

Sermon on the Mount – Parts IV-V.

Fulfilling the Law – True Righteousness

Text: **Matthew 5:17-20** (KJV)

Introduction

- We are opening God's Word this morning in the heart of the Sermon on the Mount.
- Many in Jesus' day misunderstood His mission, believing He came to abolish the Old Testament Law and the Prophets.
- In **Matthew 5:17-20** (KJV), our Lord sets the record straight: *"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."*
- Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount that:
 - He perfectly fulfills the Law
 - Upholds its enduring authority
 - Calls us to greatness through doing and teaching it, and
 - Demands a righteousness that exceeds mere external rule-keeping
- This passage challenges us to move from outward religion to heart-deep obedience empowered by grace.
- May the Holy Spirit open our hearts to receive what Jesus taught today.

I. Jesus Came to Fulfill the Law

"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." (**Matthew 5:17**)

A. He did not destroy the Law or the Prophets but completed them.

Luke 24:44-45 ESV

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.”

45. Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,

John 19:30 ESV

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, “It is finished,” and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

B. Jesus perfectly obeyed the Law **and** revealed its full meaning through the New Testament as holy men of old wrote as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit (**2 Peter 1:21**).

- **Practical Application Today:** Honor the whole Bible as pointing to Christ; teach children that Old Testament commands find their power in Jesus (**Deuteronomy 6:6-7**).

6. *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.*

7. *You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

II. The Law Remains Authoritative in Every Detail

“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.” (**Matthew 5:18**)

A. Not one jot or tittle will pass until all is fulfilled (**Psalms 119:89; Isaiah 40:8**).

“**LAMED.** *For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.*” (**Psalms 119:89**)

“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.”
(**Isaiah 40:8**)

B. God's moral standards endure beyond heaven and earth.

- **Illustration:** Gravity does not change with culture; neither does God's righteous standard.
- **Practical Application Today:** Stand firm on biblical truth in business honesty, sexual purity, and justice when society pressures change (**Proverbs 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:3**).

III. Greatness in the Kingdom Comes from Doing and Teaching the Commandments

"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." (**Matthew 5:19**)

A. Breaking and teaching others to break even the least commands makes one least in the kingdom.

James 2:8-10

8. *If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.*
9. *But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.*
10. *For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.*

B. Doing and teaching the commandments brings greatness in the kingdom.

- **Illustration:** A father who lives what he teaches raises respectful children; hypocrisy weakens influence.
- **Practical Application Today:** Parents and leaders must model and proclaim God's commands on anger, lust, and greed without compromise (**Matt 5:21-30; Titus 2:7-8**).

Matthew 5:21-22

- 21. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:*
- 22. But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca (worthless one), shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*

Titus 2:1-8

- 1. But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine.*
- 2. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.*
- 3. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,*
- 4. and so train the young women to love their husbands and children,*
- 5. to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.*
- 6. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.*
- 7. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity,*
- 8. and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.*

1. When we fail to teach the principles found in God's Word, like Titus 2:1-8, we do a disservice to the flock.
 - a. Some refuse to teach these principles because its uncomfortable
 - b. Some refuse because it goes against the belief systems of "the age."
 - c. Some are concerned about being seen as patriarchal, misogynistic, or old fashioned.
2. The path to Greatness is achieved through the teaching and the applications of God's Word.

- a. God's Word brings order...
- b. God's Word shows direction...
- c. The application of His Word brings breakthrough...

IV. Our Righteousness Must Exceed That of the Scribes and Pharisees

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20)

A. External rule-keeping is not enough.

1. Matthew 23 list seven woes Jesus pronounced over the Scribes and Pharisees.

B. Kingdom righteousness is heart-deep, given by grace through faith in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21; Jeremiah 31:33).

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (Jeremiah 31:33)

- **Illustration:** A cup clean only on the outside is still unclean; true righteousness transforms the heart.
- **Practical Application Today:** Rely on Christ's righteousness, then allow the Spirit to produce inner purity, mercy, and love in daily life (Matt 5:21-48 (studying next week); Galatians 5:22-23).

Galatians 5:22-23

22. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*
23. *gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

Conclusion/Takeaways

- Jesus fulfilled the Law so we could receive His righteousness and obey from the heart.
- Trust Him today.
- Live and teach His commands faithfully.