

BUT I SAY TO YOU...

Kingdom people are defined by true repentance (an internal reality), which then demonstrates itself in practical righteousness (an external reality).

Everything builds on the righteousness Christ came to fulfill in the lives of His people as seen in Matthew 5:20. The remainder of the Sermon on the Mount in Matt. 5-7 is essentially a further unpacking of the truth in Matthew 5:20. The theme of the remainder of the Sermon in essence answers the question: ***“How shall we then live as kingdom people?”***

As believers living in the Church Age, we note the prominent NT emphasis on the Spirit Who now lives inside of us. And we note that the fruit of the Spirit is really a ***“kingdom emphasis”*** because the New Covenant and the kingdom go together. Really, the fruit of the Spirit could, in a sense, be called the fruit of the kingdom. Kingdom living is Spirit-filled living based on our New Covenant relationship with God through Christ.

Matthew 5:21-48 is often called “The Six Antitheses” because all six sections begin with some variation of Christ saying, ***“But I say to you...”***. (cf. Mt. 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43).

Six Sections – Six Topics

- 1) Murder/Anger – Mt. 5:21-26
- 2) Adultery – Mt. 5:27-30
- 3) Divorce – Mt. 5:31-32
- 4) Oaths – Mt. 5:33-37
- 5) Vengeance – Mt. 5:38-42
- 6) Love for Enemies – Mt. 5:43-48

What was the point? Didn't Israel already know about murder, adultery, divorce, etc.? Well, yes, they did. But the DEEPER teaching of Christ shows that the Law has an internal dimension. The Law is not merely to be externalized but also internalized. It's not merely about our actions, but also about our thoughts that lead to actions.

By the way this is New Covenant stuff. The New Covenant is all about the ministry of the Spirit of changing people from the inside out. It relates inherently to our inward thoughts and disposition.

Jeremiah 31:33 (NKJV)

33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: **I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts**; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

This is the aspect of the Law that Jesus came to fulfill in a deeper sense – in the lives of His people.

Romans 14:17 (NKJV)

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 2:12 (NKJV)

12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

As God's people living in the church age, we are not yet in the kingdom. But we are kingdom people who are headed for the kingdom. And as such we should live accordingly. Kingdom living is Spirit-filled living defined by such things as righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

In applying this internal aspect of the Law, Jesus presents this DEEPER understanding based upon His prophetic authority. All the way through the Sermon on the Mount, there is a special emphasis on the fact that Jesus taught with unique authority and not as the scribes.

Who would have the audacity to come along after the Jews had the Law for 1500 years and say, *"Oh, by the way, let me tweak this a little bit for you. Let me enlighten you on the DEEPER reality of the Law; Let me tell you that I have come to FULFILL it in a DEEPER sense."* Who in the world could possibly have this kind of authority? Well, only the Messiah Who is God in a human body which is exactly Who Jesus was. Moses was considered the GREATEST prophet in the history of Israel. At the end of the book of Deuteronomy, it says in Deut. 34:10, ***"But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses..."***.

Moses, who was the GREATEST prophet in the OT, said that God would in the future raise up another unique prophet who like him would speak the Word of God with unique power and authority.

Deuteronomy 18:15 (NKJV)

15 "The Lord your God will raise up for you **a Prophet like me** from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear,

Deuteronomy 18:18–19 (NKJV)

18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put **My words in His mouth**, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, **I will require it of him**.

The Jews rightly considered this prophecy in Deut. 18 a Messianic prophecy. In Acts 3:22-23, Peter plainly said this was fulfilled in the Person of Jesus Christ. Jesus as the Messiah ultimately fulfills the office of Prophet, Priest, and King, all in ONE person, perfectly. Jesus was MORE than just a Prophet, but He was a Prophet par excellence on a level higher than any other. He not only spoke for God – He was God!

This is the level of authority seen in Him as He explains and brings to fulfillment a DEEPER dimension of the Law than anything ever realized before.