

Flipped: The Upside Down Kingdom (The Law: Fulfilling & Failing)

Andy Deane · 9/10/2023 · Matthew 5:17-20

Jesus teaches us that the Kingdom of God is to be one that's overflowing with a righteousness that is of a totally different kind than the so-called "righteousness" of Pharisees. What's a believers relationship with the Law?

Matthew 5:17-20, 17 *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Therefore, anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 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.*

Jesus helps connect the dots between Christ followers today and the Old Testament Law in four ways:

JESUS CLARIFIES: Matthew 5:17

1. He clarifies our wrong thinking about Him: *Do not think that I have come to*
 - Colossians 2:9, *For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form*
 - Hebrews 1:3, *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being...*
2. He clarifies how we view Scripture: *not come to abolish / but to fulfill*
 - Jesus did not come to rip up the Old Testament, but to free it from the way some wrongly interpreted it.
 - There are three helpful categories that clarify the O.T. Law for believers:
 1. Moral Laws: The 10 commandments, what God loves or hates, laws repeated in the N.T., etc.
(God's morals never change, so we still obey these)
 2. Civil Laws: Customs of the nation of Israel, dietary, punishments, boundaries, etc.
(God's purpose & plan for the nation of Israel at that time is different than for us today, so we do not follow these, but we can still learn biblical principles from them)
 3. Ceremonial Laws: temple worships, feasts, washing, etc.
(We also do not follow these for the same reasons given for Civil Laws)

JESUS ASSURES: Matthew 5:18

1. He assures us with His authority: *truly I tell you*
2. He assures us that it's all important: *the smallest letter*
3. He assures us that Scripture is reliable: *until everything is accomplished*
Helpful book: *God-Breathed: The Undeniable Power and Reliability of Scripture* by Josh McDowell

JESUS WARNS: Matthew 5:19

1. He warns not to ignore Scripture we don't like: *sets aside one of the least*
2. He warns against only reading Scripture: *practices and teaches*

Wait, aren't Christ followers done with the law?

- Yes, but only partly (concerning righteousness)!
- Romans 10:4, *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*
- The Law shows our inability and points us to Jesus to be justified, but the law is still the perfect expression of God's character. After we come to Jesus, He sends us back to the law to learn the heart of God for how we should live our new lives.

Do you want to throw off the shackles of lust, pride, fear, envy, greed, gossip, or whatever sin has you?

Read God's Word! Hide it in your heart. Love it. Pray it. Rejoice in it. Believe it. Sing it. Read the Bible to your kids before bed. Write a Bible verse out and put it on your bathroom mirror. Listen to it in your car. Study it diligently. There is power in it. Throw yourself into simple obedience of it. What are you scared of losing? Nothing God would take from you in obedience to his Word will do you harm—only good. Spending time with Jesus transforms us!

JESUS SHOCKS: Matthew 5:20

1. Jesus scares us into realizing we aren't good enough: *unless your righteousness surpasses*
2. He rattles us, to reveal our broken foundation and then offers us another way, Himself: John 14:6

If you put your trust in Jesus today (or recently), text "JOURNEY" to (951)425-4425 so we can support you!