

Sermon On The Mount Part 3

To Fulfill The Law

Matthew 5:17-20

Memory Verses: Matthew 5:17

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

The Sermon on the Mount, is not only the greatest sermon in the Bible because of who spoke it, Jesus our Lord, but because it presents us with a full picture of what it means to follow Him.

In *Matthew 5:1-12* we see a list of godly attributes for which we will be blessed called the Beatitudes. These show us the moral fiber and core values of a believer. In *verses 13-16* we are told how these core values and christian characteristics are, put into practice through a Christ centered strategy; be salt and be light!

We don't just hold the Beatitudes inside and hide them from the world, no, we let our light shine bright. We shine so bright that we are a city on a hill attracting people to Christ like moths to the flame. We do this through praying, caring, and sharing. We pray for the lost and for opportunities to love them. We care for them in service and build a relationship with them. And finally after having earned the right, we have spiritual conversations with them of eternal consequences where we lay out the Gospel plan of salvation before them and give them a choice to either deny or accept Christ. In doing so we preserve the spiritual design of God in the world and shine a light in the darkness of the world.

Which leads us to the final part of the introduction where Jesus addresses a controversial issue which will define the rest of the sermon - how to fulfill the law and live righteously before God and mankind. You see, up to this point it appears to the religious leaders of Israel, and thus to the people they lead, that Jesus is a rebel. His methods could be seen as a revolt against the law rather than an adherence to them. We see this in passages like *Matthew 15:1-9* and *Mark 7:1-13*. In this passage we again see the Pharisees have a huge problem with the fact that Jesus and his disciples will not wash their hands before supper. I think this particular Pharisee's name was Lisa Sloane.

You see, the Pharisee's traditions taught that washing hands before a meal was righteous and holy, even though it was not a law given to Moses by God. Jesus never failed to live according to every single one of the Old Testament Law, but he was also not going to allow the Old Testament law to be watered down by man's traditions and thus he held his ground. Jesus was against their legalism, not the law, but the Pharisees couldn't see the difference anymore.

So Jesus has to address this. Look with me in the sermon on the

mount in *Matthew 5:17-20*. It is clear that Jesus fights not against the law but for the law. He didn't come to abolish or get rid of the law. On the contrary he has come to fulfill the law. This morning we want to accomplish two things. First, we want to show you how Jesus has fulfilled the law. Secondly, we want to show you how the law still applies to those of us who are believers. The main point is this... **The Law shows us our sin and need to be saved. Jesus fulfills the Law by forgiving us and being our savior.**

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first thing we need to see here is that... **Jesus Fulfills The Law As The Perfect & Prophesied Messiah.** Jesus fulfills the law and the prophets in three distinct ways. First, Jesus is the promised Messiah foretold in the Law and by the Prophets who "will save His people from their sins." He proved this by fulfilling hundreds of prophecies concerning himself. One theologian submits that there are 456 unique prophecies concerning Jesus. Another statistician has concluded that the probability of Jesus fulfilling just 8 of these prophecies was one in 10¹⁷. That's a 1 with 17 0s behind it. It's enough to cover the face of Texas with silver dollars two feet deep. **The statistician concluded that, "any man who rejects Christ as the Son of God is rejecting a fact, proved perhaps more absolutely than any other fact in the world."**

But not only through prophecy, Jesus also proved that he was the promised Messiah through his miracles, the greatest of which was his own resurrection from the dead. As we often state, the resurrection of Christ proves He was who he said he was. With these two points there can be no doubt that Jesus was the one the prophets said would come and save the world.

Secondly, Jesus fulfilled the law by perfectly keeping the Law and its commandments. He was blameless and without sin. Even his enemies – the pharisees, Judas his betrayer, and those who convicted him like Pilate – couldn't find any fault in him. **In living a perfect life, Jesus fulfilled the moral laws; in his sacrificial death, Jesus fulfilled the ceremonial laws; and according to Romans 8:2, in his resurrection Jesus fulfilled the law of the spirit of life over the law of sin and death.**

This brings us to the third way Jesus fulfilled the law; by becoming the payment of breaking it. This is of course the most important one to remember. And, I want you to understand this; the Old Testament law could only be fulfilled by humans in one of two ways – they could either keep it completely or they could pay the penalty for breaking it. *Leviticus 17:11* tells us in no uncertain terms that a blood sacrifice must be used to pay the payment of sin because when we break the law we forfeit our lives and thus a life for a life. These are God's rules. Man didn't make them, he did. We must play by his rules.

And that presents a huge problem for us because humanity cannot keep the law completely. In fact, we can't even keep it slightly. Just take the 10 commandments for example. Have you ever given to something or someone the affection that belongs to God alone? Then you've had other gods before the one true God. Have you ever given your heart to a physical thing such as a house, car, or screen? Then you've made for yourselves graven images. Have you ever spoken the name of God or Jesus Christ in a way that was superficial? Have you called yourselves Christians yet defamed the name of Christ with your actions? Then you've taken the Lord's name in vain. Y'all, that's just the first three. We haven't even gotten to honoring your parents, not stealing, not lying, etc... We can't keep 10 of the 600 laws. If we were honest, we can't even keep 1. If the penalty for breaking the law is a life for a life, then surely all of our lives are forfeit. After all, we must fulfill the law, right?

And this is where Jesus steps in. He in essence says this. I know you can't keep the law to fulfill it, but I can fulfill it for you by becoming the life for a life that the law requires. As **Romans 10:4** says – Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. **Jesus died in our place, as the blood sacrifice which was demanded by our sin against the law, thus fulfilling our obligation to the law.** He fulfilled the law. Now we don't have to die, giving our life for a life, to fulfill the law, all we have to do is trust that Jesus has done it for us. **The Law shows us our sin and need to be saved. Jesus fulfills the Law by forgiving us and being our savior.**

The second thing we must see here today is that... **We Fulfill The Law As Those Motivated To Live For Christ.** So Jesus has done the work of fulfilling the law. That's great, but doesn't the New Testament teach that we no longer need to keep the law because we are under the grace of Jesus now? Well that certainly can't be the case according to **Mt5:18-19**. Nothing can be taken away from our obligation to the law, and none these commandments can be relaxed.

There are a few things that you need to know here. Let me try to explain as best as I can with the time we have left. First, **Hebrews 10:1** tells us that the law was only a shadow of the good things to come in Christ. **Galatians 3:23-25** tells us that the law was our guardian for a time in order to lead us to Christ. All this means is that the law was there to point us to our sinful state and our need for a savior.

Secondly, just because Jesus has fulfilled our obligation to the law through his sacrificial death, doesn't mean that we do not need to try to live according to the law. If the law shows us our sin, then the law also shows us our way to worship our savior. In essence, the law is God's guidelines to worship him and show him glory. We don't corrupt our

salvation by simply saying, well Jesus died for my sins... let's go sin some more. Instead, we say thank you Jesus for what you have done. I love you. And the way I'm going to show you that I love you is by keeping your commandments. In fact that's exactly what Jesus says in **John 14:15**.

Lastly, and this is very freeing, we aren't under the strict obligation to observe the exact letter of the law but the intent and purpose of the law. Look with me at this story in **Mark 2:23-28**, **Luke 6:1-5**, and **Matthew 12:1-8**. Growing up in church I was always told that it was wrong to work on Sundays. Perhaps you were told the same. Why? The fourth commandment. Keep the Sabbath Holy. According to the law if we were to keep the Sabbath holy we were not allowed to do any work on the Sabbath. We couldn't harvest our fields, we couldn't even cook our own food. The food was to be prepared a day beforehand. So when Jesus and his disciples start to pick some grain from field in order to eat it on the Sabbath, the pharisees freak out. How dare you pick food to eat on the Sabbath. And Jesus' response is huge for us. Yes, the letter of the law says do no work, but the intent is not to make people starve. The intent was worship. The key is found in **Matthew 12:6**. Jesus is greater than the words of the law. In him is grace. He desires mercy not sacrifice. The point is simple. Jesus desires that we keep the commandments, not in a legalistic rule following kind of way, but in a way that shows that we truly love him. The point is simple... **it's pointless trying to keep the commandments if your heart isn't in the right place.** In trying to keep the commandments, always keep worshipping Jesus as the primary motivation. We still keep the law because we still love Jesus. **The Law shows us our sin and need to be saved. Jesus fulfills the Law by forgiving us and being our savior.**

Application

Jesus has fulfilled the law and still wants us to live according to it. Just because we aren't beholden to the law for salvation doesn't mean that we shouldn't want to live according to it in order to worship our Lord. If Jesus has saved you, why would you not want to love him the way he wants to be loved? He clearly wants to be loved by us through an adherence to His word. **The Law shows us our sin and need to be saved. Jesus fulfills the Law by forgiving us and being our savior.**

Conclusion

So, three things this morning. One, accept the salvation of Christ. You can't keep the law and owe your life. Jesus has fulfilled the law on your account by giving his life. Two, love Jesus by keeping his commandments! Third, a very practical way of showing Jesus we love him by keeping his commandments is observing the Lord's Supper. I'm going to ask one of our elders to come and lead us in this time as we continue to worship through the law this morning.