



Empowering People to Change the World

Jesus, the Law and Wholehearted Living
Matthew 5:17-20

Teacher: Steve Holt

In the first part of the Sermon, Jesus instructs us on the values of Kingdom Living. Values that, if followed, can make us the most blessed, the most happy people on the face of the earth.

- He instructs us that as we embody the Kingdom lifestyle, the world will push back and there will be persecution.
- He says that we will be like salt and light to the culture.

In our passage today, we are making a profound shift in the Sermon on the Mount. From this point, Jesus will take on the Pharisees at a heart level they have never heard before.

- In this new section, Jesus is setting us up for a contrast between the True Scriptures, the True Bible or what we call the Old Testament, the first 39 books of the Bible, and the Pharisaic Tradition or, what Jesus calls the Traditions of Man, what the Scribes and Pharisees had created through oral tradition to be the interpretation of the Law of Moses.
- He did not agree with their oral traditions. According to Rabbinic Judaism, the oral law was just as binding as the first 5 books of the Old Testament, in the written law.
- This was a law that the Rabbi's had put together to define the written law, passed down from generation to generation and then put into written form following the destruction of the second temple. So they had developed these new laws, called traditions that were held to be equal with the written scriptures.
- Jesus is setting us up to make this contrast.
 - Look at verse 21, "you have heard it said..." The Pharisees Interpretative Law added to Scripture in their teaching.
 - Vss 27, 33, 38, 43 and so on

- But first He is explaining to us that every part of the Bible can be trusted, even down to the most minute detail, even the “jot” and “tittle”—which I will explain later.

There is no other passage in all of the Bible more powerful in affirming by Jesus that the Bible is God’s Word and it can be trusted! Completely trusted. This is the ringing affirmation of the authority of God’s Word.

- We reference the Bible because Jesus referenced the Bible.
- We believe the Bible is of vital importance because Jesus Christ believed the Bible was of vital importance.
- We affirm the authority of the Old Testament because Christ affirmed it.
- I like to say that the “Old Testament concealed, New Testament revealed” in Christ.
 - This means that the Law, the first 5 books of the Old Testament, written by Moses conceals Jesus, prepares us for the completion of the Law through Jesus.
 - The New Testament reveals Jesus to us. Jesus is saying that He is the fulfillment of the Law.
- Jesus said ⁴⁶***“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”*** (John 5: 46-47)
- How can you believe in Jesus Christ without believing in His Word?
- This is one of the most powerful passages in the Bible in reference to the “doctrine of Inspiration.”
 - We believe that the Bible is inerrant and infallible.
 - Meaning that the Bible does not contain error in the original manuscripts.

Our world and our culture, hates God's Word!

Richard Dawkins, the Billy Graham of Atheism, wrote a book, *The God Delusion*.

“To be fair, much of the bible is not systematically evil, but just plain weird. As you would expect from a cobbled together anthology of disjointed documents composed, revised, translated, distorted, and improved by hundreds of anonymous authors, editors, and copyist, unknown to us and unknown to others over nine centuries”

That is Richard Dawkins take on God's Word

- It is cobbled together, disjointed, distorted.
- Is the bible just confusing, cobbled together, mythological beliefs?

He is basically saying you cannot trust this book. But is that accurate?

Let me give you some Bible facts:

- 66 books given to us in the Old and New Testament.
- 39 in the Old and 27 in the New.
- One book.
- Moses wrote the first 5 books of the Bible.
- Paul wrote 14 books, over half of the New Testament.
- Written over a period of over 1500 years.
- The Bible was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- Over 40 different authors from all walks of life.
- Shepherds, farmers, kings, prophets, physicians, priests, philosophers.
- In spite of all these different authors the bible is amazingly cohesive and unified.
- The Bible was written in 3 languages: Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic.
- There are 23,145 verses in the Old Testament.
- There are 7,957 verse in the New Testament.
- The perfect unity of all these verses is proof alone that there was one Author of them all—The Author was God.
- There are no contradictions.

- The Bible has been translated into 2,018 languages with countless partial translations and audio works for unwritten languages.
- In comparison, Shakespeare, many consider the greatest English writer of all time, has only been translated into 50 languages.
- The Bible reveals the mystery of God's plan.
- The Bible reveals the plan of salvation.
- It is the revelation of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus makes it clear that all of scripture is the fulfillment of Him.

And that is the point of our passage

Matthew 5:17

17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

- Jesus is explaining the purpose of His coming.
 - In the first part he tells us what he did not come to do, and in the second part, what He did come to do.
- 1. I did not come to destroy the Law and the prophets.** He is not against the Law of Moses or any of the Prophets—which was confusing to the Pharisees because of the things that He is doing that appears to them to be the opposite of what they were teaching.
 - The Pharisees were saying that Jesus was breaking the Mosaic Law.
 - They said that because He healed on the sabbath, He was dishonoring the Law.
 - They said He was blaspheming the Law because He claimed to be the Son of God.
 - Jesus is teaching a view of the Kingdom of God, in its motives and purposes that actually line up with the intent and heart of the Old Testament scriptures.
 - Jesus is about to contrast the true purpose of the Bible, that it must be lived from the inside out.

- The Old Testament was supposed to be personal, intimate and wholehearted revelation of a personal intimate God.
- Not ceremonial or liturgical, based on outward works but on a heart love for God.
- Not dead religion but a vital dynamic personal heart passionate relationship with God.

2. I came to fulfill the Law and Prophets

- What does fulfill mean? Some say it means the “accomplishment of the law” and that it speaks of His life, death and resurrection.
- Fulfill is the word, “Playaroh”—to fill with content, to fill with meaning.
 - Matthew 13:48 to fill up a net.
 - To complete, the filling.
 - I believe this is the primary meaning.
 - A deeper meaning.
 - He gives meaning, He fills up the purpose of the Law.
- Jesus is teaching that He is the fulfillment of the Law, that the Law will not save you but rather than the Law is pointing us to Himself.
 - The ancient writer and Christian, Seophilek, said, “the Lord Jesus filled up Moses and the prophets as a painter fills the sketch of a picture he has made.”
 - Jesus fills out the meaning of Genesis 3:15, fulfiller in Genesis 22 and Genesis 49, the Passover in Lamb Isaiah 55.
 - And finally He is the completion, the fulfillment of the Law through being the substitutionary atonement of our all our sins at Calvary.
- Now listen, if there is one thing about the Lord Jesus Christ that can be said of Him, in contrast to all other religious leaders, it is this: He was always talking about Himself.

- I do not think we can find any other religious leader who talks so much about himself.
 - If we were talking about any other person we would say he was vain, egotistical and a narcissists.
 - Jesus is always talking about himself.
 - Even the world does not criticize Jesus for it, for down deep inside they know He is right to do it.
- Jesus is saying that the Law was pointing to Him and found its completion in Him—He is making a claim of sinless perfection. To advance the revelation of God found completely and perfectly in Him.
 - Jesus will say “I am the way and the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father but through Me.”

Matthew 5:18

18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

- **DL Moody** said, “the Bible is given to us not just for information but for our transformation.”
- A *jot* was the 10th and smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
- A *tittle* is like an apostrophe.
- *Not pass away*: God’s word is permanent, it is not going to change, even the very smallest part.
- Jesus says later in **Matthew 24:35** “***Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.***”

Isaiah 40:7-8

***The grass withers, the flower fades,
Because the breath of the Lord blows upon it;
Surely the people are grass.***

***8 The grass withers, the flower fades,
But the word of our God stands forever.”***

Psalm 119: 89-90

⁸⁹Forever, O Lord,

Your word is settled in heaven.

⁹⁰Your faithfulness endures to all generations;

You established the earth, and it abides.

Galatians 3:24-25

Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

- The law was to lead us to Christ. God's Law was to keep us safe. We want to do whatever we want, but if we obey the law. it is safe.

Parenting is like that, right? You tell your kids to not do things because you want to keep them safe. The Law has its place to keep us safe. My mom and dad used to tell me...there was a reason for that law. It kept us safe. It was not to destroy.

The Law awakens you to harmful stuff. But you are not able to perform it perfectly.

Adultery, coveting, jealousy, but you cannot do it! you need something.

It becomes the Tutor to lead you to the Savior.

Matthew 5:19

¹⁹ Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

- “break” - Making something void. To release yourself from God's commands. God's commands do not apply to us.
- Jesus is saying this in the spiritual sense. The Jews had 613 commandments—some were considered heavy and light. They had laid that burden on people.

- My greatest responsibility as a pastor, teacher and visionary of The Road is the exegesis of God’s Word to build us into a people who go after God with our whole heart! Wholehearted seekers, worshippers, and warriors!
- **As your Pastor my Greatest Responsibility is to build Wholehearted Disciples of Jesus.**
- **Look at Ps 119:1-2, 9-15,**
- **Mahatma Ghandi: “You Christians look after a document containing enough dynamite to blow all of civilization apart, turn the world upside down, and bring peace to a battle torn planet. But you treat it like its nothing more than a piece of literature.”**
 - In your hands you have the most powerful document ever given to man.
 - And we treat it like it’s Newsweek magazine.
 - We have pastors today that are afraid to teach God’s Word because they are fearful of offended sensitive ears.
 - But you must expect pushback and persecution

Matthew 5:20

²⁰ For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

- Warning to live a genuine authentic life.
- We have been given a New Law—the Law of love!! For God, for ourselves and for our fellow man.
- **Matthew 22:35-40**
35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said to him, ““You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

- All of the Law and Prophets are summed up in this.
- You just cannot live a virtuous enough Christian life,
- you won't find righteousness in attending church,
- giving,
- good works.
- It is only found in loving Christ with all of your heart.