

Inside Out [A Righteous Law] Discussion Guide

Summary

This sermon explores the difference between external rule-following and internal transformation through Christ. Jonathan teaches that the Old Testament law was never meant to make us righteous but to show us our need for a Savior. Jesus didn't come to abolish the law but to fulfill it perfectly, becoming our righteousness. The Pharisees had external righteousness through rule-keeping, but Jesus calls us to a deeper righteousness that comes from having transformed hearts through relationship with Him. True transformation happens when we stop trying to earn God's acceptance through performance and instead receive the righteousness that Christ freely gives us. This shift from self-made righteousness to Christ-given righteousness changes us from the inside out, leading to genuine holiness that flows from freedom rather than obligation.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You with grateful hearts, knowing that You desire authentic relationship over religious performance. As we gather together today, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us. Help us to be honest about where we are and receptive to Your transforming work in our lives. May Your Holy Spirit guide our discussion and draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

Share about a time you had to use a temporary fix or 'MacGyver' solution for a problem until you could get it properly repaired.

Key Verses

- Matthew 5:17-20
- 1 Corinthians 1:30
- Romans 3:20
- Galatians 3:19-24
- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Ephesians 2:8-9
- Jeremiah 31:33
- Philippians 3:4-9

Questions

- What does it mean that Jesus came to 'fulfill' the law rather than abolish it? How does this change our understanding of the Old Testament?
- Jonathan said the law was like a mirror, not a pathway to righteousness. What does this mean, and how have you experienced this in your own life?
- Jesus said our righteousness must surpass that of the Pharisees. Since they were known for perfect rule-keeping, what kind of righteousness was Jesus talking about?
- Paul considered his impressive religious credentials as 'garbage' compared to knowing Christ. What things do we sometimes count on to make us feel acceptable or worthy?

- How does understanding that Jesus is our righteousness change the way we respond to failure and sin in our lives?
- What's the difference between trying to be righteous and living as someone who already is righteous in Christ?
- The sermon mentioned that transformation flows from identity, not obligation. Can you think of an example of how this might look different in daily life?
- How can we practically apply the three steps Paul demonstrates: recognizing what we've been counting on, counting it as loss, and trusting Christ's righteousness instead?

Life Application

This week, when you face moments of failure, temptation, or comparison, practice the three-step process from Philippians 3: First, recognize what you're tempting to count on for your worth (performance, approval, achievements). Second, deliberately choose to see these things as worthless compared to Christ. Third, remind yourself that your identity and righteousness come from Jesus alone, not your performance. In these moments, pause and pray: 'Lord, I can't fix this or make myself righteous, but You already have. I'm standing on Your righteousness, not mine.'

Key Takeaways

- The Old Testament law was a temporary solution designed to show us our need for a Savior, not to make us righteous

- Jesus fulfilled the law perfectly and became our righteousness, offering us what we could never achieve through rule-following
- True righteousness is not about external compliance but internal transformation through relationship with Christ
- We must stop trying to earn God's acceptance through performance and instead receive the righteousness Christ freely gives
- Transformation flows from identity in Christ, not from obligation to rules, leading to genuine change from the inside out

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for being our righteousness and for the freedom that comes from knowing we are loved unconditionally. Help us to live each day from the security of our identity in You rather than from the exhaustion of trying to earn Your love. Transform our hearts so that our lives naturally reflect Your grace and love to others. When we fail, remind us that we are still righteous in You. When we're tempted, help us remember who we are in Christ. May we be people who love from overflow, not obligation. Continue this work of transformation in our lives, and help us to encourage one another in this truth. In Your precious name we pray, Amen.