



Sermon on the Mount  
**RAISE THE BAR**

**Life Groups Discussion Guide**  
February 9, 2020

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**KEEP YOUR WORD** Matthew 5:33–37

**CONNECT**

1. Have you ever made a vow to God and/or others? How did this go? Were you able to keep the vow? If not, why? What were the implications of that?

**CELEBRATE**

2. Read Exodus 20:7 & Leviticus 19:12. What is being said about the dignity of God's name? What is the significance of not using His name inappropriately, particularly as it relates to truth telling?
3. In Matthew 5:33–37, Jesus tells us to not "take an oath at all." And yet, we see many places in the Bible where people and God do indeed take oaths. See Genesis 9:16, Genesis 15:7–21 & 1 Thessalonians 2:10. How do we reconcile this apparent contradiction? See Deuteronomy 23:21–22 for further insight.
4. It is not necessarily the formula that is wrong (rainbows, sacrifices, a spoken vow), but the manipulation or abuse of the formula that is problematic. What are ways, today, that we "cross our fingers behind our backs"?
5. Often, we hear about so called "white lies," suggesting that lying can at times not be a big deal. But how might we square that with Jesus' words in Matthew 5:37 about lying coming from "evil"? And James' comments in James 5:12 about consequences? Remember that the Apostle Paul lumps lying in with the seemingly dramatic sins like sexual immorality and idolatry (Colossians 3:5–9). How does this reframe your view of truth telling?

**CONTRIBUTE**

6. What would the community around us think about New Hope Church if its members were never deceitful and always told the truth in every realm (personally, social media)? In what ways might this elevate the reputation of Jesus Christ?
7. If you are with your Life Group or family right now, look around and ask yourself if you have lied to anyone in front of you. Take this time to come clean. See Matthew 5:22–25 for insight on how to do that. Now, how about with folks beyond your family or Life Group? In the public square, work place, school?
8. Keeping question 6 in mind, how does your interaction with others reflect the gospel and Christ's vision and values as kingdom citizens, particularly around the matter of truth telling? See Ephesians 4:25 & Colossians 3:9 for wisdom on engaging neighbors.