

THE KING'S SERMON
On Earth As It Is Heaven
Matthew 5:17-20
Jesus fulfills and upholds the Scriptures

Big Idea: Jesus fulfills the Scripture and upholds the supremacy of Scripture as God's perfect, eternal, and authoritative Word.

I. Jesus reveals the focus of the Scriptures (5:17).

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.

a. How did Jesus "fulfill" the Law and the Prophets?

(1) Jesus fulfilled the law by explaining fully its original intent (5:21-48).

(2) Jesus, the Messiah, came to fulfill all that was written in the Law and the Prophets.

> All the Scriptures bear witness to Jesus, even Moses wrote about Jesus (John 5:39, 46).

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that

bear witness about me. . . . If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me."

> All the Scriptures are about Jesus, even where there is no explicit prediction (Luke 24:27, 44).

27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. **44** Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

> All the promises of God in the Scriptures are fulfilled in Jesus (2 Cor. 1:20).

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

> All the prophecies about the Messiah are fulfilled in Jesus.

- Virgin birth (Matt. 1:22-23)

- Herod kills the children (Matt. 2:17-18)

- Born in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:3-6)

- John the Baptist preparing the way (Matt. 3:3)

- Came out of Egypt (Matt. 2:14-15)

- Jesus begins His ministry (Matt. 4:12-16)

b. How do we apply the Old Testament to our lives?

(1) Place the text in the Bible's unfolding redemptive storyline according to its covenantal location.

Creation > Noah > Abraham > Moses > David > Christ

(2) Think through how the text points forward, anticipates, and is fulfilled in Christ.

> We must view all Scripture through the lens of Christ and the NT to determine what is morally binding upon us today.

The OT law is not to be abandoned. Indeed, it must continue to be taught (5:19)—but interpreted and applied in light of its fulfillment by Christ. In other words, it stands no longer as the ultimate standard of conduct for God's people, but must always be viewed through the lenses of Jesus' ministry and teaching.

Douglas Moo

> Although Christians are not "under the law" as a covenant, it still functions for us as Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

c. How has Christ already fulfilled the Law?

- (1) Sacrificial system (Heb. 9:12)
- (2) Priesthood (Heb. 7:23-24)
- (3) The Temple (John 2:19-21; 4:21-23)
- (4) Food laws (Mark 7:18-20)
- (5) Sabbath (Matt. 11:28-30; Heb. 3:7-4:13)

II. Jesus upholds the authority of the Scriptures (v. 18).

18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

- a. Because they are permanent - "Until heaven and earth pass away . . ."
- b. Because they are perfect - "not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished"
 - > Jesus affirms the absolute authority and inspiration of all the Scriptures down to the smallest components of individual words.

Our Lord Jesus here lends His character and His position and His status to the affirmation of the authority of the word. We believe in the authority of the Scripture precisely because our Lord believed in the authority of Scripture.

Ligon Duncan

> It is impossible to take Jesus seriously and not the Scriptures seriously.

Jesus spoke absolute truth and not to consider Scripture to be that absolute truth, because that is precisely what Jesus taught it to be. If Jesus was mistaken or deluded on this point, there would be no reason to accept anything else that He said. At the outset of His ministry, He makes clear that His authority and Scripture's authority are the same; His truth and Scripture's truth are identical and inseparable.

John MacArthur

III. Jesus stresses the priority of the Scriptures (v. 19).

19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

- a. Christians will be judged by their response to God's Word.
- b. Two things are necessary to be great in the kingdom of heaven:
 - (1) Be a disciple - Obey the Word of God!
 - (2) Make Disciples - Teach others to obey the Word of God!

IV. Jesus declares the necessity of the Scriptures (v. 20)

20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

- a. What does Jesus require for entrance into the kingdom?

> The pseudo-righteousness of the Pharisees:

Their righteousness was external (Matt. 23:25), partial (Matt. 23:23) and self-centered (Matt. 23:25).

He would not accept the artificial righteousness of the religious leaders. Their righteousness was only an external masquerade. Their religion was a dead ritual, not a living relationship. It was artificial; it did not reproduce itself in others in a living way. It made them proud, not humble; it led to bondage, not liberty.
Wiersbe, W. W.

> Jesus places a primary emphasis upon the inner character that generates outward conduct.

> In Jesus' kingdom, any outward conformity without an inward commitment is unthinkable!

b. How can we exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees?

(1) Christ perfectly obeyed the law.

> The point of the gospel is that the minute a person embraces Jesus Christ, all that Christ has done is applied to that person. All that He is becomes ours, including His righteousness.

Rom. 3:21

“But now a righteousness from God, apart from the law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.”

(2) Christ fulfills the law in His death.

> In Christ's death we see the demands for holiness. Christ took what we deserve upon Himself. He took our sin and judgment that we might become the righteousness of God.

The Gospel is that Jesus Christ came to earth, lived the life we should have lived and died the death we should have died.

Tim Keller

(3) Christ fulfills the law in us by His grace, the new birth by the Holy Spirit.

> The promised new heart and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit have been given through faith in Christ.

Ezekiel 36:25-28

25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. 28 You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God.