

Matthew 5:17-18

Todd Fletcher [00:00:02] Jesus says this, "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. 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. 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. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Thus reads the words of Lord, you may be seated.

Todd Fletcher [00:00:40] So as we come to this passage verses 17 through 20, we come to a very debated and controversial section of Scripture. As is Jesus's way, He's incredibly controversial. Jesus is not afraid to step on toes. He's not afraid to break from tradition. In fact, religious tradition often is seen as the very proponent of Christ Jesus. So I want to bring you back, just a little earlier to the 1500s to a man named Martin Luther, who was an Augustinian monk. He saw the law as something that was, in his words, as suffocating. As he studied the law, he looked at God's holiness and God's righteousness. Martin Luther was overwhelmed, and in fact, hated the God of the Old Testament. Those are not my words, those are his words. Because he saw God's righteousness and God's holiness in comparison to his fallenness and his sinfulness. And he thought, I can never measure up. I can never reach the level that God would expect me to reach on my own.

Todd Fletcher [00:01:40] In fact, he says this, "the entire Scriptures of God essentially are divided into two parts commands and promises." He saw this as law and gospel, but he did not quite fully understand what the gospel was until he started wrestling with Scripture itself. Turn with me to Romans chapter 1 verse 17. Because Luther's struggle is our struggle. And Luther's struggle is the church's struggle with law and gospel. Romans 1, verse 17 shattered Luther's life. He saw a salvation by works, but as he read the Bible, he began to see a gospel of grace that you're not saved by works, you're saved by grace. Starting in verse 16, Paul writes, "for I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, the righteous shall live by" what? "Faith." That is the gospel. It's by being saved by grace through faith in Christ alone, not by works, so that no man may boast. It's the work of God alone to bring salvation to His people. Now, the issue here too, is that Martin Luther began to realize that even his best works were tainted by imperfect intentions. So if you bank on your best works according to the law, even your heart motives condemn you. See Jesus is about to get to something that's very important and that is issues of the heart. Jesus is after your heart. You're going to see right as we go into the Sermon on the Mount, that's what He's going after. You may say you're not a murderer, but if you have anger in your what,? Heart, you're a murderer.

Todd Fletcher [00:03:39] You may say you're not an adulterer, but if you have lust in your heart, you're an adulterer. You see Jesus says your righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees and the scribes. They didn't serve God from the heart, they served God with outward appearances. The true Christian is someone who is born again and has a new heart. Now what we're going to deal with today is going to challenge tradition. Let me remind you that the battle cry of the Reformation was sola scriptura. It is scripture alone. It is the only rule of faith and obedience. Today, the battle cry should be simpler reformada, always reforming. We didn't stop with the Westminster confession. We didn't stop with the 1689 confession. We are always reforming as the church. We are always submitting our

beliefs to the Word of God, allowing the Word to evaluate our beliefs. We're going to come across some things today that will challenge you, I guarantee you all of us will be challenged by this text because Jesus is challenging. But Martin Luther said this, "as he wrestled with commands and promises of God, Philip Melancthon later on said that Martin Luther could be summed up in two things that he always taught law and gospel." Martyn Lloyd-Jones follows this tradition and always teaches law and gospel. John MacArthur today would say that every sermon is based in law and gospel. That Jesus, as we will see, fulfills the law and He is the gospel. Law and gospel. Turn to Galatians chapter 3 verses 24 to 26 to kick us off. What is the Christian's relationship to the law, especially as New Covenant believers? What is the Christian's relationship to the law? Today specifically, we're going to be looking at Jesus's relationship to the law. And the next week we're going to be looking more closely at the Christian's relationship to the law.

Todd Fletcher [00:05:39] But Galatians 3 verse 24 says this, to 26, Paul writes, "so then, the law was our guardian," or tutor, schoolmaster some translations say, "until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by," what? "Faith." Paul says, just an aside, in chapter 1 of Galatians, if you add any works to the gospel that ceases to be the gospel and you are accursed of God, if you add works to the gospel. That's how serious Paul is about being justified by faith alone, not by works, as the Ephesians says. Verse 25, "but now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian." We're no longer under the schoolmaster, we're no longer under the tutor. We've been delivered to a new covenant. 'For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ," you're a new creation in Christ, you have a new heart. You're under a new covenant. You're under a new law. The law of liberty, the law of Christ. The law of freedom. That's how the New Testament refers to the law that we are under. Now, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Martin Luther, Charles Spurgeon, even John MacArthur today and many others recognize that the law can be divided into three parts. The threefold division of the law. Now, before I say anything further, there is nothing in the Bible that says that the law is divided into three parts. This is theologians trying to understand how best to understand the buckets of the law. Historically speaking, we've seen the law in three buckets ceremonial laws, civic or judicial laws, and moral laws.

Todd Fletcher [00:07:28] Now, moral laws is really where the debate lies. Many Christians today say that the ceremonial law, the civic laws have all been fulfilled. But the moral law of the Ten Commandments is still binding, and we're going to deal with that today. Many will push back to what I'm preaching. Many will question what I'm going to say today. But I am held captive by the Word of God and must present what I see in the Word of God. And I stand arm in arm with many men who would preach the same way that I'll preach today on the fact that the moral law has been fulfilled by Christ and we are under a new law. I'll get into that. But Martyn Lloyd-Jones says this, "the moral law consisted of the Ten Commandments, the great moral principles that were laid down once and forever. There were those also the judicial law, which means the legislative law given for the nation of Israel and its peculiar circumstances at that time, which indicated how men were to order their behavior in relationship to others and the various things they were and were not to do. Finally, there's the ceremonial law concerning burn offerings, sacrifices and all the ritual ceremonies in connection with their worship at the temple and everywhere else." So again, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Martin Luther, all these folks recognizing that the law can basically be broken into ceremonial, civic and moral laws. Now, the question for us today is how does the Christian relate to the law? But more importantly, how did Jesus relate to the law? Because He is our forerunner, He is our King. We are His followers. So how Jesus relates to the law is how we ought to relate to the law as His followers.

Todd Fletcher [00:08:59] So we'll see this today, Jesus did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill the law. And until He accomplishes all of the law. Jesus doesn't abolish it, Jesus fulfills it and He will accomplish all of it. This is fantastic. As we break into this, we're going to see how crucial Jesus is to everything. So we're going to break this section, these two verses, into three points. And as we break this section into three points, we're going to see the ramifications of all that Jesus is saying and how powerful and how shocking what Jesus is saying is. So the first point is this He did not come to abolish, not to abolish the law, verse 17a. The first part is He did not come to abolish the law. In fact, He would say, perish the thought that anyone would think that I came to abolish the law. The second point is this, He came to fulfill the law. That's the second part of 17, that He is the fulfillment of the law. And the third point is this, until all the law is accomplished. That He will accomplish everything the law has ever said, both in His first and His second coming. So let's look at the first point here. Look at verse 17, Matthew 5, verse 17. Jesus says, "do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets." He is addressing a charge that was levied against him by the religious elite. They said He was a law breaker. Now, if that's true, every single one of us are still dead in our sins. If Jesus broke God's law, that means He was a sinner because sin is lawlessness, as first John says. Therefore, the wages of sin is death.

Todd Fletcher [00:10:46] And if Jesus has sinned, He deserved the death on the cross that He received, and He cannot satisfy the wrath for us. Massive. If Jesus was a sinner, we are all dead in our trespasses. That is an essential doctrine of the church that is an essential doctrine of Scripture that Jesus was perfect. He was the perfect Lamb of God sacrificed for our sins. He who knew no sin became sin, that's the gospel. Now, the charge of the religious elites were that he was a antinomian. Jesus was a law breaker. Now, what is an antinomian? That simply means anti law-ism. There are many antinomians in the church today that say that the Christians are not bound by any laws of Scripture that were saved by grace and we can live according to grace and that works don't matter. Have you ever heard that before? That is not true, that is contrary to the Scriptures. We are saved by grace through faith in Christ. But we're saved unto holiness. We're saved unto good works. We're called to grow in our Christlikeness. So the Old Testament, what we'll see is the law and Jesus relationship to the law is that He is not a law breaker, in fact, He is a law fulfiller. And that's what He's going to argue. So before we get into this, what is the Christian's proper relationship to the law? Many churches today don't even read the Old Testament. In fact, many Bibles, and I'm not going after the Gideons, trust me. But many Bibles don't even include an Old Testament. So how do we relate to the Old Testament? The Old Testament is incredibly important for believers, but we need to recognize how we relate to the Old Testament as New Covenant believers.

Todd Fletcher [00:12:34] So Jesus was being charged of lawlessness. So before He gets into His interpretation of the law, He deals with this charge. Verse 17, "do not think," don't even think for a second that I came to abolish the law. That is the very contrary statement that is contrary to Jesus's nature as Yahweh. God cannot abolish the very law that He spoke into existence because God's Word is eternal. So Jesus is dealing with this directly. Now we need to understand what the term "law" means. So there are four ways that the law could be understood during Jesus's day. Now, before we speak to that, I want to bring some Jewish rabbinic teachings here. Jewish rabbis believe that to abolish the law was to disobey the law. They based that on Deuteronomy 27:36, you can write that down. We don't have time to read it. But a rabbi said you abolished the law when you disobey the law. So they said, Jesus is abolishing the law because He's disobeying the law. And Jesus says, "don't think that I came to abolish the law," He's dealing with this charge directly. So what do they mean by the law? Well, the first meaning of the law could be the Ten

Commandments, simply God's moral law. The 613 commands of the Old Testament summarized in Ten Commandments into two tables, how do you love God and how do you love your neighbor? We see Jesus brings that forward in the great commandment. The greatest commandment, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, love your neighbor as yourself on these two commands hang all the law and the prophets. So Jesus affirms the Ten Commandments, and then we'll get that as specifically what is brought forward into the New Covenant.

Todd Fletcher [00:14:15] So the law could refer to the Ten Commandments. The law could also refer to the first five books of the Bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. That's the Pentateuch, the books of Moses. It can also refer to the whole Old Testament. But fourthly, and this is probably most important, it could refer to rabbinical or scribal traditions, the oral law. So what type of law do you think the Pharisees are talking about? Their traditions. Their oral traditions are being obliterated by Jesus Christ, and to that He would say yes and amen! Because He hated the traditions of man. Anything that stands contrary to the Word of God must be cast asunder must be cast down because it is actually hindering the very Word of God. Matthew 15:6 says this, "for the sake of your tradition you have made void the Word of God." So when you add a little bit of man's tradition to the word of God and it's contrary to the word of God, what does that do to God's word? It voids it. That's why Paul says if you add even a little bit of works to the gospel, it is now a non gospel. It's in fact, a damning gospel. Because you will be accursed of God. This is very serious what Jesus is getting into. You see, He goes on to say, but there's a key phrase that I haven't really dealt with yet. Look back to verse 17, He says, "do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets." Now the law can refer to those four things, but whenever the Law and the Prophets are put together, that refers to the entire Old Testament, that refers to all Scriptures in the Old Testament.

Todd Fletcher [00:16:05] Turn to Luke 16:16, a very important verse for the discussion of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Luke 16:16, we read this, "the Law and the Prophets," meaning the whole Old Testament Scriptures, "the Law and the Prophets were until John," so who's John? John the Baptist, right. Remember. Do you do you remember Jesus saying that John the Baptist is the greatest of all old covenant saints? But he is the least in the New Covenant because there is a qualitative difference to the New Covenant believers compared to the old Covenant believers. And if you say, Well, no, there's one covenant of grace, there's no difference between the old covenant believers and New Covenant believers, the Bible would disagree with that. Because Acts 2 says that there is a time when the Holy Spirit will come down and He will permanently indwell the believer. And that's why Jesus says there's a qualitative difference between the church and between the old Covenant people of God. Those are Jesus's words. John's the greatest of the old covenant, but he would be the least in the New Covenant. So I'm just giving you Jesus's words. And again, this may challenge your traditions, but that's okay because Jesus had no problem challenging tradition. So He says, back in Matthew chapter 5, "do not think that I have come to abolish the Law," what's the term abolish? Abolish means to destroy, throw down, demolish, it means to pulverize. This word is used in Matthew 24, verse 2 of the temple. Now, what happened to the temple? Remember, Jesus walks out of the temple after He cleanses the temple with a whip and He turns some tables over and all that stuff. As He's walking out, His disciples say, what a beautiful temple this is.

Todd Fletcher [00:18:01] And He says, "Truly, I say to you, not one stone of this temple will stand upon another they will all be cast down." They will be abolished, destroyed. That's what abolish means to cast down, to destroy. And this term "do not think" says do not even dare to think. Do not even suppose that I would abolish one word of God. Perish

the thought. Because He is God and He cannot violate and void His own words. God's words are eternal. God's Word is the beginning. He's the alpha and Omega, He's the beginning of the end, He's outside of time. Every word God is spoken will be fulfilled to its fullest extent. In fact, the Word of God will outlast the heavens and the earth. It's an amazing thing. God's word is eternal and there is nothing wrong with it. Now, today, many churches abolish the Word of God, don't they? They make void the word of God. This no longer applies to us, this was for a patriarchal system. The roles between men and women only applied back then, not today. Also female pastors, teachers, preachers, genders, two genders male, female He created them. Homosexuality, all these types of things, am I stepping on anyone's toes yet? Maybe not your toes, but I'm definitely stepping on some toes, right? We all know what the Bible says, but we make void the Word of God when we reject the Bible. Many pulpits this morning are making void the word of God. Many preachers today are rejecting God's clear counsel and they're lying to their congregation. Do you think Jesus would do that? Do you think Jesus would ever lie to His people? Do you think Jesus knew that He was offending the Pharisees and the Sadducees? You know, there was a time where the disciples said, did you realize you just offended them? And Jesus says, duh. Like He didn't actually, that was Todd's translation.

Todd Fletcher [00:19:58] But He said He knew He was offending them because He didn't care about man's tradition. So it's easy to point at the Pharisees and say, yeah their traditions, but what about your traditions? You know, we're coming to Christmas a very traditional time and we all have a lot of strong feelings about Christmas one way or the other. But the point is that we submit all of our traditions to the Word of God. It's okay to have traditions as long as they're not in violation of God's word. So he says, Do not even think. Now, when you start to think that Jesus abolished or destroyed any letter of God's word. Matthew Henry says this, "let not carnal libertines imagine that the Messiah is come to discharge them from the obligation of divine precepts and yet to secure to them divine promises to make the happy, and yet to give them leave to live as they list." Basically saying do not expect that you can receive the promises of God without the precepts of God, without the commands of God. Henry goes on to say, "Christ commands nothing now, which was forbidden either by the law of nature or the moral law, nor forbids anything which those laws had enjoined. It is a great mistake to think he does, and he here takes care to rectify the mistake. I am not come to destroy, he says." This is really powerful, what I'm about to read, "the Savior of souls is the destroyer of nothing but the works of the devil. He would never destroy the Word of God. He only destroys the works of Satan, of nothing that comes from God, much less those excellent dictates which we have from Moses and the prophets. No, he came to fulfill them.

Todd Fletcher [00:21:52] So let us perish the thought that Jesus would ever abolish a single word of God's word. Turning to the second point now, look back at verse 17. He says, "I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." Now I'm going to deal with an important theological term that theologians use all the time in debates about covenantalism versus dispensationalism, in debates about the covenant of grace versus the old and new covenant. This term abrogates I want to spend some time on this term because that's a term that I think a lot of people use that many people don't actually know what it means. So abrogate this is the English definition of abrogate, to abolish, to do away with, or to annul, especially by authority. So it's interesting because we know Jesus doesn't abolish. He doesn't destroy. But does He annul based on His authority? Well, what does annul mean? Annul means to make or declare void or invalid as such, with a marriage or a law, a marriage that is nullified. Now that term marriage should bring our attention to Romans 7, so let's turn to Roman 7. Because Paul actually uses this exact same marriage covenantal language in Romans 7 to argue for the Christian's new

standing in relation to the law. Roman 7 verses 1 through 6. Now, Roman 7 is truly the height of theology or sorry, the book of Romans is the height of theology. And Romans 6 through 8 is truly the height of salvation or soteriological investigation. So look at Romans 7 verses 1 through 6. This is Paul speaking and he's using this language of fulfillment and in fact, annulment with regards to marriage.

Todd Fletcher [00:23:41] He says this, "or do you not know brothers, for I'm speaking to those who know the law, that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulterous." Now it goes on to say, "likewise," in similar fashion, "my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ." Now how dead is dead? Pretty dead here. "So that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit to God. For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law," how released is released? How dead is dead? Isn't it pretty obvious here? We now have an entirely new spouse is what he's saying? "Having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code." Now, just to pile on here, turn to Romans 10, verse 4. This is so clear in Scripture but oftentimes theology and systematics confuse what's plain in Scripture. Romans 10:4 "for Christ is" the almost end of the law? No "Christ is the end of the law," very clear "for righteousness to everyone who believes." So if you do not believe you're still bound by the law, sin and death still hangs over your your head. And when you go stand before the throne of God, the great white throne judgment and the books are open, you will be judged by the law.

Todd Fletcher [00:25:42] But for those who believe, Christ is the end of the law. All the righteous requirements of the law have been met in Jesus Christ. He is the end of the law for the believer, Romans 10:4. So as you're wrestling with this, turn back to Matthew chapter 5 and we're going to look at this fulfillment language. So a couple of things, let's situate ourselves back into the Sermon on the Mount, verses 3 through 12 talk about the character of a believer. This is what a believer looks like. This is the very character, this is the essence. This is the nature of a believer verses 13 through 16 talk about the function of a believer. They are the salt of the earth, they are city on a hill. They are the light of the world. The believer has a unique function, and his or hers otherness in a dark world. But verses 17 through 20 deal with the very foundation of the believer, which is none other than the Word of God. This is the very rock upon which we build is the Word of God. We live under the titles of Sola Scriptura and Semper Reformada that the only rule for faith and obedience is the Word of God, and that we are always reforming according to the Word of God. That's what Jesus was concerned about. Holiness and righteousness are always in line with the Word of God. For anyone who says that the Spirit led me to do something contrary to the Word of God, what's wrong with that person? They've been deceived.

Todd Fletcher [00:27:16] Only Satan and his minions lead us away from the Word of God. God's Word and God's Spirit are always perfectly in line. So whenever you're trying to make decisions, always take account, God's wisdom, God's word, good counsel, and God's leading. God's word and God's Spirit are always aligned. So let's talk about Jesus and the law. Matthew 5, verse 17, He says, "I have not come to abolish it I have come to fulfill it." This is the Greek word, pleroo, which means to fulfill, to be complete, to fill up. So think about a cup. The cup represents the Old Testament. Jesus says, I have filled it all the

way up to the very brim to where you cannot add a single drop to my fulfilling. So when you try to add a single drop to the fulfillment of the Old Testament, Christ has already done it. Jesus' says I have come to fulfill to bring to a designed end. Turn to Hebrews 8:13, if you will. Hebrews 8:13 again a very clear passage, and it may break your systematics, but that's okay. Hebrews 8, verse 13, "in speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one," mostly obsolete. Wait, I keep adding words the Scripture. I'm sorry, "he makes the first one obsolete," completely obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. So what about the Old Covenant? He's fulfilled it, it's obsolete. The new version has come. Now, you may say, Well, that can't be all that that means but it is. The first one's obsolete. Christ is the end of the law, the first spouse is now dead and we are married to a new spouse. Now, if I haven't won you over yet, look to Luke 24.

Todd Fletcher [00:29:17] And this I think if you give me a chance to make this argument. It's going to have some pretty profound impacts on your life and also on your study of Scripture. Luke 24, verse 27, "and beginning with Moses and all the Prophets," there's the Law and the Prophets. "He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." Also go to verse 44, "these are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about," who? Me. "Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." So Jesus is making some pretty amazing claims that everything in the Bible is about Me. Now let's put some work behind this. That's a massive statement. Now, do you see why the Pharisees wanted to kill Him? Everything's about Me. If He wasn't God, that is blasphemy, but He is God. Alright, I need some ethos here, I going to bring John MacArthur to the battle. Alright, John MacArthur says this, "but most importantly, as the Spirit surely intends to emphasize here, Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament by being its fulfillment. He did not simply teach it fully or exemplify it fully. He was it fully. He did not come simply to teach righteousness and to model righteousness. He came as divine righteousness. What He said and what He did reflected who He is." So let's talk about the three buckets of the law. MacArthur says this, "the civil law, His crucifixion marked Israel's ultimate apostasy and final rejection of her Messiah. So when Israel crucified their Messiah, that was the end of the theocratic kingdom." But he goes on to say, "and the interruption of God's dealings with the people as a nation."

Todd Fletcher [00:31:25] Notice, interruption, the church age is an interruption in his dealings with Israel. I made that argument a couple of weeks ago in a sermon on Israel. So John MacArthur says the civil law has been fulfilled in its rejection of the Messiah. They are no longer under God's theocratic reign. Ceremonial fulfillment, "sacrifice was the heart of all the Old Testament worship. And as the perfect sacrifice, Jesus brought all other sacrifices to an end." He fulfills the sacrificial system that he is the perfect sacrifice, the perfect Lamb of God. And finally, morally, "because Christ fulfilled all righteousness and has become our righteousness, He has fulfilled the moral law." The Ten Commandments are fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He's the perfect fulfillment, we'll get into that. So this statement I'm about to read again, this is John MacArthur's words, and the reason I need him in this battle is because he has weight. He has ethos. He says this, this is profound and he reflects Martyn Lloyd-Jones, who reflects Charles Spurgeon, who reflects Matthew Henry, who reflects Martin Luther. Listen to this statement "from Genesis 1:1 through Malachi 4:6. That's the whole Old Testament. The Old Testament is Jesus Christ. It was inspired by Christ. It points to Christ. It's fulfilled by Christ." One commentator says the law is Christ. That's pretty powerful, isn't it? That Jesus is the word incarnate. Jesus is both the law and the gospel. He fulfills the righteous requirements of the law perfectly. The law reflects His perfect nature and His character. Yet He's also the gospel that brings God's grace and God's mercy to lawbreakers. So when people say that he abolishes and destroys the law,

how could Jesus abolish and destroy Himself? Because the law is the perfect reflection of who Jesus is.

Todd Fletcher [00:33:26] All the law, all the prophets, all the Psalms, they all point to Me, because the law reflects who I am. This is profound teaching. So as we deal with this, the threefold aspects of the law, Jesus perfectly fulfills every aspect of the law. Now turn to second Corinthians 1:20. This is so important for your understanding of all 66 books of the Bible. Second Corinthians 1, verse 20, because some of you might be saying, I don't know Todd, like I know Jesus is important, but is literally the whole Bible about Jesus? Second Corinthians 1:20 says this, and again, let's let the Bible speak plainly, "for all," now, does all mean mostly all? No, "for all the promises of God find their Amen in Him." Find their Yes in Jesus. Jesus is the fulfillment that God promises in every promise that He has made, both Old Covenant and New Covenant promises find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Again, second Corinthians 1:20, "all the promises of God find their Yes in Him," every promise in the Bible will be or has been fulfilled by Jesus Christ. So as we look at this, as we talk about the civil law, the ceremonial law and even the moral law, I want to deal with the Sabbath real quick. So there are many views even within this church, not among our leadership necessarily, but among the church itself on the Sabbath. And I'm going to make an argument that the Sabbath has been fulfilled by Jesus Christ. So Romans 10:4 says this, again, "for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." Now got questions, which always blows my mind with how good this website is. If you've never checked got questions.org, do it after I'm done preaching.

Todd Fletcher [00:35:32] They say this, and I couldn't agree more, nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the New Testament numerous times and in different ways. So He's the fulfillment of the moral law and what He brings forward into the New Covenant is a part of the law of Christ. So nine of the Ten Commandments are brought forward, in fact, many of them are found here in the Sermon on the Mount, which we'll see. So the only command that is not repeated is this. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy, that's a fact. It's not repeated and it's not commanded of New Testament believers. In fact, turn to Colossians 2 verse 16. Again, a very clear verse. If you have eyes to see and you accept Scripture for what it says. Colossians 2 verse 16, and this is dealing in verse 16 and 17, this is dealing with a very important issue because there's a lot of judgment being passed. Listen to this, Colossians 2 verse 16, "therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to festival or a new moon or a what? Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ." Now, why is there no marriage in heaven? Why are we all going to be like angels, Jesus said? Because marriage is a shadow of our marriage to Christ. And once we're in heaven and we're with Christ, marriage has fulfilled its purpose. That's why there's no marriage in heaven, because it points to our relationship as the church with Christ. So the relationship you have with your spouse, if it's a good one, and I promise you it'll be better in the sense of that relationship is just a glimpse of the relationship you have with every brother and sister in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Todd Fletcher [00:37:27] That's why Paul says I don't need marriage here. Marriage is a gift, but so is singleness. Marriage is simply a shadow of a greater reality that Paul was banking on. In the same way, Sabbath points to a reality which Colossians says is Christ who is the fulfillment. So we're going to get into this for a second. So gotquestions says this, "in fact, Colossians 2:16 releases the believer from the Sabbath rule. Jesus the Lord of the Sabbath," remember He's always dealing with the Sabbath and He claims to be the Lord of the Sabbath. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. Gotquestions goes on to say, "Jesus, the Lord of the Sabbath has become for us our own Sabbath rest. The Sabbath

pictured our resting in God, and Jesus is our permanent Sabbath rest." Now don't believe me, believe the Scriptures Hebrews 4 verses 1 through 11 turn their briefly. The reason I would argue that the Sabbath is not brought forward into the New Covenant is because Jesus fulfills it. Hebrews 4 verses 1 through 11, and I would encourage you to go back and study this further after the sermon today. "Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands," meaning it's still offered. "Let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it." The rest is available, but not all of you will reach it. "For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by," what? "Faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest." What rest? He's going to explain the Sabbath rest. "As I swore in my wrath, they shall not enter my rest, although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way."

Todd Fletcher [00:39:16] By the way, that's Genesis 1. I love how the author of Hebrews is like somewhere. Somewhere, you know. But he has somewhere spoken in the seventh day and God rested on the seventh day from all His work. Sorry, that's Genesis 2. "And again, in this passage he said, They shall not enter my rest." Now it goes on, "since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of their disobedience, again he appoints a certain day, today." So what is the day of the Lord? Today. "Saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, today, if you hear," the voice of the Lord, "do not harden your hearts. For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from His." See the whole point of the Sabbath is about resting from your works. That's why Jesus is the fulfillment of the Sabbath, because when we enter into Christ, we are now resting in His works. It goes on to say, "let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience." Now. McArthur says this, this is going to challenge some in this room, but we need to hear and give this a fair hearing, "because keeping the Sabbath is one of the Ten Commandments. It may be helpful to comment on that part of the moral law."

Todd Fletcher [00:40:48] This is where the debate always goes down to. "The essence of the Sabbath observance was holiness not resting or refraining from work. It was a provision meant to remove the heart from earthly endeavors and to turn it towards God because Christ fulfilled all righteousness and has become our righteousness the purpose of the Sabbath observance ended at the cross. Christians possessed the reality and so no longer need the symbol. All believers have entered into permanent salvation rest. As the writer of Hebrews carefully points out in Hebrews 4 verses 1 through 11. Every day has become holy to the Lord." Is Saturday holy? Yes. Is Sunday holy? Yes. What about Wednesday? Yes. In demonstration of that fact the early church met together every day for worship, Acts 2:46. They met every day for worship, but before long, their primary worship meetings were held on the first day of the week. Notice that's not the Sabbath, that's the Lord's Day. Saturday is the last day of the week when God rested. Sunday is the first day of the week, and that is the Lord's day. Revelation 1:10 refers to the Lord's Day because of its association with Jesus's resurrection. That day was to stimulate them to holiness every other day as well. As Paul made clear, however, there is no longer any special day of worship. Now I'm stepping on toes, I know. But Romans 14:5 through 6 says this. Colossians 2:16 through 17 says this. Worship on a Tuesday. McArthur says Thursday or any other day of the week is no less biblical or spiritual than worship on the Lord's Day. Why? Because every day is the Lord's Day. As Christians, we have permanent rest in Jesus Christ, your rest is not just on Sunday.

Todd Fletcher [00:42:37] Your rest is every day. McArthur goes on to say, "as some claim, but simply the day of worship most Christians have observed since the New Testament times is a special time set aside for spiritual exercises. But the moral aspects inherent in the Sabbath law is the heart of true worship." God is after our hearts. So if you have a new heart and you've been born again, every day is your Sabbath rest because you find rest in Jesus Christ. Now I know I stepped on some toes, but that's okay, because all traditions and all confessions and all creeds should be submitted under the evaluation of what? Scripture. And that is *semper reformada* at its heart. We're always being reformed by the Word of God. So as we get to verse 18, the last point here, I want to show you something significant of what Jesus is saying, because He says not one word will pass away. Not even one pen stroke will pass away. Verse 18, "for truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass away from the Law until all is accomplished." So here he is directly addressing the charges of antinomianism. Now he's saying every single pin stroke of God, every single drop of divine ink will be fulfilled by God. It will never be abolished. But that word fulfilled is significant because once it's fulfilled, it's fulfilled. Jesus has fulfilled the old covenant. We're under an entirely new covenant. Turn to Jeremiah 31:31. Not right now, on your own time. We don't have time. I still got too much to get through. But you see, many people throughout history have rejected parts of the Word of God. The 66 books of the Canon 39 and the Old Testament, 27 in the new are all inspired by God's divine ink.

Todd Fletcher [00:44:28] Every single stroke is inspired by God and will be fulfilled by Jesus. That's clear. That's what he's saying. So just a little history lesson, many heretics have rejected many aspects of God's word. Marcion In the second century, he disparaged and completely repudiated the Old Testament because it didn't fit with his theology. So he got rid of it. That's convenient, isn't it? Today, the Jesus verses Paul debate, that I accept the words of Jesus, but I reject the teachings of Paul. Many have said that Paul hijacked Christianity from Jesus. You'll you'll hear this today in Harvard, you'll hear this today in Yale and Princeton, that Paul hijacked Christianity from Jesus Christ. And if you buy that and you only read the red letters, you're rejecting the word of God. Because what Paul wrote is just as inspired as the very words of Jesus Christ. So we need to recognize that that is an old heresy. And then the limited inerrancy argument, which is that there are the parts of the Bible that are truly inspired and others are not. Well, how do you know which is which? Well, that's based to you, that's up to you, right. C.S. Lewis struggled with the full inerrancy of God's word, where he said the imprecatory Psalms, you know, where the Psalmist is casting down curses on his enemies. He said, those cannot be inspired by God, because I don't believe that. I don't believe that's right. That's what C.S. Lewis said. So we need to be careful, even with our heroes, because many of our heroes did not accept the full inspiration of God's word. So when Jesus says. That every single jot and tittle, every single stroke, every single letter will be fulfilled, He means it. So it's what are those mean? What's an iota? That's the smallest letter of the Greek alphabet.

Todd Fletcher [00:46:12] And you'd also be thinking of Hebrews yoed. Just a little comma, he says. Every iota, every yoed will be fulfilled in God's word. Not even a dot. That's a stroke. That means a little horn. That's at the end of a letter and there's just a tiny little stroke like a horn, he says even those small strokes will be fulfilled. They will not pass away. It's amazing putting this together, he says, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot will pass from the law until all is accomplished. So what does that mean? He means that heaven and earth will pass away before God's word ever passes away. Listen, Matthew. 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away." Jesus is making some pretty strong statements, isn't He? It's very clear. So when you think about the cutting room floor, whenever a pastor is preparing a sermon, there's a lot that

doesn't make it into the pulpit. And even in my notes, there's a lot that doesn't make it into the sermon because I'm putting a lot on the cutting room floor. I just don't have time to deal with everything that I've studied. But nothing ends up on the cutting room floor for God. He didn't need a hard draft, you know, He didn't need to work on multiple versions of the Scriptures. Everything He said was perfect and it will be fulfilled. There's no cutting room floor for God. He never made a mistake. He's outside of time and His word is eternal. So every stroke of God's pen will be accomplished. So as we come to Jesus and the law. You need to recognize what he's saying is I didn't abolish any of it. I will fulfill all of it.

Todd Fletcher [00:47:56] Both in His first coming and His second coming. So Romans 10:4, we see again that He is the end of the law for those who believe, for those who in Christ is the end of the law. Now, again, I made this statement earlier it needs to be said again, The law is all about Jesus. Listen to this. It was inspired by Christ. He is wisdom. He was with God in the beginning. Also, we know He is God. It points to Christ, all the law, the prophets, and the Psalms point to Jesus and it's fulfilled by Christ. But also the gospel is all about Christ. First Corinthians 15:3 through 4 says this, that this is a first importance that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried and He was raised on the third day. That's the gospel. So Jesus fulfills the requirements of the law because the law represents His perfect nature, but he also provides to us the grace that's necessary for those who are dead under the law. And He paid the penalty and He took on the wages of sin and death himself so that He might give us the grace and the mercy of Yahweh that's only available by the name of Jesus Christ. So every verse of Scripture will be fulfilled in Jesus Christ. He is the end of all Scriptures. He is the pointing to, all Scriptures find their yes and Amen in Jesus Christ. That's why Acts 4:12 says this, "and there is salvation and no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Why? Because it's all about Jesus. That's why this church is Christ centered.

Todd Fletcher [00:49:33] You can't be saved apart from the name of Jesus Christ. So how should the Christian relate to the law as a new Covenant believer? Well we'll deal with that more clearly next week. But we we know this Jesus has fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law, and He has given us the law of liberty, which is summed up with two commands, love the Lord your God, with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commands hang the Law and the Prophets. That's the law of Jesus. And he says, in fact, I'll give you a new law. Love one another as I have loved you, by this all men will but know my disciples by their love for one another. He says this is the new commandment love as I have loved. I fulfilled the law, now love like me. That's the new commandment of Jesus Christ. So Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. So you're still under the law if you have not believed in Jesus Christ, you will be accountable for your works before God. And your best works are his filthy rags before Him. But if you believe in Jesus, His righteousness becomes your righteousness. And the law has ended for you. You're now under the law of liberty. Holiness is founded on God's Word alone, and it's only available in Christ alone. I'll end with Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "he has not come to destroy or indeed to modify even the slightest extent the teachings of the law or the prophets. He has come, he tells us, rather, to fulfill and to carry them out, to give them a perfect obedience. There we see the central claim which is made by our Lord. It is, in other words, that all the law, all the prophets point to him will be fulfilled in him down to the very smallest detail. Everything that is in the law, and the prophets culminates in Christ and he is the fulfillment of them. It is the most stupendous claim that he ever made."

Todd Fletcher [00:51:37] Let's pray. Father God, we are so thankful for Jesus. Lord, He is so amazing. His creation is amazing. His words are amazing. Lord, this teaching is stupendous, as Martyn Lloyd-Jones said. God, may we marvel at Your truth every day. May all our beliefs, all our practices be submitted to Your word on a daily basis? May we always be reforming and being conformed to Your image. Lord, we stand before You, we stand before an audience of One. May we not be afraid to step on tradition. May we not be afraid to receive the barbs and the attacks of men. But, Lord, we perform for an audience of ,ne. Father we all desire to hear, "well done, good and faithful servant." Lord, I pray that when we stand before the great white throne, that our names are found written in the Lamb's Book of life with His blood. We pray this in His holy and precious name. Amen.