

Upside Down Kingdom: Not if, but why
Small Group Discussion
Matthew 5:17-20

Opening Question (get everyone involved in discussion):

- How do you feel about rules? Would people who know you say that you are generally a rule-keeper or rule-breaker? (This opening question is meant to be light-hearted!).
- What is your overall feeling about the Old Testament Law? Be as honest as you can.

Read Matthew 5:17-20, and then discuss the following.

1. How would you summarize what Jesus teaches here about the Old Testament?
 - On Sunday we heard that **Jesus still wants us to honor God's Law**. How do you feel about this fact?
 - Pastor Josh said that living in compliance with God's law helps us to avoid a breakdown, because God's law best reflects his design for our bodies, relationships, and societies. Do you agree? Have you ever seen this principle play out in your life? You may consider it with regard to the Ten Commandments, such as honoring your parents, honoring the Sabbath, not coveting, etc.
 - Do you ever feel that you cannot measure up to God's standards? Why or why not? How does this feeling affect your daily life?
2. What does Jesus mean when he says that he came to *fulfill* the Law and the Prophets?
 - Try to recall several examples of how Jesus fulfilled God's Law.
 - What does it mean that Jesus fulfilled the "types" in the Old Testament? For example, Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, David, Esther, etc.?
3. What does Jesus mean when he calls us to live with a "righteousness [that] *surpasses* that of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law?"
 - On Sunday, Pastor Josh said that **through Jesus Christ, you can keep God's Law in a way that is deep and authentic**. What does this mean?
 - What is the difference between pharisaic obedience and grace-motivated obedience to God? How does the latter "exceed" the former?
 - Up until now, have you gravitated more toward grace-motivated obedience or pharisaic obedience?

4. On Sunday we learned that the Old Testament contains three kinds of laws: **ceremonial** (laws about sacrifice and ritual purity, which pointed to the kind of cleansing that was necessary for sinful humans, which Jesus Christ would ultimately accomplish); **judicial** (which described how the Nation of Israel was to conduct life as a theocracy), and **moral** (laws that describe the way in which we are relate to God and other people). Take some time to work through the Old Testament passages that follow. Using what you learned on Sunday, and what you've learned so far in this discussion, answer the following questions for each passage:
- a) Which kind of law is this, ceremonial, judicial, or moral?
 - b) In what way did Jesus fulfill this law or teaching?
 - c) In what way does it still apply to us? Are we to keep it literally? If not, how does it build us up in the present? What does it show us about Jesus?
 - Exodus 20:3-4
 - Exodus 22:7-9
 - Leviticus 16:3-10, 20-22
 - Leviticus 19:9-10, 18
 - Leviticus 19:11-16
 - Deuteronomy 28:1-14
5. Share about your **prayer needs** with your group. In addition to **praying for one another**, spend some time praising Jesus for all that you have seen about him through the above passages.