

Brandon Phillips / General

The King and His Glory / Righteousness / Matthew 5:17-20
King Jesus reveals two shocking truths about Kingdom Righteousness.

Pre-sermon Comments

[Psalm 150:3-6](#) (LSB) ³ Praise Him with trumpet blast; Praise Him with harp and lyre. ⁴ [Praise Him with tambourine and dancing; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe.](#) ⁵ [Praise Him with resounding cymbals; Praise Him with clashing cymbals.](#) ⁶ Let everything that has breath praise Yah. Praise Yah!

Legalism is our tendency to keep our personal interpretation of God's Law for the purpose of finding favor (salvific or otherwise) with God. We are also being legalistic when we hold others to our personal interpretation of the Law. Further, it is not legalistic to desire to keep God's interpretation of His Law and desire for our fellow Christians to do the same ([Luke 10:27](#)) out of a love for Him and others.

Sermon Text

Matthew 5:17-20 LSB

¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸ "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Introduction to our Text

“A serious athlete has to keep training rules. Most athletes are glad to keep them, rigid as they may be, for the sheer love of the sport. A few athletes conform to make the team and glorify, show off, self. The former attitude is love, and the latter is legalism, but both attitudes are toward the same rigid code, and both result in conformity. Having to conform to a law is not of itself legalism. When we conform to a Law for outward reasons, like looking good to others, we are being legalistic. When we expect others to conform for reasons other than our love for them, we are being legalistic. Conforming to God’s law because of our love for Him and love for others is not legalism. ~ Charles Ryrie

[Matthew 5:6](#) (LSB) ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

[Galatians 3:24](#) (LSB) ²⁴ Therefore the Law has become our tutor unto Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#) (LSB) ²¹ He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Proposition and Outline

In [Matthew 5:17-20](#), King Jesus reveals two shocking truths about Kingdom Righteousness. You must recognize that Kingdom righteousness:

1. Completely Concurs with Old Testament righteousness ([Matt 5:17-18](#))
[Review]
 - a. Jesus did not come to abolish the Old Testament ([Matt 5:17](#)) [Review]
 - b. Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament ([Matt 5:17](#))
 - c. Jesus contended for the permanence of God’s Law ([Matt 5:18](#))
2. Comprehensively Challenges Pharisaical righteousness ([Matt 5:19-20](#))
 - a. Jesus confronted those who would nullify the Law ([Matt 5:19](#))
 - b. Jesus commended those who would love the Law ([Matt 5:19](#))
 - c. Jesus challenged those who misapply the Law ([Matt 5:20](#))

Review

Kingdom Righteousness Completely Concurs with Old Testament righteousness ([Matt 5:17-18](#)) [review]

[Matthew 5:17](#) (LSB) ¹⁷ “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

[Matthew 5:16](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Jesus did not come to abolish the Old Testament ([Matt 5:17](#))

[Matthew 5:17](#) (LSB) ¹⁷ “Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

Jesus Knew the Purpose and the Ramifications of His coming

[John 3:16-18](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

[John 3:19](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ “And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

What is the Law and the Prophets?

[Matthew 23:35](#) (LSB) ³⁵ so that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.

We must never drive a wedge between the Old Testament and the New. We must never feel that the New makes the Old unnecessary. I feel increasingly that it is very regrettable that the New Testament should ever have been printed alone, because we tend to fall into the serious error of thinking that, because we are Christians, we do not need the Old Testament. It was the Holy Spirit who led the early Church, which was mainly Gentile, to incorporate the Old Testament Scriptures with their New Scriptures and to regard them all as one. They are indissolubly bound together, and there are many senses in which it can be said that the New Testament cannot be truly understood except in the light that is provided by the Old. For example, it is almost impossible to make anything of the Epistle to the Hebrews unless we know our Old Testament Scriptures. ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

[Matthew 5:18](#) (LSB) ¹⁸ “For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”

Kingdom Righteousness Completely Concurs with Old Testament righteousness ([Matt 5:17-18](#))

Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament ([Matt 5:17](#))

[2 Corinthians 1:18-20](#) (LSB) ¹⁸ But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no. ¹⁹ For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us—by me and Silvanus and Timothy—was not yes and no, but has become yes in Him. ²⁰ For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes. Therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.

All the promises of God are, in this wonderful Person [Jesus], yea and amen. That, in effect, is what our Lord is saying here. ~ Martyn Lloyd-Jones

The rest of the Old Testament gives a wondrous, perfect, and complete picture of the coming King and His kingdom, and Jesus the King came to fulfill it in every detail. ~ John MacArthur

[Luke 24:27](#) (LSB) ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He interpreted to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

[Luke 24:44](#) (LSB) ⁴⁴ Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

[John 5:39](#) (LSB) ³⁹ “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that bear witness about Me;

[Hebrews 10:7](#) (LSB) ⁷ “THEN I SAID, ‘BEHOLD, I HAVE COME, IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME, TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.’”

He had lived it fully and obeyed it perfectly. There was nothing, not a jot or a tittle, in connection with it which He had to the slightest extent broken or failed to fulfil. You see that in His life, as well as in His birth, He was made subject to the law. ~ Martyn Lloyd-Jones

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Jesus did not simply teach it fully and 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. ~ John MacArthur

Three ways that Jesus fulfilled the Law

The law was given, in a sense, in order to show men that they could never justify themselves before God, and in order that we might be brought to Christ. In Paul’s words it was meant to be ‘our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

Jesus fulfilled the Law’s moral demands

[Exodus 20:3](#) (LSB) ³ “You shall have no other gods before Me.

[Genesis 1:1](#) (LSB) ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

[Exodus 20:13](#) (LSB) ¹³ “You shall not murder.”

[Genesis 1:27](#) (LSB) ²⁷ And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

[Genesis 2:1-3](#) (LSB) ¹ Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts. ² And on the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on it He rested from all His work which God had created in making *it*.

[Mark 2:27](#) (LSB) ²⁷ And Jesus was saying to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

[2 Corinthians 5:21](#) (LSB) ²¹ He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

[Matthew 11:28-30](#) (LSB) ²⁸ “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. ³⁰ “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

[Colossians 2:16-17](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ Therefore, no one is to judge you in food and drink, or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day— ¹⁷ things which are *only* a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

He fulfilled the Law’s judicial commands

[Exodus 21:32-34](#) (LSB) ³² “If the ox gores a male or female slave, the owner shall give his *or her* master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned. ³³ “And if a man opens a pit, or if a man digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, ³⁴ the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead *animal* shall become his.

[Leviticus 20:10](#) (LSB) ¹⁰ ‘If *there is* a man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, one who commits adultery with his friend’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

God’s judicial law was given to provide unique identity for Israel as a nation that belonged to Jehovah. The laws relating to agriculture, settlement of disputes, diet, cleanliness, dress, and such things were special standards by

which His chosen people were to live before the Lord and apart from the world. ~ John MacArthur

[Matthew 21:42-43](#) (LSB) ⁴² Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures, ‘THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER *stone*; THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES’? ⁴³ “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation, producing the fruit of it.

One of the ways in which the law has to be fulfilled is that its punishment of sin must be carried out. This punishment is death, and that was why He died. ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

Jesus fulfilled the Law’s ceremonial obligations

[Matthew 27:51](#) (LSB) ⁵¹ And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.

[Hebrews 10:19-22](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

[Hebrews 10:4](#) (LSB) ⁴ For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

[Hebrews 10:10](#) (LSB) ¹⁰ By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Jesus Christ, by His death and all He has done, is an absolute fulfilment of all these types and shadows. He is the high priest, He is the offering, He is the sacrifice, and He has presented His blood in heaven so that the whole of the ceremonial law has been fulfilled in Him. ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

Unless I see all this fulfilled in Christ, unless He is my burnt offering, my sacrifice, my everything, all this ceremonial law still applies to me, and I shall be held responsible unless I perform it. But seeing it all fulfilled and carried out in Him, I say I am fulfilling it all by believing in Him and by subjecting myself to

Him. That is the position with regard to the ceremonial law. ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

If Jesus has fulfilled the Law then what is the Christian's relationship to it?

[Galatians 6:2](#) (LSB) ² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

[Luke 10:27](#) (LSB) ²⁷ And he answered and said, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

There is nothing more fatal than to regard holiness and sanctification as experiences to be received. No; holiness means being righteous, and being righteous means keeping the law. Therefore if your so-called grace (which you say you have received) does not make you keep the law, you have not received grace. You may have received a psychological experience, but you have never received the grace of God. What is grace? It is that marvellous gift of God which, having delivered a man from the curse of the law, enables him to keep it and to be righteous as Christ was righteous, for He kept the law perfectly. Grace is that which brings me to love God; and if I love God, I long to keep His commandments. 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them,' Christ said, 'he it is that loveth me.' ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

Jesus contended for the permanence of God's Holy Law ([Matt 5:18](#))

[Matthew 5:18](#) (LSB) ¹⁸ "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Conclusion:

The Gospel

[Matthew 11:28-30](#) (LSB) ²⁸ “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. ³⁰ “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

If the Holy Spirit has laid anything on your heart in the preaching of this sermon, please contact one of the leaders or speak to a mature Christian to answer your questions. I can be contacted at brandon.phillips@gracegainesville.org.

Kingdom Righteousness Comprehensively Challenges Pharisaical righteousness

Jesus confronted those who would nullify the Law ([Matt 5:19](#))

[Matthew 5:19](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ “Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others *to do* the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus commended those who would love the Law ([Matt 5:19](#))

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