

Sermon On The Mount: Christ, The Christian and the Law

Matthew 5:17-20

INTRODUCTION:

Thus far in our discussion concerning Christ's Sermon on the Mount we have dealt with a series on relationships, in the kingdom preview and principle.

- #1. The Christian's relationship to God.
- #2. The Christian's relationship to his fellow man.
- #3. The Christian's relationship to the world. (Salt & Light)

In this lesson we will discuss the Christian's relationship to the Law. Jesus is the new Lawgiver (**Matt.17:1-8**). He possess divine authority in the giving of the new Law, fulfills the Old Law. A general introduction to our subject is contained in verses **17-20**. (verses **21-48** contain the main body of instructions to this subject). Contrary to the belief of many, Christ did not attack the Old Law. What did He keep while living on earth? Jesus and the apostles were constantly being brought under attack about "destroying the Law". **Matt.7:28,29**--taught "*with authority*".

Mk.1:22-27, "*New Doctrine*", one speaks with authority.(Demons speaks back--done today??) Apostles under same charge, **Acts 6:13,14**. Now Jesus is moving into the application of some of these principles. Christ first establishes His own relationship to the Law and then establishes the Christian's relationship to it. In the process of accomplishing these two goals the proper relationship & understanding between the OT. & N.T. is established also.

I. Christ And The Law, 5:17,18

- a. Did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill.
 - 1. Distinction between Law or the Prophets. Both included in O.T., all of it. Christ and redemption is the theme of the O.T. Christ is the central character in both testaments. Did the Law prophesied? **Matt.11:12,13. Heb.1:1,2; Heb.10:1**. Book of Matthew & Hebrews clearly show that Old Testament culminated in Christ and kingdom started on Pentecost.

*****The Law**--reference to Genesis through Deut. Contains moral laws, national laws, and laws of worship. Lay down the types and shadows of good things to come.

*****The Prophets**-- reference to Joshua through Malachi. Two-fold objectives--1. Calling the people back to God. 2. Preparing the way for coming events.

b. Abolish the Law (**Eph.2:14,15; 2 Cor.3:13**)

#1, Word in **Matt.5:17** (abolish) "*katalusia*" in the Greek, (Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich) "*To do away with, annul, make invalid, repeal*", p.415 (Used in **Acts 5:38**, a plan not to be completed). Word used in **Eph.2:15 & 2 Cor.3:13**--"*katargesas*" defined by Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich "*to wipe away, set aside*, (p.418). Used in **1 Cor.13:11**, putting away childish things. Could Jesus fulfill the law if He destroy it? How would the purpose be fulfilled. This meant abrogation and cessation of this law. Did He come assailing that law? No!

c. To Fulfill the Law and the Prophets. Blueprint illustration. Christ came to fulfill the requirements of the blueprints. Not to destroy the blueprint and create a new one. How did He do so?

#1. The Purpose (**Gen.3:15**). To redeem man through Christ. Sin made this a necessity (**Matt.1:21**). Blessings, spiritual, **Eph.1:3**; foreordained, **Eph.1:5**; Provides redemption, **Eph.1:7**; Fulfillment of mystery, **Eph.1:9**; Christ the sum of all things, **Eph.1:10**; Providing salvation through the gospel, **Eph.1:13**;

#2. Picture-Prophecies fulfilled. The Lamb. **Gen.4**; (Abel); **Gen.22**(substitution); **Exo.12**; (Passover Lamb); **Isaiah 53** (suffering); Lamb of God--**Jno.1:29; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet.1:18-21; Rev.5:12**

#3. Law Demanded Penalty for Disobedience. **Gal.3:10-13**. God could not ignore sin. His holiness and justice would not permit it. **Isa.59:1,2**. Christ lived the perfect life, **1 Pet.2:21-25; Heb.4:15**. By so doing honored the law. **Rom.3:25,26; Heb.9:15**. Grace & atonement provided to all--those who had lived under the Old Law. **Heb.10:1-4**. Without this "perfect sacrifice", what hope did those who lived under that covenant have? By fulfilling the requirements of that law, thus setting it aside afterwards. Christ obedience eliminates our boasting, **Eph.2:8-10**.

#4. Fulfilled Prophecies concerning Him.

Birth, **Isa.7:14 -- Matt.1:23; Micah 5:2; -- Matt.2:6; Life**, **Isa.9:1,2 -- Matt.4:15,16; Death**, **Isa.53; Acts 8:32ff; Resurrection-Psa.16:10,11 -- Acts 2:27,28**

#5. Fulfilled types & shadows. **Col.2:17; Heb.9:24; 10:1**.

a. Old Testament Prophecy A Temporary Covenant.
Jere.31:31-34 "New" "New Doctrine", Mk.1:22

b. All would be fulfilled concerning that Law, v.18.
Gal.3:24,25; Not the smallest letter or stroke of the Law to pass away, until ALL accomplished.

- #1. **Lk.24:44** --Jesus taught this same truth to His disciples. Law of Moses, Prophets, Psalms (summary of OT. in those times).
- #2. **Acts 13:29** -- "All things fulfilled".
- #3. **Rom.10:4** -- "End of the law". Culmination of that law--by Christ!
- #4. **Eph.2:14,15**--Abolish in His flesh--the Law & commandments. Jew & Gentile wall has been broken down! Law a temporary thing -- New order...
- #5. **Col.2:14**--Nailed that law -- to the cross!! Foreshadowed the coming of Law. Blotting it out -- (Made man conscience of my sin--that law) Animal sacrifices, could not avail, **Heb.10:4**. Pointing men to a "perfect sacrifice". Removed the "imperfect system", no provision for remission of sins (**Heb.8:7**). Could man obey that law? Yes! Christ did! Proper attitude & obedience a need. Men departed from that law. Christ did not. Jesus used no miracles to keep that law. New Order -- New Kingdom -- New Law -- (**Deut.18:15-18**).

II. The Christian's Relationship To The Law, (vv.19,20)

a. Cannot annul one of the "least" of these commandments. Annul -- from "luo" meaning to loose. "Destroy, bring to an end, abolish, do away with", {Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich, p.485). "To subvert or deprive of authority", (Earnhart, p.192). Also used in **1 Jno.3:8**, destroying the works of the devil.

b. Least of commandments. Distinction between the great and least.

Matt.22:35-40. Great commands deal with relation to God. Least commandments deal with relation to men. (Not iron clad rule).

We cannot neglect lesser commands, **Matt.23:23,24**. Least and greatest in the kingdom, not speaking of degrees of reward.

Matt.18:1-4; 20:26-28. Only "great" enter the kingdom.

c. Jesus agreed not all law carries equal significance. **Mk.12:28-34**;

Lk.10:27,28. Yet, ALL must be kept! **Eccl.12:13; Jno.14:15**. No matter how excellent one may be in other respects, whoever willfully disregards even the law's least commandment and teaches others to copy his example will be "least" in the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, whoever practices and teaches these commandments "according to Christ", shall be called great. One who will break any of the laws, displayed an improper attitude towards divine law. True respect a must to enter this kingdom!

d. Righteousness must EXCEED the scribes & Pharisees.

#1. Jesus is about to make a strong statement regarding the reprehensible righteousness of the scribes & Pharisees, as contrasted with another righteousness in which God delights. *Scribes--copyists of the Law; represent those who were most knowledgeable. Pharisees--strictest sect of the Jews; represented those who were practitioners of the Law.*

a. Pharisees righteousness. Best summed up -- self-righteousness. Had calculated that the law contained 248 commandments and 365 prohibitions and they aspired to keep them all. Illus. Fasting commanded once a year. Pharisees fasted twice a week. Very strict about giving a tenth of everything to God.

Matt.23:23. Lk.18:12.

b. Problems with their righteousness. religion was external and formal instead of being from the HEART. **Lk.16:15.** More concerned with the ceremonial than the moral (**Mt.15:1,2**). Religion based upon man-made rules, regulations, and traditions, which were based upon certain privileges that had decided to grant one another (**Mt.15:4-9**). Restricted the commandments thus extending the permissions of the law. This made them more permissive. These men glorified themselves, not God! One of the reasons they hated Jesus -- would take away their power & position. The attitude of looking for "loopholes" is rejected by Christ!

c. Proper righteousness. What does God desire it to be? In the beatitudes Jesus clearly gives the answer concerning the proper attitude needed to achieve the proper "righteousness" before God:

#1. See himself as God sees Him, reality (**Mt.5:3**).

#2. Grieves over sin, **Mt.5:5; Rom.7:24.** See the terribleness of it.

#3. Seeks to have relationship with others-duty, **Mt.5:5.**

#4. See the values that are found in righteousness, **Mt.5:6.**

#5. Is sympathetic, **Mt.5:7.** Seeks opportunities for serving.

#6. Begins at the center of man--HEART, **Mt.5:8.**

#7. Not self-centered, **Mt.5:9.**

#8. It does cost him something, **Mt.5:10,11.** Willing to pay the price, gladly.

#9. Righteousness that is seen in one's life. **Mt.5:13-16. Tit.2:10.**

Best summed up--To be Christ like! **Phil.2:2-5; 1 Pet.1:15,16; Jno.13:15.** God's law does not change to fit us -- we much change to fit that His Law. It exceeds the Pharisees and scribes, because it seeks to please God and not please self!

CONCLUSION:

Christ's relationship to the law was one of fulfillment. Our relationship to the Law of Christ is one of obedience, not that we must keep the O.T. to be

saved, **Acts 15:2,3,24**, but that we should keep the same spirit of obedience that was demanded for those under that Law. All of God's commandments must be treated with respect, reverence, dignity, because all was given by God! **Mt.7:21; Ja.2:10. Lk.6:46**. We must ever be on guard concerning our attitudes. Self-centered religion will never be accepted by God. Humble, serving, obedient, and seeking His favor must take first place. Does your righteousness exceed those of the scribes and Pharisees?

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