



# MESSAGE NOTES

PRACTICAL TEACHING FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

Title: **Righteousness That Goes Deeper**  
Series: **Upside Down Kingdom**  
Text: **Matthew 5:17-20**  
Speaker: **Kevin T. Hardy** Date: **February 22, 2026**

*“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. (Mt 5:17–20).*

## 1: STOP \_\_\_\_\_ GOD’S WORD TO FIT YOUR LIFE!

*“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**. (Matt. 5:17)*

### WHAT IS THE LAW?

### WHAT DOES THE LAW DO?

- LAW FUNCTIONS AS A \_\_\_\_\_.
- LAW EXPOSES OUR \_\_\_\_\_.
- LAW RESTRAINS \_\_\_\_\_.

### HOW DOES JESUS FULFILL THE LAW?

## 2. TAKE ALL GOD’S COMMANDS \_\_\_\_\_

*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**. (Matt. 5:18)*

**“The NT writers recognized that Jesus death, certain elements in God’s law had been fulfilled in order to be abolished. The ceremonies of the law - daily, weekly, and yearly sacrifices were abolished because the real meaning was to foreshadow the sacrifice that Christ himself would make.”**

Sinclair Ferguson

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**. (Matt. 5:19)

### THESE VERSES CONFRONTS TWO EQUAL AND OPPOSITE ERRORS:

- \_\_\_\_\_: Treating obedience as a way to earn salvation.
- \_\_\_\_\_: Treating grace as a permission slip to ignore God's commands.

11 For **the grace of God that brings salvation** has appeared to all men. 12 It teaches us **to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions**, and **to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives** in this present age, (Tt 2:11–12).

### 3. \_\_\_\_\_ HEART-RIGHTEOUSNESS, NOT IMAGE-RIGHTEOUSNESS

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**. (Mt 5:20).

**But Jesus exposes the problem: the Pharisees's righteousness was often external.**

- CLEAN HANDS, BUT UNCHANGED \_\_\_\_\_
- RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY, BUT LITTLE \_\_\_\_\_
- PUBLIC HOLINESS, BUT PRIVATE \_\_\_\_\_
- RULES KEPT, BUT LOVE \_\_\_\_\_

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is **the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes**: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—**a righteousness that is by faith from first to last**, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith. (Ro 1:16–17).

**"Jesus didn't come to help you perform righteousness—He came to produce righteousness from the inside out."**

### CONCLUSION:

IF YOU'VE BEEN \_\_\_\_\_ SCRIPTURE, **COME BACK UNDER IT.**

IF YOU'VE BEEN \_\_\_\_\_ FOR ACCEPTANCE, **REST IN CHRIST.**

IF YOU'VE BEEN \_\_\_\_\_ IN COMPROMISE, **REPENT AND RETURN.**

IF YOU'VE BEEN \_\_\_\_\_ TO CHANGE WITHOUT POWER, **ABIDE IN HIM.**