

## Sermon Devotionals James 5:12

1. Make a list of all that James has taught about the tongue/speech from 1:26, 2:12, 3:2-11, 4:11, and 5:12. If you have not done so before, mark these in a distinctive way. Since James has dealt with this topic in all five chapters, how strong is the connection between what we believe and what comes out of our mouths?
2. Highlight the exhortation in v.12. Swearing in this case is *omniyo*-to promise, affirm or threaten by an oath (Strong's). This is not the word used in Eph.4:29-*sapros* which means rotten or filthy. In the culture of that day, similar to today, if you wanted to assure someone that you were not lying, you swore by something—and in v. 12 there is a list. Think about the times either you, or someone you were talking with, used oaths. Was the truth being told in most of those cases?
3. Oaths are reserved for serious events—officials take oaths of office, witnesses take oaths in court to tell the truth, couples take oaths in marriage. Look up the following and note who and why oaths(vows) were taken: Gen. 24:2,3; 26:26-31, 31:44-50 2Samuel 19:23 2Cor.11:31 Deut. 6:13 Numbers 30:2. What do you learn ?
4. Look up the following: Acts 2:20,23 Hebrews 6:13 2Cor.1:23 Matt.26:63-4 Psalm 16:10 Isaiah 49:15-18. Note who makes the oath and the circumstances. ( note: All through the Old Testament when the Lord uses the phrase “As I live-such and such will happen..”, He is swearing by His Name) What is the difference between the oaths we have noted in Scripture and those James is prohibiting?
5. Have you heard or used the phrase “I swear to God” or other such phrases in just everyday conversation? Does living faith speak in this way as a habit of life?

**While the golden rule is more admired than practised by ordinary men, the Christian should always do unto others as he would that they should do unto him. He should be one whose word is his bond, and who, having once pledged his word, sweareth to his own hurt, but changeth not. There ought to be an essential difference between the Christian and the best moralist, by reason of the higher standard which the gospel inculcates, and the Saviour has exemplified. Certainly, the highest point to which the best unconverted man can go might well be looked upon as a level below which the converted man will never venture to descend. C.H.Spurgeon**