



WCF Prayer:

Chapter 22 - Of Lawful Oaths And Vows

Lord God Almighty,

We praise you for the freedom we have in worship, as you direct us to the elements to be included in that worship. Lord we recognise that these elements of worship may on occasions include articulating our worship in oaths and vows.

Lord, help us understand that such an oath is a serious matter, never to be taken lightly, for you hold us accountable for these commitments. We praise you that these acts become a significant element of religious worship because we invoke your name in the matters being testified to. In doing this Living God, we recognize your omnipresence, your omniscience, and your absolute justice and sovereignty.

Lord, let us never direct such oaths toward any other so-called god or power. Grant us the clarity of mind to never permit such misplaced worship. We recognize that to do so would be a sin, suggesting that another person or thing is equal to you. Forgive us even the thought of such an action.

Because we take these oaths in your great and holy Name, may we do so with fear and reverence. Prevent us, Lord, from swearing lightly or rashly. Guard us from swearing allegiance to anything sinful, that which is contrary to your Word. Instead, lead us, we pray, to recognize the necessity of oaths on those weighty matters which are warranted by your Word in both the Old and New Testaments, or required of us by lawful external authorities.

In our promises before you, help us never to take an oath unless we are fully persuaded that it is true, good, and just. May we be certain that what we vow we have the ability to perform and that we are truly committed to its performance. Lord, forgive us when we withhold ourselves from true and just oaths imposed by lawful authority.

Steer us, Lord, from playing "games"—audible or mental—with the words of our oaths. Father, help us to make our commitments true to the plain and common meaning of the words we use.

We know that no oath can bind us to sin, and we cannot be obligated by a sinful vow. We also recognize that once a legitimate oath is taken, we are bound to perform it even when it brings us pain. And Lord, we also

acknowledge that these oaths remain binding even when made to those who do not believe in you, or to ungodly institutions.

Grant us grace to take all vows with care and to perform them with all faithfulness. We commit to taking vows to you alone, doing so voluntarily out of faith, duty, and thankfulness for the mercy we have received in Christ.

Finally, Lord, remind us that our vows must never commit us to anything forbidden in your Word, or that which will hinder us from doing what you have commanded. Keep us from oaths that are outside our power to perform or for which we have no assurance of your help. Aid us in resisting vows which have the sound of spiritual value, as though by committing to do something outside your revealed will, we will gain merit. Lord we recognise this practice can become a sinful snare. Forgive us when we fall into this trap.

Be glorified in the lawful oaths and vows we take. For the sake of Jesus our Saviour in whose Name we pray,

Amen.