

# The Law of Love

📖 Matthew 5:43-48

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Tonight let's turn to the last of the six contrasts between the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees regarding the law vs the teachings of Jesus. "You have heard it said...but I say to you." After we develop this one we'll show there are three categories these six contrasts can be organized into that point to one OT command and then we will deduce the principles taught by each of the six so we see the flavor of the Law and Jesus' teaching concerning the Law.

Jesus in 5:21-47 uses a method of teaching that involves contrasts. As we've been working through this have you deciphered the nature of each contrast? Is it that Jesus taught the opposite of the scribes and Pharisees? No, it's that Jesus taught a different interpretation than the scribes and Pharisees but not necessarily the opposite. He usually agreed with them to some extent. What did we say was the big difference? 5:20. Righteousness, a different quality of righteousness. On one hand, if one followed the interpretations of the scribes and the Pharisees he had a certain quality of righteousness. How have we characterized that righteousness? As external. It was surface, it was outward, it was act only. On the other hand, if one followed the interpretations of Jesus as given here then it resulted in a different quality of righteousness. How did we characterize this righteousness? Internal. It was deep, it was inward, it was related to the thinking processes of the heart. And God looks where? At the heart. So Jesus got to the real issue.

What then is the key verse of the sermon? 5:20. "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." Did the people really think that the scribes and the Pharisees were the most righteous people? I doubt it. That is commonly thought but I doubt it because in Matt 3 when John was baptizing there were many coming out to him to be baptized. And what did we say baptism was doing? Changing their identification. By undergoing John's baptism they were severing their identification with the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees and identifying with John and his message of the at hand kingdom. So I think most already saw the hypocritical righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees and were looking for something else. There was

a Messianic expectation at that time and John proclaimed He was already around because the kingdom was at hand.

What 5:20 is stating is that for the kingdom to come a generation needed to have a quality of righteousness that surpassed that of the scribes and Pharisees. I'm saying the issue here was generational entrance into the kingdom, not individual entrance. There was always the truth that individual entrance was based on faith. All who believe will be raised to enter the kingdom when it comes to the earth. But the issue here is under what condition will the kingdom actually come so that one generation will enter? The kingdom was at this time 'at hand'. By 'at hand' we mean the kingdom was on the verge of breaking into history, coming from heaven to earth with all the accompanying judgments of God that destroy the Gentile kingdoms and in their places comes His own righteous kingdom that will fill the earth. But for it to actually come one generation has to demonstrate loyalty to God's through the Law of Moses. This was a genuine offer of the kingdom being made to that generation. It was not theater. The offer was so genuine that if they had conformed their lives to the Law the kingdom would have come. So we must view this as a genuine offer and a genuine possibility, from the human standpoint.

What is Jesus doing in 5:21-48? Clarifying the difference in righteousness; the external, what they'd been taught, vs the internal, which He was teaching. Let's review. The first contrast is in 5:21-26; the Law of Murder. The scribes and Pharisees interpreted the law to mean thou shalt not physically murder but Jesus said thou shalt not allow anger to develop in your heart because that is the root of murder but instead you should reconcile your differences quickly. The second contrast is 5:27-30; the Law of Adultery. The scribes and Pharisees interpreted the law to mean thou shalt not physically commit the act of adultery but Jesus said thou shalt not look upon a woman with lust in your heart because that is the root of physical adultery. Instead you should not set up stumbling blocks within yourself that would cause you to stumble and fall. The third contrast is 5:31-32; the Law of Divorce. The scribes and Pharisees interpreted the law to mean that divorce was permitted for any and every cause, even if your wife burned your toast, but Jesus said divorce was permitted only if she was sexually unfaithful and that therefore the divorces that were occurring were illegitimate and so the marriages were illegitimate and in God's eyes adultery was taking place. The fourth contrast is 5:33-37; the Law of Oaths. The scribes and Pharisees interpreted the law to mean that only oaths that invoked the name of God were required to be kept, thus allowing them to invoke other things and not be bound to the oath, but Jesus said oaths invoking heaven, earth or Jerusalem were binding because those things were connected to God. When oath taking becomes so degraded that they are used to justify lying under the guise of truth Jesus says just let your yes be yes and your no be no. The fifth contrast is 5:38-42; the Law of Retaliation. The scribes and Pharisees interpreted the law to mean they were duty bound to press for the full punishment of the law in minor issues, but Jesus said they should not oppose such people but rather be

gracious to them and not make a federal case out of it. Once we get through the sixth contrast tonight we will see that they fit neatly into three categories that altogether violate another OT commandment and that this commandment actually stands behind every commandment that exists. And therefore it's the violation of this commandment by the scribes and Pharisees which is the most serious of all.

Before we look at the three categories and the one commandment let's look at the sixth and final contrast in 5:43-48. What's the law under investigation here? The Law of Love. **You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'** Did the OT teach this? Part of this it did teach and part of this it did not teach. Which part did it teach? The first part, which is why some of your Bible's set the first part in a different font to distinguish it from the second part. Where does this OT teach **YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR?** Check your margin. Lev 19:18. Let's see what this law meant and then see what the scribes and Pharisees taught. Here's where we find the command to LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR. We saw this verse last week with respect to the law of retaliation. "You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD." Alright, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Is the command to love yourself? Just to be clear because there are a lot of false teachers in churches who are teaching that we need to love ourselves. The Bible doesn't teach self-love. When you find these statements to 'love others as yourself' it is referring to the manner in which love ought to be expressed toward others; namely, in the same manner in which you love yourself, love others. Well, how do you love yourself? In a manner that is habitual and requires little or no thought. The concept of love here is taking care of yourself...How do you take care of yourself? You do it without even thinking about it. It's natural to wash your body, comb your hair, brush your teeth, bandage your wounds, etc...all the basics. So what is the meaning of the OT commandment to love your neighbor? To love your neighbor's in the same manner that you love yourself, meaning habitually, without requiring thought. Who is one's neighbor in this context? One's neighbor does not refer to the person next door as it does in our society but to one's fellow Jew. That is helpful because when we read in the NT epistles that we should love our neighbor who is it talking about? Our fellow Christian. So they were to love their fellow Jew in the same sense that they cared for themselves, which is in a natural, habitual fashion, without thought, it should be a no-brainer.

But what did the scribes and Pharisees teach it meant? Barbieri says, "The Pharisees taught that one should **love** those near and dear to him..."<sup>1</sup> Pentecost says, "The Pharisees entertained in order to receive hospitality in return. They loved the elaborate greetings in the marketplace in which one sought to outdo the other in heaping accolades on the one being greeted." In short they displayed love to those close to them and only to others out of self-interest; to get something out of it for themselves in

return. It was an external love only and did not have the proper internal attitude. Christ was more concerned with the internal attitude of the heart.

In addition they taught **and hate your enemies**. Is this taught in the OT? No. As Toussaint says, "The clause is only an inference and an invention of the rabbis spoken as their exposition of the law in their synagogues."<sup>2</sup> Yet it is understandable why they made this inference seeing as hate is the opposite of love. As Constable says, "...this seemed to many of the Jewish religious teachers to be the natural opposite of loving one's neighbors."<sup>3</sup> By application what can we learn from these observations? We must be very careful when drawing corollary or inferential truths. When we do we are in great danger of adding to Scripture and thereby negating the true intent. The OT did not command the Jews to **hate your enemy** but because it is the natural opposite of loving one's neighbors as well as being natural to the sinful flesh, they not only taught that it did but then found passages to support this invented teaching. How many times do people do this and then have a verse to support it (or so they think)?

For example, turn to Ps 26:5. Here's a Psalm of David and he's singing as he commonly did about how his heart was open before the Lord and inviting the omniscient Lord to examine him and test his heart to see whether there was any evil way in him. In that context what does he utter in verse 5, "I hate the assembly of evildoers, And I will not sit with the wicked." The scribes and Pharisees used this verse to justify hating their enemies. They were merely following David. Is that interpretation justified? No. Why not? It doesn't say David hated evildoers. What does it say? David hated the assembly of evildoers. Why did David hate the assembly of evildoers? Because that's where they cooked up evil. That's where they planned wickedness. David is saying he did not like and did not take part in such meetings where criminal acts were deliberated. If he did that would show there was evil in his heart. But he didn't. So there's really no justification here for the claim that the Jew was to hate his enemy. They were grasping to support their invented doctrine.

Turn to Psalm 139:19. This is probably the strongest passage they cited in support of their hatred for their enemies. "O that You would slay the wicked, O God; Depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed. <sup>20</sup>For they speak against You wickedly, And Your enemies take *Your name* in vain. <sup>21</sup>Do I not hate those who hate You, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? <sup>22</sup>I hate them with the utmost hatred; They have become my enemies." What does David mean by "I hate them with the utmost hatred, they have become my enemies?" How did they become David's enemies? Because they were first God's enemies. What's he really communicating? His love for God above all else! Does it anywhere say that David hated his own enemies? No. It only says that David hated God's enemies. So the scribes and Pharisees first made a wrong inference and second tried to find support for their wrong inference by misusing Scripture.

Do people do that today? All the time. They have these erroneous beliefs and they want the authority of the Bible behind their beliefs and so they go to the Bible and rip verses out of their context in order to justify their beliefs. All they are doing is playing God. It's a serious crime and yet people get away with it. The bottom line is they are autonomous and in rebellion against God and they'd rather believe what they want to believe than submit to what God says. They're lawless. I only ask of you what I ask of myself, and that is to always submit to the grammatical-historical-contextual meaning of the text whether it agrees with what you like or not, whether it makes you feel good or not. That's all irrelevant. What is relevant is what God actually means and once we've deciphered that we accept it on His authority. The scribes and the Pharisees had not done that.

Now how might we address it with them? If the OT law to love one's neighbor really inferred that they should hate their enemies then how does that reconcile with Exod 23:4? Turn to Exod 23:4. We could ask them about this passage. "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey wandering away, you shall surely return it to him." Why, if I am to hate my enemy, am I going to waste my Saturday afternoon chasing his animal down just to return it to him? Why be kind to him? Because God said to be kind to him. How then does that reconcile with hating one's enemies? It's a contradiction. Same thing in verse 5, "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying *helpless* under its load, you shall refrain from leaving it to him, you shall surely release *it* with him." So you help your enemy. That was the spirit of the Law but the scribes and Pharisees had made a wrong inference from a Law and then found Scripture to support their wrong inference but you can see from these verses that their inference was contradicted by other Scriptures. So they really had no excuse.

Let's see how Jesus addresses it in Matt 5:44. **You have heard it said...But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.** That was the true spirit of the Law. And it's essentially what we just read in Exod 23. Pentecost says, "The Pharisees thought they knew the full implication of the law...However, Christ showed that true righteousness exceeds what the law demanded, and true righteousness causes the believer to love enemies."<sup>4</sup> To love one's enemies is to love them as you would love yourself, meaning to care for them in the same way that you would naturally take care of yourself. Some say that *αγαπᾶο* here excludes emotion but that is nonsense. The story of the Good Samaritan illustrates the kind of internal emotion and external care that they should have for their enemies (cf Lk 10:29ff). In the story, Jesus does not designate who the man is who was robbed, stripped, beaten and left for dead. He merely refers to him as "a man." This was on purpose. It showed that they were to love all men, regardless of their background, by giving them the kind of care they would give themselves. After the priest and the Levite passed the man by, the Samaritan alone felt compassion and stopped to care for him. Who then was the man who loved as the spirit of the Law demanded? The Samaritan. That story illustrates the kind of love Jesus said fulfilled the righteousness requirements of the OT Law. It was a righteousness composed of internal compassion to help those

who are in need, whoever they may be. If they only had an external love for those who were close to them or to get something out of it, what good was that?

Not only were they to love their enemies but they were to **pray for those who persecuted** them. Prayer for our enemies is a manifestation of love. Such love is not humanly possible but wrought by God in the heart as we conform to Him. Jesus demanded of that generation a righteousness that far surpassed that of the scribes and Pharisees. Stott points out that Jesus led the way in this respect. "Jesus seems to have prayed for his tormentors actually while the iron spikes were being driven through his hands and feet; indeed the imperfect tense suggests that he kept praying, kept repeating his entreaty, 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Luke 23:34). If the cruel torture of crucifixion could not silence our Lord's prayer for his enemies, what pain, pride, prejudice or sloth could justify the silencing of ours?"<sup>5</sup> So then Jesus both taught and lived the true spirit of the Law.

In Matt 5:45 Jesus challenges them "show that they are" **sons of your Father who is in heaven**. The original Greek should not be translated "so that you may be sons of your Father. As shown from verse 48 God was already their Father. They needed to show that they were His sons. In Exodus 3-4 God established the imagery that He is their Father and Israel was His son. Hosea 11 says "Out of Egypt I have called My Son." Egypt was the birth canal out of which the nation Israel was born. At Mt Sinai God gave His son instruction to live by. His hope was that His son would learn loyalty to Him through His word and become a mature son. How did they fare? Isaiah 1:2 says, "Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; For the LORD speaks, "Sons I have reared and brought up, But they have revolted against Me." They had not learned loyalty and were therefore exiled out of the land (no longer to enjoy blessing in the land). God's aim was for Israel to grow from an infant son born out of Egypt into a mature son so they could meet the prerequisite for enjoying the land on a permanent basis in the kingdom. When God sent His King to them they were to have become that mature son. The Sermon on the Mount is the King coming to a son that is still immature. They needed to become mature. They could do so only by returning to the true spirit and intent of the Law which their Father had given. That is what this sermon is all about!

The Law required them to love their enemies and pray for them. If they did they would show themselves to be sons of their Father and the kingdom would come. A son shows himself to have become mature by mirroring the characteristics of his father. Israel was being challenged to show themselves as true sons by emulating their Father in heaven. What was their Father like? Verse 45, **He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous**. He takes of His own goods and gives them to others indiscriminately. This principle is often called common grace; grace because it is unmerited favor shown and common because it is shown to all men. God gives His sunlight to men whether they are **good** or **evil** and God gives rain to men whether they are **righteous** or **unrighteous**. If this is how Israel's heavenly Father is, shouldn't

they as true sons emulate Him? Plummer says, "They show their parentage by their moral resemblance to the God who is Love..." If they had grown to maturity they would have loved and prayed for their enemies but as it was they were not!

Verse 46 reveals their immaturity. **For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?** It is easy to **love those who love you**. It is quite natural. But it is an immature love. What is difficult about loving those who love you? Nothing. What is difficult and unnatural is loving those who do not love you. That is a mature love. They needed to love those who hated them and thereby show that they were mature sons of their Father who gives to all without discrimination. By illustration he compares those who only love who love them to the worst of all in Jewish society, the tax collector, saying, **Do not even the tax collectors do the same?** The **tax collectors** were lumped in with drunks, harlots and all the other low-life of society. There is not one verse that looks favorably on tax collectors. Why? Because "they were working for Rome; they had sold themselves out to Rome, for their own personal enrichment." And even the tax collectors loved those who paid their taxes. What then is Jesus saying about the scribes and Pharisees? That they were no better than the tax collectors. This was a slap in the face of the leadership.

Verse 47, **If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others?** To greet **your brothers** is very natural. There's nothing unique about it. It's an immature action. Anybody and everybody does that. As Jesus says it, **Do not even the Gentiles do the same?** This is another low blow because...who were **the Gentiles** to the Jews? They were dogs, even lower than a Jewish tax collector like Matthew, they were unclean heathen, utter filth and yet even the utter filth greeted their fellow utter filth. So what then was Jesus saying about the scribes and Pharisees? That they were no better than Gentiles! And you can see, with this kind of accusation that Jesus is really going to raise the ire of the scribes and Pharisees when they start to interact. He's not pulling any punches. It's a serious situation. The scribes and Pharisees were sons of their Father but they did not mirror the character of their Father. They had had plenty of time to learn loyalty to God as a son and lead the nation in becoming like God but they had not. The nation should have distinguished themselves from all the other nations on the earth in their love for others.

Verse 48 comes in that context and this is a summary of the intent of all six contrasts. **Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.** In context what does it mean to **be perfect?** It means to live according to the true spirit of the Law and not as the scribes and the Pharisees. Perfection is that moral uprightness that befits a son of the heavenly Father. What then was Jesus looking for? A perfect person in the sense of the English word? No. He was looking for a mature generation that had learned loyalty to Him through His word.<sup>6</sup> All along He had wanted a generation that imitated Himself in their inner character and thoughts. There had always been individuals who met this standard but never

a generation. Walvoord agrees that "Perfection here refers to uprightness and sincerity of character with the thought of maturity in godliness or attaining the goal of conformity to the character of God. While sinless perfection is impossible, godliness, in its biblical concept, is attainable."<sup>7</sup> Glasscock is helpful when he says, "The word perfect (*teleios*) actually does not mean without flaw or sinless but implies to be "complete, whole, mature." The comparative phrase "as your heavenly Father is perfect" indicates that the character of God's people should reflect His character."<sup>8</sup> God was looking for His Son Israel to have learned loyalty to Him and become mature.<sup>9</sup> The kingdom was 'at hand,' on the verge of breaking into history, but it had not broken in. It will only break in when a generation of Israel learns loyalty to God, reflecting the very nature of their heavenly Father and thus welcoming the King. When a generation of Israel gets to that point the kingdom will come. Are there any questions so far?

Having worked through the six contrasts of 5:21-47 we can now go back and categorize these into three groups to see that the scribes and Pharisees had actually violated another Law that stood behind all of these. First, they had subtracted from the Law, second, they had changed the Law and third, they added to the Law. The first and second laws are examples of subtractions from the Law. The scribes and Pharisees *took away* from the true intent of the Law. With the first law, the Law of Murder, they interpreted it to refer only to the physical act itself. Jesus said it also referred to the heart attitude of anger. In other words, they did not take it far enough. Thus they subtracted from the true intent of the Law. With the second law, the Law of Adultery, they did the same. They interpreted it to refer only to the physical act of adultery. Jesus said it also referred to the heart of lust. Again they did not take it far enough. This was a subtraction from the Law. The third and fourth laws are examples of changes to the Law. The scribes and Pharisees changed the meaning of the Law. With the third law, the Law of Divorce, they changed the meaning of the word "indecency" to mean any and every cause rather than its true meaning of "sexual unfaithfulness." This change destroyed the true intent of the Law. With the fourth law, the Law of Oaths, they changed the meaning of the phrase "do not swear falsely by My name" to permit them to swear by other things without explicitly saying the name of God. This change nullified the true meaning of the Law. Not only did they subtract and change but with the fifth and sixth laws they added to the Law. With the fifth law, the Law of Retaliation, they added the idea that one was required to punish to the full extent of the Law without tempering that punishment with grace. Their addition to the law distorted the Law.

With the sixth law, the Law of Love, they added the idea that one was not only to love his neighbors but also to hate his enemies. This was an addition to the Law that contorted the true spirit of the Law.

Subtracting from, changing and adding to are the three basic ways one may distort what God has written. Turn to Deut 4:2. What did God command? "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it..." The reason why was clear, "that you may keep the



commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." If one changes the commands of God in any way then they render the commands unable to be kept. This is problematic because then one cannot attain to the righteousness of God as defined by the commandment. Therefore it is a grave crime to add, change or take away anything from the word of God. An implication is that it is possible to know with certainty the meaning of the word of God because those who teach it wrongly are held accountable for maligning it. Later Jesus will condemn the scribes and Pharisees by saying that their false interpretations shut men off from the kingdom of heaven. They were the leadership of the nation and they should have interpreted the word of God straightforwardly and yet they did not. Therefore they did not lead in the way of righteousness as defined by God; but they lead in the way of a contrived righteousness of their own. If that generation continued to follow their false teachings then the kingdom offer would be postponed and they would face judgment. Only when a generation comes along that does repent and return to the true intent of the Law will the kingdom come.

By secondary application, adding to, changing and taking away of the word of God is so prevalent today in the Church. That is why we place such a preeminence of importance on proper exposition of the word of truth. If the word of God is not explained properly then the people cannot live lives that please God. There is therefore nothing more important in the Church than teachers rightly dividing the word of truth. This is why James says, "Let not many of you become teachers... knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment." There is only one role that the NT warns will incur stricter judgment and that role is teacher. Therefore I do not think that God desires for every Tom, Dick and Harry to become a teacher. I think God warns against many becoming teachers. This is why I say that you should only be a teacher if it is the only thing you can do. If you can do anything else do it. Only if this is the only thing you can do should you do it. However, while not many should become teachers all should become disciples of good teachers. A good teacher will not add to, change or take away any portion of the word of God but will do as the apostle Paul and not shrink back from declaring to you the whole purpose of God (Acts 20:27). The Bible itself puts a high value on proper interpretation and teaching of the Bible so that people can know and live the truth.

In conclusion let's deduce the six principles that Jesus taught so we can know what He expected of them. Next week He will turn to the practices. Principle always precedes practice and so we get the principles firmly in mind and accept that principles affect practice. What's the principle of the first law, the Law of Murder, in 5:21-26? The principle of reconciliation. Be quick to reconcile with your brother because reconciliation is the key to quelling anger which is the root of the physical act of murder. So there is a root and there is the fruit and if we don't do what is necessary to stop the root from growing then what will eventually develop is the fruit. Therefore Jesus was very intent on the importance of the offender going to the offended and doing all that is necessary to reconcile so that the root of anger does not form that will eventually develop the fruit of murder. The key principle was the importance of

reconciliation. What's the principle of the second law, the Law of Adultery, in 5:27-30? The principle of avoiding lust. How do you avoid lust? By not setting up stumbling blocks within yourself. If you struggle with sexual lust then don't exacerbate that by staring at pornography, don't read suggestive books, don't stare at magazine covers, don't go to waterparks, and don't listen to suggestive music. That's not being legalistic, that's just realizing that as a human, if you dwell on these things then it creates a mental imagery that stays with you which later you recall and it causes you to stumble into sin. This goes for other areas as well, it may not be lusting sexually, it may be lusting to steal. One of the world's 50 richest men was caught in a store stealing a couple of cheap items. He had over \$35,000 in cash in his wallet! The issue is lusting to steal, just desiring to do that. So it's very foolish to create these stumbling blocks. The second key principle is the importance of avoiding lust by disciplining yourself to not set up stumbling blocks within yourself. What's the principle of the third law, the Law of Divorce, in 5:31-32? The principle of covenant faithfulness. When you marry someone you are making a covenant and to take that covenant lightly by divorcing for any and every cause is simply wrong. No fault divorce plays right into the hands of this principle. It says what is wrong is right. We should not take the covenants we enter into lightly. The same principle of covenant faithfulness applies to other legal contracts you might come into such as loans, etc... Filing bankruptcy is a violation of this principle. Fundamentally there is a very unreliable heart behind the covenant breaking. You see these principles apply across a very large spectrum to a multitude of issues. What's the principle of the fourth law, the Law of Oaths, in 5:33-37? The principle of honest speech. When you speak let what comes out of your mouth be truth. There should be no need to swear by this or that. Such emendations only reveal you are fundamentally a liar at heart. That's not to say oaths aren't fitting for certain occasions such as a marriage ceremony or a court of law, but simply that we ought to be so truthful that when we say yes that means yes and when we say no that means no. There should not be any ambiguity in our speech. So the fourth principle is honest speech. What's the principle of the fifth law, the Law of Retaliation, in 5:38-42? The principle of graciousness. You shouldn't insist on making a federal case out of minor issues, just show grace to the other person, don't allow it to bother you, just move on. It's a very simple principle but one people have a hard time following. They want to make mountains out of molehills. That is what the scribes and Pharisees did. So the principle of being gracious toward others. What's the principle of the sixth law, the Law of Love, in 5:43-48? The principle of common grace. When you see a fellow human in distress you should have a compassion for them that leads you to help them, even if they are your enemy. Caring for them should be as natural as caring for yourself. If your God gives them rain and sunshine then should you not reflect Him by giving to them? Common grace is the sixth principle taught by Jesus and yet this is far from all that He taught. This is a mere sampling. He could have gone through each and every OT Law and done the same kind of thing, "You have heard it said...but I say to you..." I wonder what it would sound like if He came to the Church and said, "You have heard it said from your pulpits...But I say

to you." It is vital to teach what He would say and not add, change or take away anything He has said as the scribes and Pharisees did.<sup>10</sup>

Next time we will turn to Matt 6 and here Jesus turns to the practices of the Law. He laid out the principles or doctrines first and now in proper order He turns to practice. Doctrine always precedes practice and Jesus shows that order here.

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<sup>1</sup> Louis A. Barbieri, Jr., "Matthew," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 31.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 5:43.

<sup>4</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, p 181.

<sup>5</sup> Stott, p. 119. Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 5:44.

<sup>6</sup> Stanley Toussaint disagrees saying, "While it is true that the adjective "perfect" (τέλειος) can mean maturity, it is certain that here it has the idea of complete goodness...The aim of the disciples' lives is the molding of their lives after the person of their heavenly Father. This is the climax to and the standard of the Old Testament concept of righteousness." *Behold the King*, p 105. Pentecost also disagrees saying, "The perfection of God is the standard for entrance into Messiah's kingdom." Pentecost, *Words and Works*, p. 181.

<sup>7</sup> John Walvoord, *Thy Kingdom Come*, p 51.

<sup>8</sup> Ed Glasscock, *Matthew*, p 137.

<sup>9</sup> Barbieri agrees saying, God "...did not lower His standard to accommodate humans; instead He set forth His absolute holiness as the standard. Though this standard can never be perfectly met by man himself, a person who by faith trusts in God enjoys His righteousness being reproduced in his life." Louis A. Barbieri, Jr., "Matthew," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 32.

<sup>10</sup> From this analysis it is really silly for people to say they live by the Ten Commandments. Nobody lives by the Ten Commandments as they were intended to be understood. When you look at them in the way the scribes and Pharisees looked at them, maybe they followed them in that way, a merely external way. But that was not the right interpretation, they either added to, changed or took away from the original

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intent. When looked at from the true intent nobody ever kept them. More likely nobody ever kept any of them.