

## Matthew 5:17-20

### I. “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets.”

- A. When Jesus says that He did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, He is saying that He did not come to invalidate, or set aside the \_\_\_\_\_ Scriptures.
- B. Why would people think Jesus had come to abolish the Law and the Prophets?
1. Mark 2:23-25, 27-28 – One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the Pharisees were saying to him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” ... And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”
  2. Mark 7:14-15 – And he called the people to him again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand: There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.”
  3. Jesus spoke with His own authority – without ever appealing to \_\_\_\_\_.
  4. Mark 1:27 – And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, “What is this? A new teaching with authority!”
- C. So what is the \_\_\_\_\_ between this King and His kingdom, and the Law and the Prophets?

### II. “I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

- A. Jesus is saying that the entire Old Testament is one big \_\_\_\_\_ of Him!
1. Matthew 11:13 – For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.
  2. John 5:46 – If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.
  3. Luke 24:27 – And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.
- B. The Old Testament prophecies of Jesus in many different ways.
1. Creation (Col. 1:15-16; John 1:1-3)
  2. Salvation (1 Pet. 3:20-21)
  3. Judgment
  4. Revelation of God (John 1:1-2, 14; Heb. 1:1-2)
  5. Priesthood and sacrifices (Hebrews)
  6. Temple (Jn. 2:19; Eph. 2:19-22)
  7. Circumcision (Col. 2:11)
  8. Festivals and Sabbath days (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 3-4)
  9. Davidic kings (2 Sam. 7; Chronicles)

10. Prophets (Deut. 18:15-22; Heb. 1:1-2)
11. Law (Rom. 3:21-22).
12. Ceremonial laws (Col. 2:16-17)
13. The woman's seed (Gen. 3:14-15)
14. Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:16, 19)
15. The proverbs of Solomon (Is. 11:1-5)
16. The land of Canaan (Heb. 4)
17. Old Testament characters (Romans 5:12-21; Heb. 7; Mat. 12:40)
18. Old Testament objects (John 3:14-15)
19. Old Testament events (Mat. 2:15; Hos. 11:1; Mat. 4:1-4; Deut. 8)
20. Numerous direct prophecies

- C. To fulfill literally means to “\_\_\_\_\_”.
1. As the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, Jesus actually \_\_\_\_\_ the Law and the Prophets with their true \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. As a result of this, some of the old forms and “shells” (Festivals, Circumcision, Food laws, etc.) no longer needed to be \_\_\_\_\_ in the same external ways.

### III. “For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”

- A. The very one who has been suspected of coming to abolish the Law and the Prophets actually says in effect:
1. The Law (down to every last dotting of the “i” and crossing of the “t”) will be \_\_\_\_\_ until the end of \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. But only in so far as you read and understand the Law as having been \_\_\_\_\_ in Me.
- B. The Law finds its continuing “authority” only “in Christ”.
1. So even though some of the forms are no longer binding, the inner realities and substance that belonged to those forms have never been more \_\_\_\_\_ to God's people (cf. the food laws under Teaching Children).
  2. As the *fulfillment* of the Law, far from abolishing the Law, Jesus actually \_\_\_\_\_ the Law as never before!

### IV. Matthew 5:19

- A. Summary
1. “Therefore” – In light of the *permanence* of the Laws' true meaning and intent, a meaning and intent that is actually fully revealed, and understood, and established only in Christ...
  2. In light of *this*, Jesus can say that greatness in the kingdom of heaven is measured by conformity to the \_\_\_\_\_.

- B. Case study (cf. Discussion of tithing under Teaching Children)
1. Matthew 23:23 – Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.

## V. Matthew 5:20

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ (!!!) attempted to obey the Law down to the very last iota and dot more rigorously and consistently than the Pharisees.
- C. But Jesus says that unless our \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ actually exceeds the law-keeping of the scribes and Pharisees, we will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
- D. What can this mean?
1. As the fulfillment of the Law, Jesus revealed the righteousness that the Law demanded for what it really was – an *inward* righteousness of the \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. But the scribes and Pharisees rejected Jesus, the fulfillment of the Law, because they were content with an external obedience to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Law.
  3. From those who would enter His kingdom, Jesus requires an entirely different \_\_\_\_\_ of law-keeping.
  4. It is *this* true heart righteousness that Jesus brought to light and established once and for all through His fulfillment of the Law.

## Conclusion

- A. Does our Law-keeping really exceed the Law-keeping of the scribes and Pharisees?
1. Jeremiah 31:33 – But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
  2. Ezekiel 36:27 – And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
  3. Romans 8:3-6 – For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.
  4. The righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees is simply the fruit and evidence of the \_\_\_\_\_.
  5. John 3:3 – Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is *born again* he cannot see the kingdom of God.

- B. In the end, the only ground for our entrance into the kingdom of heaven is the righteousness of another – the very one who fulfilled the Law.
1. 2 Corinthians 5:21 – For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
  2. Philippians 3:4-11 – (A Pharisee who embraced Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law.)
- C. As citizens of the kingdom, are we relaxing or minimizing even one of the least commandments in the Law?

### **Teaching our Children**

- Q. What are some things Jesus said or did that might have caused some people to say that He was trying to abolish or get rid of the Old Testament Scriptures?
- A. See I. B. (Sabbath / food laws / new authority)
- Q. How can we explain these “problems” and “contradictions” between Jesus and Moses?
- A. (This question is mainly intended to provoke thought and get us searching for the answer.)
- Q. Instead of coming to abolish (get rid of) the Old Testament, what did Jesus say He had come to do?
- A. Jesus said He had come to fulfill the Old Testament. This means that the entire Old Testament is one big prophecy about Jesus (it all points to Jesus).
- Q. What are some of the different ways that the Old Testament is always pointing to Jesus?
- A. See II. B.
- Q. As the fulfillment of the entire Old Testament, this means that Jesus actually fills the Old Testament up with its true what?
- A. Jesus fills the Old Testament up with its true meaning (and inner significance).
- Q. How does Jesus fill up the inner meaning and significance of the food laws?
- A. ~ In the OT, certain foods were “unclean” and so they were not to be eaten by God’s holy people.
- ~ This was meant to be a constant reminder to Israel of their need for cleansing and separation from sin.
  - ~ Jesus is the one who cleanses us and separates us from all uncleanness in our hearts.
  - ~ This is what the food laws were always pointing toward. The food laws were meant to prepare Israel for Jesus – the one who would cleanse and separate them from sin.
  - ~ Once Jesus came, there was no longer any need for the food laws, because He fulfilled their true meaning.
  - ~ Did Jesus abolish the food laws? No. He fulfilled them.
  - ~ Do we still need to obey the inner meaning of the food laws by carefully and faithfully separating ourselves from every uncleanness of the world? Yes!
- Q. Since Jesus has fulfilled the Law and established its true meaning, for how long will the Old Testament need to be obeyed by God’s people?

A. Until the very end of the world!

Q. How much of the Old Testament do God's people need to obey (in light of its fulfillment in Christ)?

A. Every single part of it – down to the tiniest little pencil mark.

Q. Who does Jesus say that He will call “great” in His kingdom? (Remind your children that the kingdom is now.)

A. Those who obey the Law and who also influence others to obey the Law.

Q. Who does Jesus say will be called “least” in His kingdom?

A. Those who ignore even one of the smallest of God's commandments (Matthew 23:23).

Discuss with your children how they should obey the “lesser” OT law of tithing.

~ The actual tithe is no longer required because the tithe was a special way to support the Old Testament temple and priests.

~ But Jesus has fulfilled the inner meaning of the OT temple and priests because He is the true temple of God and He is the one great High Priest.

~ Since there is no more physical temple or Levitical priesthood, then there is no more tithe.

~ But do we still need to obey the tithing law by cheerfully and willingly honoring God with the first and best part of all our money and possessions? Yes! (Mark 12:41-44; 2 Cor. 9)

Q. Was anyone ever more careful and has anyone ever worked harder than the Pharisees to obey God's Laws?

A. No way! The Pharisees were famous for how hard they worked to obey all of God's Laws.

Q. If we want to be in the kingdom of heaven, then our law-keeping has to pass up even the law-keeping of who?

A. Our law-keeping has to pass up even the Pharisees!

Q. How does Jesus want our law-keeping to pass up the law-keeping of the Pharisees?

A. The Pharisees obeyed the “letter” of the Law on the outside. But Jesus shows us that the true meaning of the Law goes deeper than our outward actions – right to our *hearts*. Jesus wants us to obey the true intent and meaning of all God's laws right from our *hearts*.

Q. What is the only way that we can keep the Law just as Jesus commands?

A. See the Scriptures under Conclusion, letter A.

Q. Are there any of God's laws that we think are less important than others and so we are not as careful to obey them?

Remind your children that even though God has given us the strength and ability to obey His laws from the heart, our sin would still keep us from entering into God's kingdom. This is why we place all our trust and hope in the righteousness of Jesus. (See Scriptures under Conclusion, letter B.)

If we are truly trusting only in Jesus, that's when we know that our law-keeping must be passing up the law-keeping of the scribes and Pharisees!