

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Fulfillment of the Law

Matthew 5:17-20

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God has called his people to be holy because He is holy.

There are two extremes to avoid in our pursuit of living a holy life:

- Legalism, which was the key issue in Jesus' day with the scribes and Pharisees.
- License, which is perhaps our greater challenge today. I'll address license later in the message.

I. Christ's Standard

A. Christ's Standard is Beyond Externals

1. When we check off a few externals, pride soon follows.
2. The biggest concern is that when we focus on the externals, we miss the heart of the matter, the internals.

Colossians 2:16–17 (NIV84) ¹⁶ Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.

3. The rest of chapter 5 contains examples of internal core issues such as anger, lust, broken relationships, and broken promises.

B. Christ's Standard is Beyond Our Ability to Keep

1. Many people miss the purpose of the law.
2. Many people miss the punch line of the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:20, **For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.**

Apparently, no one flinched, so Jesus trumped his punch line with Matthew 5:48, **"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."**

The point is that we are sinners in need of a perfect Savior. We need to be completely humbled, to be poor in spirit and meek, thirsting for righteousness.

II. Christ's Fulfillment

A. Christ Fulfilled the Law

Christ was revealed and foreshadowed throughout the Old Testament.

B. Christ Fulfilled Our Redemption

"It is Finished" – Jesus' fulfillment of everything necessary for our redemption.

C. What About Obedience to the Law?

The biblical balance is that the spiritual life is completed by both God and our active engagement. Philippians 2:12-13; John 15:5

1. Discover, or Rediscover the Delight of Devotion
2. Discover, or Rediscover the Delight of Obedience
3. The reason for our obedience

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Conclusion

- Is there an area of your life that you try to control, yet fail to control?
- Has your walk with God felt dry and boring lately? Do you feel like you're just going through the motions with no energy or joy?
- Do you ever feel inadequate, discouraged or fearful in your relationship with Jesus?
- Are there rules that you break or bend and hope God doesn't notice?
- Do you get the "punch line" of the Sermon on the Mount?
- When we say that "Christ has fulfilled your redemption," what does that mean to you?
- Ask God to bring fresh life into your spiritual practices.
- Ask God to bring overflowing joy and excitement into your walk of obedience.
- Ask God to remove your pride and give you a heart that is "poor in spirit."