

Sermon on the Mount Series

**“Christ Fulfills the Law”**

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Note: Unless otherwise specified, all Scriptures are from the NKJV Bible.

**Jesus Came to Fulfill the Law.**

**Matthew 5:17-20**

Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

- Jesus did not come to “repeal and replace” the Law or the Prophets.
- Approximately 330 prophecies of the coming Messiah (Christ)

**God’s Plan Will Never Change.**

Matthew 5:18 “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.”

- Till heaven and earth pass away
- Till all is fulfilled

**Respect and Obey the Smallest Commandment.**

Matthew 5:19 “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.”

- No one has the authority to set aside or alter any of God’s Laws.
- Jesus emphasized an attitude of respect toward God’s Word and God’s Will.
- A person’s treatment of the law would affect his/her standing in the Kingdom.

**The Old Testament Includes Three Categories of Law.**

1. The “ceremonial law” related specifically to Israel’s worship. Its primary purpose was to point forward to Jesus Christ. These laws were not longer necessary after Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Example: Leviticus 1:2-4 – “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of the livestock—of the herd and of the flock. If his offering is a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish; he shall offer it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Lord. Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him.’”

2. The “Civil law” applied to daily living in Israel. Even though our cultures differ today, the principles behind the commands are timeless and should guide our conduct.

Example: Deuteronomy 24:10-11 “When you lend your brother anything, you shall not go into his house to get his pledge. You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you lend shall bring the pledge out to you.”

3. The “moral law” is the direct command of God and requires strict obedience. The moral law reveals the nature and will of God, and it still applies today. Jesus obeyed the moral law completely.

Example: Exodus 20:13 – “You shall not murder.”

### **The Righteousness of the Kingdom of God**

Matthew 5:20 “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.”

- The Pharisees spent their lives in rigid devotion to keep every commandment.
- Jesus was not placing impossible demands on his followers.
- The Pharisees were content to obey the laws outwardly without humbly looking to God to change their hearts or attitudes.
- The righteousness of Christ’s followers exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees because it rests on a relationship with God.

Our Righteousness must:

1. Come from what God does in us, not what we can do by ourselves.
2. Be God-centered, not self-centered.
3. Be based on reverence for God, not approval from people.
4. Go beyond keeping the law to loving God who gave the law.  
(Life Application Bible Commentary, Matthew, p. 90)