

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)

Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

The whole OT anticipated the truth that the “Messianic King” is coming! Matthew presents the truth that the KING has come! He came offering the kingdom on the condition of REPENTANCE. The way into the kingdom is through REPENTANCE.

Slide # 2

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV)

17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 4 emphasizes repentance is necessary to enter the kingdom, Matthew 5 shows what that repentance looks like in the life. Matthew 5 presents Christ’s “kingdom ethic” of how the repentant should then live!

This kingdom ethic which is to be lived out in the lives of the repentant is reflected in the beatitudes which is then fleshed out in the remainder of the Sermon on the Mount.

Slide # 3

The Beatitudes – Matt. 5:3-10

Blessed “Kingdom Ethics”...

- Acknowledge spiritual poverty – “poor in spirit” – v. 3
- Godly sorrow – “those who mourn” – v. 4
- Humble submission to God’s reign – “the meek” – v. 5
- Pursue godliness – “hunger and thirst for righteousness” – v. 6
- Concern for others – “merciful” – v. 7
- Passion for holiness – “the pure in heart” – v. 8
- Strive for unity – “peacemakers” – v. 9
- Stand for what is right – “persecuted for righteousness” – v. 10

This is what is to characterize **“kingdom citizens”**. And those who live like this function as **“salt”** and **“light”** in the world. Christ now uses two metaphors (namely salt and light) to describe the influence His kingdom people will have in the world.

Matthew 5:13 (NKJV)

13 “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

“You” is emphatic referring to Christ’s disciples (Mt. 5:1-2). It is Christ’s PEOPLE themselves who are the SALT of the earth. They function as “salt” when they live out the beatitudes. The power of the “kingdom citizen” is seen in their metaphorical influence of being salt and light.

Note Christ does not say His disciples should become salt, but rather that as repenters this is what they already ARE! It is expected that true disciples will live out the beatitudes to one degree or another and as such they are the salt of the earth.

Salt in the ancient world served a number of constructive purposes in relation to food. It added flavor and it served as a preservative (cf. Mk. 9:50; Lk. 14:34-35).

As the “salt of the earth” Christ’s disciples bring seasoning to an otherwise “tasteless” world. They make life “palatable”. It is believers who bring a special kind of grace and pleasantness to a world full of unattractiveness – spiritually speaking.

However, salt in the time of Jesus was mainly used as a preservative and many commentators feel this is perhaps the main emphasis here (cf. Ex. 30:35; Lev. 2:13; 2 Kg. 2:21; Ezek. 16:4). Rubbed into meat salt would slow the decay. God’s people serve as a preserving agent in the context of a perverse and corrupt world.

If you think things are BAD now just remove God’s people from the equation and things deteriorate very quickly into utter ruin. 2 Thess. 2 speaks of the restrainer which is even now restraining the Antichrist from coming into position. I take it this restrainer is the Holy Spirit working through the Church (cf. 2 Thess. 2:6-8). When this restraining influence is removed all hell will break lose on planet earth.

Very early in the Tribulation Period, after the restrainer is removed, when the second seal is opened instantly you have worldwide calamity.

Slide # 4

Revelation 6:3–4 (NKJV)

3 When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come and see.”

4 Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to **take peace from the earth**, and that **people should kill one another**; and there was given to him **a great sword**.

Jesus said of those days, ***“because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.”*** (Mt. 24:12). The people of God are gone – the love is gone out of the world. The preserving element of “salt” is gone, and it is not a pretty picture.

In the meantime, God’s “kingdom citizens” slow the process of societies decay and corruption. We don’t stop it, but through the Holy Spirit we serve as a restraining, preserving, influence. It’s not politics, social reform, or legislation that is the SALT! Rather, it is God’s people themselves!

By the moral and ethical standards of God’s people [as seen in the beatitudes], by their higher value system, higher regard for all human life, Christ’s servants offer the flavor and preserving factor of their presence. – ***Ed Glasscock***

Christ then went on to address the condition of when the salt loses its flavor. Technically, pure salt cannot lose its flavor. But this is the point, the salt in the time of Christ, largely from the Dead Sea area, was often contaminated and therefore could lose its effectiveness. None of us as “salt” are totally pure in practice. We still have a few flesh contaminants that remain. Hence, the warning that we endeavor to remain a salty influence.

When Christ says, “***if the salt loses its flavor***” the word “***loses***” (Gk. moraine) can literally be translated as “***foolish***”. So, this could be translated, “***If the salt by made foolish***”.

Slide # 5

In the only other New Testament uses of the word, Romans 1:22 and 1 Cor. 1:20, the context is the foolishness of human reasoning in comparison with God’s plan. – ***Ed Glasscock***

The Rabbis metaphorically connected the idea of salt to that of wisdom.

Slide # 6

Colossians 4:5–6 (NKJV)

5 Walk in **wisdom** toward those who are outside, redeeming the time.

6 Let your speech always be with grace, **seasoned with salt**, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

The beatitudes are full of “salty” truth denoting the preserving wisdom of kingdom ethics. “***But if the salt loses it flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.***”

Salt that lost its flavor was “***good for nothing***” relative to food and therefore was thrown out on pathways to harden it as a walkway. If a disciple loses their “***saltiness***” they are no longer fit for kingdom work. If the beatitudes are not on display in a person’s life, they are no longer serving God’s kingdom purposes. It is very sad to come to the place of being “***good for nothing***” in terms of kingdom usefulness. There is a WARNING here! It can happen!

This was not a threat of losing one’s salvation but of being useless and cast aside in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The consequences of such failure does not involve loss of salvation but loss of reward at the Bema of Christ (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10). -***Ed Glasscock***

14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Once again Christ speaks emphatically saying to His disciples “You” are the light of the world. Prophetically, the OT prophets said the Messiah would bring the light (cf. Isa. 9:1-2; 42:6; 49:6). Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” (cf. Jn. 1:5-9; 8:12; 9:5; 12:35-36, 46).

So which is it? Is Jesus the light of the world or are we His people? The answer is Jesus is the SOURCE light with a capital “L”. We are in effect His light REFLECTORS (cf. 2 Cor. 3:18). We are light with a small “l”. In a sense we are an extension of Christ’s ministry (cf. Eph. 5:8-9; Phil. 2:15).

Our purpose as “kingdom citizens” is not only to bring flavor and a preservative quality to the world; but we are also to shine the light of God’s truth in how we live. We ourselves are to be the light.

Worldly mindedness or secularization is here condemned, but so also is aloofness or isolationism. – **William Hendriksen**

Light makes things clear. It helps people to see. We are the “light” in that we are means God uses to help people see His truth. This is our role. We are the only Bible some people will ever read!

In the OT as in the NT, [light] most frequently symbolizes purity as opposed to filth, truth or knowledge as opposed to error or ignorance, and divine revelation and presence as opposed to reprobation and abandonment by God. – **D.A. Carson**

Jesus compares the light of our witness to a city on a hill that cannot be hidden. He intends for our witness to be an obvious and open testimony and He emphasizes the point.

15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

The purpose of the lamp is to give off light, not to hide it under a basket. Rather it is put in a prominent place to give off as much light as possible for all who are in the house. The idea is that we as believers should seek as much exposure as possible for the giving off of our light. The light of our character, attitudes, and actions should be obvious to all around. If we are kingdom citizens, the beatitudes should shine brightly in our lives.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

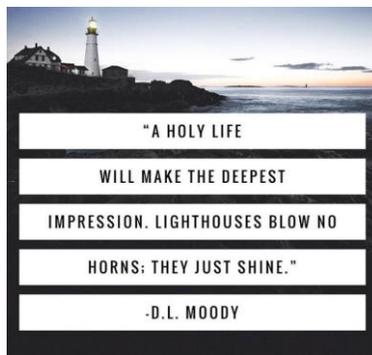
The emphasis here is that our LIGHT is seen in the form of good works. This is the outworking of the beatitudes in our lifestyle.

The goal is not to draw attention to self for the sake of self. The motivation here is that God be glorified. This is letting your light shine for God's glory not your own.

The emphasis is on the ministry of Christian character. The winsomeness of lives in which Christ is seen speaks louder than the persuasion of words. – **William MacDonald**

Yes, God uses words too, but the real power-punch is words that are shared through the prism of a life of integrity – a life of good works that point to God. Words without the good works of light in the life are probably going to fall on deaf ears. Only a life-changing kind of faith really makes an impact.

Slide # 7



This is the emphasis here in Matt. 5:16. Matt. 5:16 gives the first of 16 references to "your Father" in the Sermon on the Mount. Clearly this is directed to disciples who know God as their Father.

Many commentators think at this point that Jesus shifts gears and goes a whole new direction in terms of the discourse. But I don't think so. I think there is a CONTEXTUAL continuity in view here.

Slide # 8

- Repentance required to enter the kingdom. – 4:17
- What repentance looks like in the life (the beatitudes). – 5:1-12

- The influence of living out kingdom ethics. – 5:13-16
- The BASIS of kingdom ethics (righteousness). 5:17-20
- **Controlling Subject:** “The kingdom of heaven”.

17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

How do the OT Scriptures tie in with this “kingdom teaching” emphasis being put forth by Christ? Is this a whole new thing without any connection to the OT Scriptures? Christ makes the strong point that there is an ongoing connection!

The Law refers to the first five books of the Bible, often called the Law of Moses. The Prophets refers to the rest of the OT given through the prophets. The Law emphasizes the legal code the Jews were mandated to live under. The prophets called the people to repentance and to align with this code and also looked forward to a promised coming Messiah/deliverer.

“**The Law and the Prophets**” is often a way to refer to the entire OT. Sometimes a third division was referenced as seen in “**The Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms**” (Lk. 24:44). Either way this was a way of referencing the entirety of the OT Scriptures.

Christ did not come to destroy any part of the Old Testament. The word “**destroy**” (Gk. *kataluo*) means “to abolish”, “to throw down”, or “to demolish”. This word was often used in reference to the demolishing of a building in the sense of destroying it or tearing it down completely. Christ did not come to tear down and destroy the Law or the Prophets, but properly understood, to enhance its fulfillment.

Slide # 9

Jesus was not presenting a rival system to the Law of Moses and the words of the Prophets, but a true fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. – **The Bible Knowledge Commentary**

Christ said He did not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but rather to FULFILL. The key to understanding what Christ meant is having a proper understanding of the word “**fulfill**”. What did Christ mean when He said He came to “**fulfill**” the Law and the Prophets? In what sense did He fulfill the OT Scriptures?

There are actually three main ideas about what this may mean.

Slide # 10***Fulfill.... (Gk. pleroo)***

- Prophetically
- Obediently
- Spiritually

The problem is that in a sense all of these are true. And there certainly is overlap here.

Prophetically Christ came to fulfill all the OT types and prophecies. They all find fulfillment in Him as He taught the two disciples on the Emmaus Road.

Slide # 11**Luke 24:44 (NKJV)**

44 Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things must be fulfilled** which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”

Others take it that Christ fulfilled the Law and the Prophets in the sense that He **OBEYED** them perfectly. Repeatedly we find in the NT that Christ was without sin – which is to say He obeyed the LAW of God perfectly (cf. Jn. 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).

Slide # 12**1 John 3:4–5 (NKJV)**

4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and **sin is lawlessness.**

5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, **and in Him there is no sin.**

These views are true theologically, but in context I think there is a third view that is actually the preferred view or emphasis.

The word “***fulfill***” means “***to fill out***”, “***to expand***” or “***to complete***”. It does not mean to bring to an end, but rather to develop in a fuller sense.

The focus in this section is the relationship between Jesus’ teaching and that of the OT Scriptures, not so much on His actions.

So, the “**fulfill**” emphasis is probably not so much on Jesus “**obeying**” the Scriptures, but rather on His giving them their FULL INTENDED MEANING. In context this is the sense in the “**formula quotations**” where Jesus repeatedly says, “**But I say to you**” and then gives a DEEPER sense of the meaning of the Scriptures (cf. v. 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). Jesus the Messiah came to show us the true deeper intent of the OT Scriptures.

Slide # 13

We are not to think that Jesus’ teaching in the verses that follow was meant to alter, abrogate, or replace the moral content of the OT law. He was neither giving a new law nor modifying the old, but rather **explaining the true significance** of the moral content of Moses’ law and the rest of the OT. (emphasis mine) – **John MacArthur**

Slide # 14

Having laid the foundation of the message in the summary statements of the Beatitudes, Jesus now proceeds to show the superiority of His message to that of the law of Moses. The New Testament gospel is not contradictory to the Old Testament Law; rather it is the **fulfillment of the spiritual intention** of that law through the person and work of Jesus Christ. (emphasis mine)
– **Tim LaHaye**

Slide # 15

The entire OT is the expression of God’s will but is now to be taught according to **Jesus’ interpretation of its intent and meaning**.
(emphasis mine) – **ESV Study Bible**

Pause right here for a moment to stop and soak this in. If this is true that Jesus fulfills the OT in the sense of **showing its deeper meaning and intent** in a way that no one ever did before, what must this be saying about His person? Realize that God all over the place in the OT asserts that it is His prerogative to give the LAW. It’s God’s Law – PERIOD (cf. Lev. 18:1-5; 19:37; 26:3, etc.). Now Jesus is giving a DEEPER sense of it!

Slide 16

Matthew 7:28–29 (NKJV)

28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching,

29 for **He taught them as one having authority**, and not as the scribes.

Jesus taught like He was GOD – God in a human body – which of course is what He was.

Here Jesus presents Himself as [the Scriptures] sole authoritative interpreter, the one through whom alone the OT finds its valid continuity and significance. – **D.A. Carson**

In Christ, we are not under the legal code of the Mosaic Law.

Slide # 17

Romans 10:4 (NKJV)

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

But here is the deal. We as believers in Christ are not under the Law of Moses, but there is a “**glory of God**” ethic contained within the Law and that reality never changes (cf. Rom. 3:23). We are no longer under the Law of Moses, but that does not mean we are lawless. We as believers are now under the law of Christ as Paul calls it in 1 Cor. 9:21. Christ has now become our rule of life.

Our behavior is now molded, not by fear of penal punishment as seen under the law of Moses, but rather by a loving internal desire to please our Lord.

Here is the point of continuity. It is found in the issue of LOVE. God is love (cf. 1 Jn. 4:8). That never changes. This is always the standard. Jesus said the entire Law and the Prophets hangs on two commandments: Loving God with your all and loving your neighbor as yourself (Mt. 22:36-40). The Mosaic Law framed this in terms of outward obedience with a penal code for non-compliance. No one could live up to it.

But now Jesus comes along and teaches something DEEPER. It’s all about the HEART and God changing us from the inside, God empowering us from the inside to where its not merely about the legal code of the law, but rather about keeping the SPIRIT OF THE LAW. This is indeed a “fulfillment” of the Law on a deeper sense than was ever known before.

Slide # 18**Romans 8:1 (NKJV)**

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, **but according to the Spirit.**

Romans 8:4 (NKJV)

4 that the **righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us** who do not walk according to the flesh but **according to the Spirit.**

When we walk in the power of the Spirit, we actually fulfill the deeper intention of the law as taught by Christ, and as made possible by Christ in His first coming. Paul in Gal. 6:2 shows that the “***law of Christ***” is really the law of love. For us now the emphasis is not merely on outward conformity to a legal code, but rather yielding to the Spirit of which the chief fruit is love. And when we do this, we fulfill the deeper intention of the law – which is really all about a HEART yielded over to and controlled by God.

Slide # 19**Romans 13:8–10 (NKJV)**

8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for **he who loves another has fulfilled the law.**

9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore **love is the fulfillment of the law.**

Slide # 20**Galatians 5:13–14 (NKJV)**

13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but **through love serve one another.**

14 For **all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love** your neighbor as yourself.”

So, we are not under the Law of Moses, and yet we are under a higher Law – the Law of Christ, which is really the deeper spiritual fulfillment of the essence of the Mosaic Law. It's not contrary to it, but rather the fulfillment of it in a deeper sense – in a spiritual sense. It is in this sense that Christ came to fulfill or fill out the Law and the Prophets.

The legal code found in the Law of Moses is not binding today. However, the moral principles embodied in the Law that reflect the very unchanging nature of God are still binding. Hence, 9 of the 10 commandments in the old code are repeated and applied to the new code of the New Covenant that we are now under.

And indeed, through New Covenant Holy Spirit realities, by the grace of God, we can now live according to this higher standard as taught by Christ as we walk in the Spirit. We don't do so perfectly, but as we walk in the Spirit, we fulfill the deeper intention of the Law. There is no contradiction.

Nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in the NT, with an important distinction – they are not given as law (with penalty attached), but as training in righteousness for the people of God (2 Tim. 3:16b). – **William MacDonald**

Slide # 21

Christ's DEEPER FULFILLMENT of the Law

- Seen in His teaching.
- He modeled it.
- He inaugurated it through His blood of the New Covenant.
- He sent the Holy Spirit to empower it.

18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

“For assuredly” is a strong assertion of authority occurring 31 times in Matthew.

[Jesus] spoke with supreme authority; He did not need to quote another. Thus He put Himself on a level with God. – **Howard Vos**

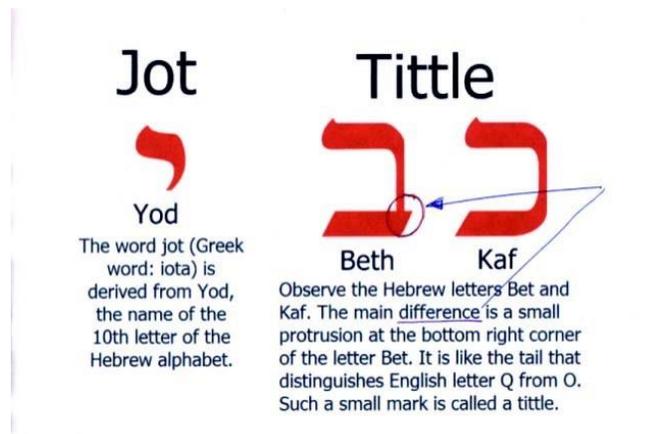
This is the first use of this “formula” (“For assuredly”) which signifies a statement of utmost importance. It is connected to the previous statement in verse 17 by the explanatory word “For” (Gk. *gar*). Thus, verse 18 affirms and further explains verse 17.

The deeper sense of the Law as fulfilled in Christ will not pass off the scene **“till heaven and earth pass away.”** And heaven and earth will not pass away until the conclusion of the Millennial Reign of Christ. All these kingdom Messianic prophecies yet need to be fulfilled. And so the deeper moral application of the Law as found in Christ endures and will be ultimately fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom in relation to the fulfillment of New Covenant promises.

Far from being abolished, the Law and the Prophets are not going anywhere. Christ said, **“one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”** The law as a system was repealed, but the deeper spiritual essence of it as fulfilled in Christ remains as a New Covenant reality as seen in the lives of Christ’s people.

The “jot” refers to the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet; the “tittle” refers to a small stroke that distinguished from one letter to another.

Slide # 22



Jesus here emphasizes the inerrancy and authority of the entirety of the OT Scriptures right down to the very letter, yea, down to the smallest part of every letter. That is total inerrancy! Thus, Jesus affirms the HIGHEST view of the inspired Scriptures possible.

The deeper application and fulfillment of the OT Scriptures will continue to be completely relevant and binding UNTIL all is fulfilled. It will apply until the heaven and earth pass away – meaning throughout the duration of the Millennial kingdom which will then give way to a new heaven and earth.

Slide # 23

2 Peter 3:13 (NKJV)

13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth **in which righteousness dwells.**

Things will be different in the new heavens and earth. Then will be a context in which perfect righteousness dwells and reigns supreme. Until then the deeper significance of the law as fulfilled in Christ remains relevant in the kingdom people of Christ.

19 **Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, 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.**

This instruction is directed to Christ's disciples.

Since the deeper essence and spiritual application of the Law, as applied by Christ remains, then it is ALL to be taken seriously. The deeper essence of the Law as fulfilled in New Covenant living is not to be set aside in any way.

The word "breaks" means "to annul" or "make invalid". Before you say one of the commandments doesn't apply you might want to think about his verse. Remember 9 of the 10 commandments from the Law of Moses are repeated and applied to the New Covenant we are now under.

Slide # 24

Only where the NT reiterates the OT commands are believers to keep the Law; but then it becomes "the Law-as-fulfilled in Jesus," also known in the NT as the "law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2).

– ***The Moody Bible Commentary***

Slide # 25

These commandments are usually taken as referring to the OT law, but it may be that *these* looks forward to what follows – Christ's deeper interpretation of the law, which indicates the way to its true fulfillment. – ***The New Bible Commentary***

In other words, the deeper spiritual application of the moral principles of the law as fulfilled in Christ are the "commandments" in view.

The beatitudes are ALL to be applied. The commandments given in the Sermon on the Mount are to be kept and taught. These kingdom ethics have abiding value. The law of love that fulfills the spirit of the law in an even deeper sense is to be applied at every point.

The moral law of God is to be taken seriously at every point. The entirety of Scripture is important and rightly divided we are to apply it all. As Paul says, “**All Scripture is given by inspiration**” and its all profitable “**for instruction in righteousness**” (2 Tim. 3:16).

Christ is here is emphasizing one’s view of the WHOLE book – the whole counsel of God. There are so many “**piecemeal Christians**” who seemingly pick and choose the commandments they want to keep. The role of men and women many think can be fudged on. Many compromise on biblical separation regarding immorality. Many promote a “Lordless gospel” that basically serves as a license to sin. Antinomianism (lawlessness) in the name of GRACE has no regard for the “law of God” in any sense! And on and on. Paul emphasized teaching the “**whole counsel of God**” (Acts 20:28). Nothing in the Bible is insignificant.

Slide # 26

1 Corinthians 7:19 (NKJV)

19 Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.

There are greater and lesser commandments, but the point is they are all important. For example, jay walking does not rise to the level of rape. But as “kingdom citizens” we should see to apply all Christ’s commandments in all things both great and small. Christ calls us to maintain a HIGH VIEW of Scripture in its entirety and then live and teach accordingly. How seriously we take the Scriptures reflects on how seriously we take God!

Slide # 27

The rabbis recognized a distinction between “light” commandments (such as tithing garden produce) and “weighty” commandments (such as those concerning idolatry, murder, etc.). Jesus demands a commitment to both the least and the greater commandments yet condemns those who confuse the two (cf. 23:23-24). The entire OT is the expression of God’s will but is **now to be taught according to Jesus’ interpretation of its intent and meaning.** (emphasis mine)

– **ESV Study Bible**

But again, we must rightly divide the Word. We are not under the law as a system. The ceremonial law does not apply, but the morals of the law do have application as interpreted and applied by Christ.

Doing and teaching go together. Certainly, we teach by our example. If we don't practice biblical separation in regard to worldliness, then we are breaking the commandment of God and by way of influence teaching others to do so as well. Our practice teaches in the sense of influence.

In view here are disciples who are all headed to the kingdom. All in view are kingdom citizens. But some in the kingdom who were lax on what they considered the "least" of commandments will be "called least in the kingdom" and those who took all the commandments seriously in the doing and teaching of them will be "called great" in the kingdom.

Some are salty Christians, and some lose their flavor. Some maintain a HIGH VIEW of Scripture taking all the commandments seriously, and some don't. Some will be called least in the kingdom and some called great. There will be differing rewards of status in the kingdom, even though all true believers will be there.

Relatively speaking, there will be those in the kingdom who have a small or relatively unimportant position. And this will be because they were compromising Christians not taking the Word of God very seriously.

Slide # 28

Those who are not opposed in principle to God's law but have avoided its lesser requirements will not be cast out of the Kingdom but will have a lesser reward in the kingdom.

– ***Wycliffe Bible Commentary***

Slide # 29

The wonder is that such people are permitted in the kingdom at all – but then, entrance into the kingdom is by faith in Christ. A person's position in the kingdom is determined by his obedience and faithfulness while on earth. The person who obeys the law of the kingdom – that person shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

– ***William MacDonald***

But lest we think it doesn't really matter then how people live, at least they will be in the kingdom, Christ goes on to say this.

20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Once again, we see the voice of AUTHORITY in Christ saying, “**For I say to you**”. This phrase is found 14 times in the sermon on the mount (cf. 5:18, 20, 22, 26, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44, 6:2, 5, 16, 25, 29).

This is the first time the Lord uses the clause, “I say to you”. By it He shows His authority as King to determine who will enter the kingdom.

– Stanley Toussaint

The law was an external emphasis and the righteousness exhibited by the scribes and Pharisees was all about externals. It was an external self-righteousness. In contrast Christ emphasized a response of the HEART saying, (Mt. 5:8). “**Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**”

The righteousness that will enter the kingdom is based on true repentance as seen in chapters 3 and 4. On the basis of repentance and faith God imputes righteousness to the true believer.

Slide # 30

Genesis 15:6 (NKJV)

6 And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Romans 4:22–24 (NKJV)

22 And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him,

24 but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

But here is Jesus point. Those who have a true repentance/faith will have the outworking of righteousness in their life. It works from the inside out - not the outside in. The scribes and Pharisees had it backwards. They emphasized an external righteousness, but that never affects the heart and will never get you to the kingdom.

This must have been shocking to hear. After all, in contemporary Judaism the scribes were the religious scholars, and the Pharisees were the religious conservatives. If anyone in that culture was expected to make it to the kingdom it was these people. But Jesus presents a higher standard saying, their merely external/formal/outward/legalistic form of righteousness would not get them there. As Isaiah 64:6 says, “***all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags***”.

All the way through here Jesus is emphasizing a deeper spiritual dynamic. True conversion results in a changed heart that applies the spirit of the law and not merely the legal code of it. The result is seen in changed lives that are salt and light in the world.

Slide # 31

I have always felt that Matthew 5:20 was the key to this important sermon. The main theme is true righteousness. The religious leaders had an artificial, external righteousness based on Law. But the righteousness Jesus described is a true and vital righteousness that begins internally, in the heart. – ***Warren Wiersbe***

In effect, Jesus is teaching that where there is true repentance and faith there will also be the outworking of practical righteousness in the life – certainly to some degree. The remainder of the Sermon builds on this truth and amounts to being a commentary on Matt. 5:20.

Slide # 32

In the verses that follow, Jesus unpacks the full moral significance of the law, and shows that **the righteousness the law calls for actually involves an internal conformity to the spirit of the law** rather than mere external compliance to the letter. (emphasis mine)
– ***John MacArthur***

Slide # 33

Three categories of people...

- 1) Salt and Light Disciples
Keep the commandments – great in the kingdom
- 2) Disciples who lose their flavor
Break the commandments – least in the kingdom
- 3) Not enter the kingdom

If New Covenant realities – the deeper fulfillment of the Law that Christ came to achieve – if these “kingdom ethics” don’t impact your life, then be very sure that you not even enter the kingdom.

True story: Some Christians were out witnessing to people. They met four young men and began to share Christ with them. However, these young men insisted that they were already Christians and as evidence showed them their “***Christian Tattoos***”. Those witnessing proceeded to emphasize to them their tattoos did not make them real Christians.

Outward religious externals will never get you into the kingdom. True kingdom citizens have had a heart conversion involving true repentance. This then demonstrates itself in the life. Are you merely an external Christian (a “tattoo Christian”); or are you a true internal Christian who has a faith that works from the inside out demonstrating itself in the life?
“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

Be among them!