

Matthew 5:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

Analysis

Simple yes or no should suffice for honest people. Anything beyond this 'cometh of evil'—either from personal dishonesty requiring elaborate assurances, or from living in an evil world where people don't trust simple truth. Christians should be so consistently truthful that their simple word is trusted completely.

Historical Context

James 5:12 reinforces this teaching. Early Christians were known for honesty and refusing oaths, sometimes suffering legal consequences. Their refusal to swear by Caesar or pagan gods marked them as radically committed to truth and singular loyalty to Christ.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Is your reputation for truthfulness such that your simple 'yes' or 'no' is completely trusted?

2. How can Christians rebuild cultural trust in an age of widespread dishonesty and spin?

Interlinear Text

ἔστω	δὲ	ὁ	λόγος	ὑμῶν	ναί	ναί	οὐ·	οὐ·	τὸ	δὲ
be	But	G3588	communication	your	Yea	Yea	Nay	Nay	G3588	But
G2077	G1161		G3056	G5216	G3483	G3483	G3756	G3756		G1161
περισσὸν	τούτων	ἐκ	τοῦ	πονηροῦ	ἐστίν					
whatsoever is more	than these	of	G3588	evil	cometh					
G4053	G5130	G1537		G4190	G2076					

Additional Cross-References

James 5:12 (Parallel theme): But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

Colossians 4:6 (Parallel theme): Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Colossians 3:9 (Parallel theme): Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

John 8:44 (Evil): Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Ephesians 4:25 (Parallel theme): Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

2 Thessalonians 3:3 (Evil): But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

Matthew 13:19 (Evil): When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

Matthew 13:38 (Evil): The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

1 John 5:18 (Evil): We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.

Matthew 6:13 (Evil): And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

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