time I sin, every time I doubt, every time I get anxious, I let Him go, I stop following.

So will I make it better by lying in worship?  
I can't promise anything;  
I can't predict the future.

James writes, "Come on now, don't say, 'I'm gonna do such and such tomorrow.' You don't know. You ought to say, 'If the Lord wills . . .'" Then later, quoting Jesus in Matthew, he writes, "Above all, don't swear by heaven or earth or any oath. Let your 'yes' be 'yes' and your 'no' be 'no.'" Why? "That you may not fall under condemnation." Now I think we're getting closer to the camel . . .

You know, when we make promises and swear oaths, we write law for ourselves. ". . . regulations, 'Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch' . . . according to human precepts and doctrines? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh" (Colossians 2:21-23).

When we vow, we make law and try to live by that law in our own energy—the flesh. We make vows, they fail, and we feel condemned. So we make bigger vows and fail and feel more condemned. Then, perhaps, we fail more in despair and make bigger vows, which are bigger lies.

You see, we're becoming addicted—enslaved—  
to sin, flesh, lies, Hell, and demons.

Did you know the word "exorcist" comes from the Greek "exhorkistes"—"out of oaths"? Satan is the accuser, and he enslaves us through oaths, laws, and broken laws.

Some say Alcoholics Anonymous is basically the only successful program in treating alcoholics. It's not really a *program* but a *philosophy*, and the philosophy comes from Jesus. When it truly works, addicts surrender to Jesus.

In AA you don't make vows and oaths and promises for the future. You make *confessions . . . now*.

You don't vow, "I'll never touch alcohol again": a law that brings condemnation.

You confess, "I'm a powerless alcoholic *now*, and I need help."

You confess, "I'm poor in spirit, I mourn, I'm meek, I hunger for righteousness."

You realize the beatitudes (at the start of this chapter) are all about a person's heart *now*.

Jesus meets us *now*. Eternity touches time *now*. *Now* is the day of salvation. We confess our *now*, and *Jesus* makes a promise for the future . . .

"Yours is the kingdom of heaven."

"You will be comforted."

"You will inherit the earth."

Jesus is our promise for the future.

I couldn't think of any places in all the New Testament where anyone (other than Jesus) took oaths or made promises in any real, positive way. But they made them all over the Old Testament (even though they continually broke them).

I read through Matthew . . .

In chapter 8 these guys vow, “Jesus, we will follow you wherever you go.” Jesus says, “Foxes have holes, birds have nests, but the Son of man has no place to lay his head,” and we never hear from those guys again.

In chapter 14 Herod makes an oath, and it traps him into killing John the Baptist.

In chapter 17 on the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter says he’ll build shelters for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus. And God basically tells him, “Shut up! Listen!”

In chapter 26 Jesus breaks bread saying, “This is my body.” He takes the cup saying, “This is the new covenant in my blood.” And just after that He says, “This night you will all fall away.” Peter declared (like an oath): “Though they all fall away, I will never fall away!” “Jesus, lover of my soul . . . Jesus, I will never let you go.” “I have decided to follow Jesus . . . Though none go with me, still I will follow.” And then they all pledged the same thing.

Churches get nervous about guarding the Lord’s table, so they have people take oaths and make pledges before they come. (Paul didn’t guard the *table*; he guarded *people from* the table.) The only pledges the disciples made near the Lord’s table that first night were all *lies* . . . and Jesus knew it! But He still said, “Take and eat . . . take and drink.”

Later that night Satan “sifted Peter like wheat.” Peter denied Jesus three times. The second time he denied Him with an oath; the third time he began to invoke a curse and to swear, “I don’t know the man.” Immediately the cock crowed, and Peter remembered Jesus’ words and went out and wept bitterly (that much more bitterly for all the oaths).

Maybe we shouldn't make promises and vows and oaths at the Lord's table before the blood of the covenant.

Now, if you're paying attention, you ought to be saying, "Hey, wait a minute. If you form a covenant, don't you swear an oath?" Yeah. In the old covenant of law, God promised to bless, and the people promised to obey. It was a covenant between God and humanity. Both swore.

But there is an older and deeper covenant . . . an eternal covenant. In Genesis 15 God promises to bless Abraham and his seed. Abraham watches as smoke and fire pass through the pieces of slaughtered animals. But Abraham says nothing. God is making a covenant with Himself. He recites an oath to bless the seed of Abraham.

At the Lord's table Jesus, the seed of Abraham, makes the New Covenant—the Eternal Covenant. On His cross Jesus redeems us from the curse of the law (the Old Covenant). He pays for every broken oath, and He pays for Hell. And on the cross Jesus ratifies the New Covenant—Eternal Covenant. God made a covenant, and He's keeping both sides.

Jesus is our Priest forever, uniting us to God.

Hebrews 7:21:

"The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'Thou art a priest for ever.'" This makes Jesus the surety of a better covenant.

- Jesus is the smoke and fire that walks the covenant.
- Jesus is the Lamb that was slain to ransom us from the Old Covenant.

- Jesus is also the Lamb that is slain from the foundation of the world to ratify the Eternal Covenant.
- Jesus is the oath of God, promising to bless the children of Abraham. “All the promises of God find their ‘yes’ in Jesus.”
- Jesus is the Word of God, and God swears . . . God swears with Word.

Is Jesus a swear word?

Yes!

Jesus is *God’s Swear Word*.

Look! God is swearing: “I love you, I love you, I love you . . . every where, every when, every how.”

This is the question: Will you believe God’s Oath? Or will you make your own? All your promises—all your oaths—are lies, for all your promises assume that *you* are the answer—the savior. And you are the problem.

But believe the Truth—Jesus—and live.

We are saved by grace, and we are *changed* by grace.

Jesus said, “Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no life in you.” He said, “I AM . . . the way, the truth, and the life.” “Abide in me and I in you. Apart from me you can do nothing.”

It’s not your oaths; it’s not your promises and vows; it’s the Oath of God in you. Ingest Him, believe Him . . . every where, every when, every how.

A couple of months ago Randy Thomas shared his testimony here at the Desert Hope Conference. Randy lived a homosexual lifestyle for years and then came to Christ. Yet even after he confessed Christ, homosexuality seemed to be lord of his life. He believed a lie about his

own sexuality, and he lived a lie. I bet he made promises and pledges, but he failed. He desperately needed help in order to change. He needed the Truth.

He shared that one day in his apartment he prayed, “Jesus, what does it mean that you are Lord?” Immediately he had a vision of the truth—what was really going on. He saw himself and Ron, his first homosexual partner. They were in bed together, and Jesus was standing beside the bed weeping. Randy said he felt such grief that if he felt any more, he’d die.

The Lord spoke:

“This is just a taste of the love I have for you and Ron. And you were so blind you didn’t even know. I have seen every single sexual act you have done with every person, and I loved you so much. I loved you so much that I wanted you to know me. It hurt me, the heart of God, to know that you couldn’t hear me.”

It was then that Randy saw Jesus. It was then he saw the Truth. God loved him every where, every when, every how. I doubt he made any vows. (He said he didn’t even know what straight people did.) He just knew he could trust God. That is, he believed the Truth. The love of God descended into his hell. He was set free; he was changed. That was ten years ago.

The cock crowed, and all Peter’s vows were broken. (All other oaths dissolve in the presence of the One Oath.) He wept bitterly. A few days later the resurrected Jesus (with nail prints in His hands and feet) appeared to Peter at breakfast on the shore of Galilee and asked three times, “Do you love me?”

He didn't say, "Peter, will you do better? Will you try harder? Promise you won't do that again." He asked, "Do you love me?" — *now*. Then . . . "Feed my sheep."

As far as we know, Peter made no more oaths, but he went on to be the Rock—the foundation of the Church. He followed Jesus and wouldn't let Him go. "Though none go with him, still he followed." He followed Jesus all the way to a cross outside Rome where he was crucified upside down.

Stop making oaths. Believe God's Oath.

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On the night Jesus—the Truth—was betrayed, He took bread and He broke it saying, "This is my body broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way He took the cup and said, "This is the cup of the New Covenant in my blood, shed for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it, all of you, in remembrance of me."

As you come to the table, stop speaking, stop singing . . . don't say a thing, don't intend a thing, don't promise a thing . . . above all, don't make any oaths. See Him, body broken, blood shed. He loves you *right now* as you are, even in Hell.

And if you feel like making oaths, turn your oaths into prayers. Not, "Jesus, I'll be good," but "Jesus, please be good in me."

"His oath, His covenant, His blood,  
Support me in the whelming flood.  
When all around my soul gives way,  
He then is all my hope and stay.  
On Christ the solid rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand."

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How deep is the love of Jesus? I can't put words on it. Before there was space and time, God thought of me and He thought of you, and He swore an oath from the foundation of the world: "I love Peter. I love my children." Then He said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And He began to make man in His own image and tell him His love story.

Then at one point, about 2000 years ago, He revealed The Oath. He sent The Oath. The more I believe The Oath, the more I walk in The Truth, and the oaths that I make are dissolved by my faith in The Oath (what is true). I walk in The Truth, I'm made in His image, and He will not let me go.

"Father, I need to confess to you that in the deep, deep places in my heart I really have trouble believing you're *that* good and *that* loving. That's the problem, isn't it? I might think it was lust or meanness, but those things are a manifestation of a deeper truth: that I don't believe The Truth.

"So, Lord, I believe. Thank you for helping my unbelief. You are that good."

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I still sing that song, "Jesus, Lover of my Soul." But I just change the words. I sing [singing]:

Jesus, lover of my soul  
Jesus, *you will never let me go . . .*

I'm trusting His Oath more than mine. Put your faith in God's Word, not your own. Amen.

Further Reading

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and get gain"; whereas you do not know about tomorrow. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and we shall do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. . . . But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes be yes and your no be no, that you may not fall under condemnation. Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray.

James 4:13-16, 5:12-13a

The good intention, the "Yes," taken in vain, the unfulfilled promise leaves a residue of despair, of dejection. Beware! Good intention can very soon flare up again in more passionate declarations of intention, but only to leave behind even greater desperation. As an alcoholic constantly requires stronger and stronger drink, so the one who has fallen under the spell of good intentions and smooth-sounding declaration constantly requires more and more good intentions. And so he keeps himself from seeing that he is walking backwards. We do not praise the son who said "No," but we need to learn from the gospel how dangerous it is to say, "Lord, I will." [Matthew 21:28-31]

Soren Kierkegaard

Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night; for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." Peter declared to him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." Jesus said to him, "Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you." And so said all the disciples. . . . Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a maid came up to him, and said, "You also were with Jesus the Galilean." But he denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean." And when he went out to the porch, another maid saw him, and she said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus of Nazareth." And again he denied it with an oath, "I do not know the man." After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Certainly you are also one of them, for your accent betrays you." Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man." And immediately the cock crowed. And Peter remembered the saying of

Jesus, "Before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75

For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. . . . And it was not without an oath. Those who formerly became priests took their office without an oath, but this one was addressed with an oath, "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'Thou art a priest for ever.'" This makes Jesus the surety of a better covenant.

Hebrews 6:13-20, 7:20-22

Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

Luke 1:67-75

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why we utter the Amen through him, to the glory of God. But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has commissioned us; he has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

II Corinthians 1:20-22

His oath, His covenant, His blood support me in the whelming flood. When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay. On Christ the

Solid Rock I stand – all other ground is sinking sand.

Edward Mote

In this question of truthfulness, what matters first and last is that a man's whole condition should be exposed, his whole evil laid bare in the sight of God. But sinful men do not like this sort of truthfulness, and they resist it with all their might. That is why they persecute it and crucify it. It is only because we follow Jesus that we can be genuinely truthful, for then He reveals to us our sin upon the cross. The cross is God's truth about us, and therefore it is the only power which can make us truthful. When we know the cross we are no longer afraid of the truth. We need no more oaths to confirm the truth of our utterances, for we live in the absolute truth of God.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. . . . He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

John 6:53-56, 15:5b

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

Revelation 10:5-7

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