

**Bible Devotions: Lock Stock & Barrel
Devotional Reading for Outdoorsmen
(Old Testament)**

Numbers 30:2

A Man of Your Word

If a man makes a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.

Other than loving Jesus and being faithful to your wife, I can't think of a higher quality of character for a man than to be true to his word. In fact, loving Jesus and being faithful to your wife have everything to do with being a man of your word.

It doesn't matter if you're a man of the outdoors, indoors, rural, urban, or inner city. Your word is what dresses your integrity. And you start putting these clothes on as a little boy.

So boys, listen up. There are things you MUST do to become the man God wants you to be, a man of your word. The biggest one I can think of is always telling the truth. That's hard to do when you think that it will hurt people or embarrass you. But telling the truth must always be done. Boys, you have a full life ahead of you. This WILL matter as you get older. Stop lying. Always tell the truth.

Another thing you must do is honor your parents. You must be determined to love and respect and obey them. If you disagree with a parent, know that your arguing is not honorable. It is wrong for Christian boys to be known as disputers or rebels. Be known as a boy growing into a man of your word. Kind words. Loving words. Honest words. Believable words. Encouraging words. Godly words. Words that will make your parents proud of you. Honor them.

This doesn't change when you become a man. Even grown men must choose to either tell the truth or lie; to be either honorable or dishonorable.

Men, every little boy in your life, whether he is family or not, is watching you and listening to you. Their integrity, self-esteem, and character are either threatened or strengthened by the things you say and do. No man is perfect, so we should want the boys in our lives to turn out better than us. Let's be honest and honorable men among boys who will one day take our places. In I Corinthians 16:13, Paul encouraged us this way: *Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love.*

So where does this leave us as we watch and stand, and show courage and strength? The Scripture in Numbers 30:2 points us in the right direction.

In Old Testament Hebrew culture, an oath was a promise made between two or more people. An oath was a "horizontal" relationship between people. A vow, on the other hand, was a promise made by a person to God. This was a "vertical" relationship (Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, 1998). For the Israelite practicing his faith, oaths and vows were made under extreme conditions.

Jesus' death on the cross was both an oath and a vow. His outstretched arms in horizontal position was His word that He would *sanctify and cleanse* people because He loves them so much (Ephesians 5:26). His upright body in vertical position was His word to the Heavenly Father that He *had finished the work* which the Father sent Him to do (John 17:4). That included dying for sins that were not His own. That included victory over death and the grave, things also which were not His own. In all ways He held true to His word, a Word that IS His own.

Jesus is our example of being a man of your word. He is our example of oath-giving and vow-taking. Men and boys, let the words which come from your mouth honor others and please the Father. Just like Jesus.

Bible Devotions: Hook Line & Sinker (study guide)

Numbers 30:2

A Man of Your Word

HOOK

1. In what outdoor sport are you most tempted to "stretch the truth?" Tell the truth!

2. What qualities would you list in describing a gun that is in average, used condition? A car?

3. Give a brief account of your most embarrassing sporting mishap. Tell the truth!

LINE

Always tell the truth. This WILL matter as boys grow into men.

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What is the most important agreement you have with another person(s)? How is Jesus honored in this oath?

What promise(s) have you made to God? How do you please Him in fulfilling your vow(s)?

SINKER

Take a few minutes to write your thoughts on this devotional. Reflect on your own experiences.

Key words: your word honesty honor
