

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes*

**Sermon notes for September 9-10, 2000**

**Dale Whitehead**

**"Straight Talk"**

**James 5:12**

### The Restriction

In this context to swear does not mean (as it often does in English) to use illicit speech, dirty talk, filthy jokes, or four-letter words, the type of unwholesome non edifying speech the apostle Paul forbids in Ephesians 4:29.

To take an oath was to attest that what one said was true, to call God to witness to that, and to invoke His punishment if one's word was violated.

Examples of godly men who took oaths (Genesis 21:24-31, 26:26-31; Joshua 2:12-30; 2 Corinthians 11:31).

There are occasions in the Old Testament when God required people to take an oath (Exodus 22:10-11; Numbers 5:19-22, 6:2-21).

God Himself has sworn oaths (Hebrews 6:13-17).

Jame's command "do not swear" must not be viewed as a blanket prohibition of all oath taking. Oaths were permitted on serious occasions, but only in the name of God.

### The Instruction

People of integrity have no need to swear elaborate oaths to convince others of their truthfulness, nor would they swear falsely to deceive people.

Believers are to be known as people who keep their word. When they have such integrity their simple yes and no will suffice.

### The Motivation

The judgment James has in mind here is not God's chastening of believers. "Judgment" (KRISIS) is never used in the New Testament to refer to believers chastening. It is speaking of eternal judgment.