

“Fulfilling the Law”

Matthew 5v17-20

**Scripture Ref: Matt 22:38-40; Rom 13:8-10; Rom 3:19-22; Gal 3:21-25;
Eph 5:8**

1. Last week we ended on the note of “being the light of the world”

The Light of the World

14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

2. We talked about living in a world that is not friendly to the children of God,

- a. **Where you may be persecuted - or even worse – for your faith –**
- b. **...but just because things might be tough doesn't mean we should just fade away and be secret-agent Christians...**
- c. ***We are to be salt to the world around – letting people see our light – our joy, our peace, our love –***
- d. **these are things that stand out in a world that is getting more rotten and dark every day!**

3. And when it comes to being salt and light – one of the ways we can be salt and light is to fulfill the law!

Jesus Get's to the Heart of the Matter

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

4. Humans are funny sometimes – we want something “new”. I remember reading a book several years ago about Marc Andreessen, the guy who founded Netscape

- a. **He got rich off of finding the “new, new thing”, because he understood people – and their desire for something new!**
- b. **This is especially true today in the Christian space- Christians are looking for the “new new thing” – just look at all the books people buy!**
- c. **Whatever new thing some movie star is doing, we should check it out (a famous daytime talk-show host comes to mind!)**
- d. **Many times the “new thing” is and “old thing” – a human rationalization to move away from the truth of God's word and justify how we want to live.**

5. Jesus is addressing that part of human tendency that says “what do you have new for me” with the following truth –
 - a. “You guys want something new? I don’t have something new, what I have is something *true*”
 - b. God is God – always has been, always will be!
 - c. God never changes – righteousness never changes
 - d. What **DOES** changes is man’s perspective
6. What had happened in Jesus day is that the religious leaders had, over time, turned the law into something it was never meant to be...
 - a. A litmus test for a persons spirituality
 - b. A standard by which to measure one another
 - c. A way to elevate themselves to be above the average person
 - d. The law had been twisted to allow people to do things they wanted to do – like divorce – and ‘get around” God’s word in the process.
7. Jesus comes along and says “I am not bringing you something new to replace the law, I am going to help you see God’s heart regarding the law”
 - a. As I said a few weeks ago – “the best commentary on the law that is available” – because God Himself, in His Son Jesus, will explain it!
8. So Jesus is not *doing away* with the law here – but rather He said He would “*fulfill*” *the law*, He literally did just that:
 - a. He didn’t violate any law (although He disregarded the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees)
 - b. He brought true revelation of the law – an unveiling – of the law as He taught
 - c. Most important – He fulfilled the *promise of the law*, in that He came to free man from the *curse of the law*!
9. When we read the following statement we can see that Jesus held to law in the highest regard:

Jesus View of the Law

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. 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. 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.

10. Now there are some heavy statements here...

- a. ...all the law must be fulfilled
- b. ...break one – you are the least
- c. ...teach and do – you are called great
- d. ...unless you exceed the scribes and Pharisees, you don't get into heaven!

11. Jesus is saying – “You gotta follow the law!” woa! How do we fulfill the law?

Jesus taught...

This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Matt 22:38-40

Paul echoed this teaching...

Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. 9 For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Rom 13:8-10

12. A summary might be said – “if you want to fulfill the law, Love God and love one another – it's that simple!

- a. If you are a Christian and you DON'T – you'll still get into heaven, but you will miss out
 - i. The blessings of peace in this life
 - ii. The reward that God has for you...
- b. If you DO and TEACH – you are walking out the heart of God towards people, and God rewards the faithful!

13. But what about that “exceeding the righteousness of the Pharisees” thing?

- a. These guys were the most “law abiding” citizens in the land – they even tithed on the herbs they picked from their garden!

Rom 3:19-22

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

... ok, so I cannot be justified before God through the law, so how can I exceed the righteousness of the Pharisses?

*But now the **righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, **through faith in Jesus Christ**, to all and on all who believe.*

Gal 3:21-25

*21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! **For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.** 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 **Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.***

14. Summary – there is only one way to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, and that is to have the righteousness of God Himself.

- a. **Are we able? NO! But we receive it through faith in Jesus Christ, we are justified by faith!**
- b. **When you place your faith in Jesus Christ, something happens to you – when God sees you,**
- c. **He does not see your righteousness, He sees the righteousness of His Son Jesus Christ**

15. But does that mean we disregard the law, and live like we want to, because “God only sees Jesus Righteousness?”

- a. **NO! That cannot be the case – because if we are truly justified by faith, and are now children of God – then we shall walk as children of the light**

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

Eph 5:8

16. And walking as children of the light is made known by our relationships with those around us... (remember, love God, love others!)

Fulfilling the law

17. When we simple seek to live according to what Jesus teaches, we are living out the law of love.

- a. **In the next few weeks we will be looking at anger, lust, marriage, our enemies – all dealing with how we relate to others.**

- b. And what we want to do is learn God's heart when it comes to relationships with others**
 - c. Because I believe through following Christ in this area, we can live far greater sermons than we would ever preach.**
- 18. Leave you with this – do you believe that Jesus came to fulfill the law?**
- a. Can you say that you have the righteousness of Christ, through faith in Him?**

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