

**Matthew 5:17-20:** Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

**Intro:** All the Law & the Prophets (all of the Old Testament) is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, & it's by looking to Him; knowing Him; trusting Him; treasuring Him, & obeying Him that we will be able to live out the beatitudes & be salt & light in the world! It's by looking to Jesus in all the Scriptures that we will be empowered to live the righteous life that pleases God. And what pleases God? Obeying all that He has commanded! True obedience!

### **1. Jesus Did Not Come To Abolish The Law Or The Prophets**

#### **2. Jesus Came To Fulfill The Law And The Prophets**

**Verse 18:** 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. Pay attention!** - Amen! Surely! Truly! Listen up! This is important! **1 Timothy 1:15:** The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

**b. What I'm about to tell you will endure to the end of the age:** Until the new heavens and the new earth are a reality; until the present order in which we live ends, this will continue. This won't change! This is fixed!

**c. The smallest, tiniest detail of the Law will not pass away: Iota:** Yod – the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet; it looks like an apostrophe – very small. 66,420 of them in the O.T.

**Dot:** An even smaller mark that is a small part of a small letter! The least stroke of a pen!

**D. A. Carson:** Jesus here upholds the authority of the OT Scriptures right down to the “least stroke of a pen.” His is the highest possible view of the OT.

- **John 10:35:** Scripture cannot be broken

- **Matthew 22:31-32:** as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: <sup>32</sup> “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”? He is not God of the dead, but of the living.

### **3. No One Should Set Aside God's Commandments But Obey Them And Teach Them**

**Verse 19:** Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

**a. Whoever relaxes (sets aside, destroys, disobeys, disregards) one of the least of these commandments will be called least in the kingdom of heaven:**

**1) What are these commandments?** All God's commandments in all the Old Testament Scriptures which Jesus is going to explain in the rest of His sermon on the mount.

**2) What does it mean to be least in the kingdom of heaven:** There will be different levels of honor, rank, reward, responsibility, and joy in heaven, based on how we live on earth.

**Luke 19:17-19:** And he said to him, “Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.” <sup>18</sup> And the second came, saying, “Lord, your mina has made five minas.”

<sup>19</sup> And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'

**1 Corinthians 3:11-15:** For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw - <sup>13</sup> each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. <sup>14</sup> If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

**2 Corinthians 5:10:** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

**b. Whoever teaches others to set aside, destroy, disobey, or disregard any of God's commands in all of Scripture will also be called least in the kingdom of heaven: 2 Timothy 2:15:** Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

**James 3:1:** Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

**c. Some of God's commandments in the Old Testament were fulfilled by Jesus Christ in such a way that our obedience to those commandments looks different in the New Covenant: Verse 18:** 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.

**WCF 19.3:** Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, **ceremonial laws**, containing several typical ordinances; partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly of divers instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the new testament.

**WCF 19.4:** To them also, as a body politic, He gave sundry **judicial laws**, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require.

**d. Jesus fulfilled the ceremonial laws: 1) Unclean food laws: Leviticus 11:7-8:** And the pig, because it parts the hoof and is cloven-footed but does not chew the cud, is unclean to you. <sup>8</sup> You shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall not touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.

**Mark 7:15-23:** 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." <sup>17</sup> And when he had entered the house and left the people, his disciples asked him about the parable. <sup>18</sup> And he said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, <sup>19</sup> since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.) <sup>20</sup> And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. <sup>21</sup> For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, <sup>22</sup> coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."

**Acts 10:10-15, 25-28:** And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance <sup>11</sup> and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. <sup>12</sup> In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. <sup>13</sup> And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." <sup>14</sup> But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." <sup>15</sup> And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." <sup>16</sup> This happened three times . . . <sup>25</sup> When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. <sup>26</sup> But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man." <sup>27</sup> And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. <sup>28</sup> And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a

Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.

**2) Sacrifices for sins: Hebrews 10:1-14:** For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. <sup>2</sup> Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sin? <sup>3</sup> But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin every year. <sup>4</sup> For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. <sup>5</sup> Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body have you prepared for me; <sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" <sup>8</sup> When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), <sup>9</sup> then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. <sup>10</sup> And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. <sup>11</sup> And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. <sup>12</sup> But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. <sup>14</sup> For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

**3) Other examples: 1 Corinthians 9:6-10, 14:** Or is it only Barnabas & I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? <sup>7</sup> Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk? <sup>8</sup> Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? <sup>9</sup> For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned? <sup>10</sup> Does he not speak entirely for our sake? It was written for our sake . . . <sup>14</sup> In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel

**1 Corinthians 5:7:** Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

**Colossians 2:11:** In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ

**d. Jesus fulfilled the judicial laws:** The nation of Israel as a nation-state under the direct rule of God is no more. The church is God's holy nation.

**Lloyd-Jones:** What of the judicial law? This was primarily and especially for the Nation of Israel as God's Theocracy [a government ruled by religious authority] in its then special circumstances. But Israel is no longer the theocratic nation. You remember that at the end of His ministry our Lord turned to the Jews and said, "Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof." That is Matthew 21:43, one of the most crucial and important statements in the whole of Scripture with regard to prophecy. And the Apostle Peter, in 1 Peter 2:9-10, makes it abundantly clear that the new nation is the Church. There is then no longer a theocratic nation, so the judicial law has likewise been fulfilled.

**e. We don't just pick and choose what we want to obey and what we don't want to obey in God's Word:** This is one of the criticisms of those who defend homosexual behavior as valid, lawful, Christian behavior.

**Some of God's commandments in the Old Testament were fulfilled by Jesus Christ in such a way that our obedience to those commandments looks different in the New Covenant**

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11:** Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>11</sup> And such

were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

#### **4. Your Righteousness Must Be Greater Than The Righteousness Of The Scribes And Pharisees**

**Verse 20:** For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

**a. The Pharisees were thought of as the most righteous people of the day by the Jews:** They “lived” the Scriptures down to the tiniest jot and tittle; they “taught” the Scriptures; they “loved” God like no one else!

**Lloyd-Jones (Two basic principles):** In the first, in verses 17 and 18, He says that everything He is going to teach is in absolute harmony with the entire teaching of the OT Scriptures. There is nothing in this teaching which in any way contradicts them. The second proposition, which He lays down in verses 19 and 20, is that this teaching of His which is in such harmony with the OT is in complete disharmony with, and an utter contradiction of, the teaching of the Pharisees and Scribes.

**Lloyd-Jones: 1) Their righteousness was an empty, external righteousness totally void of the true knowledge of God: Matthew 15:7-8:** You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me”

**2) They were more concerned with the outward ceremonies and religious rituals that obeying the moral commands of God: Luke 16:13-14:** “You cannot serve God and money.”<sup>14</sup> The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him.

**3) They came up with man made traditions that contradicted God’s commands and allowed them to break God’s commands: Matthew 15:9:** in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.

**4) They were more concerned with glorifying themselves than with glorifying God: Luke 18:9-14:** He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: “God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.” But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!” I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

**5) There was a complete absence of the spirit of the beatitudes in their hearts and lives:** No poor in spirit, no mourning over sin, no meekness, no hungering and thirsting after true righteousness!

**Lloyd-Jones:** The trouble with the Pharisees was that they were interested in details rather than principles, that they were interested in actions rather than in motives, and that they were interested in doing rather than in being. The remainder of this Sermon on the Mount is just an exposition of that. Our Lord said to them in effect, “You are pleased with yourselves because you do not commit adultery; but if you even look with lust in your eyes, that is adultery.” It is the principle, not the action only, that matters; it is what you think and desire, it is the state of your heart that is important. You do not become Christian by just refraining from some actions and doing others; the Christian is a man who is in a particular relationship to God and whose supreme desire is to know Him better and to love Him more truly. That is not a part-time job, if I may so put it, it is not achieved by the religious observance of a part of Sunday; it demands all the time and attention we have. Read the lives of the great men of God and you will find that that is the principle that always emerges. **GOSPEL!**

**b. Your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees in order to enter the kingdom of heaven:** 1) You must be justified by faith alone in Christ alone.

2) The main focus here is the fruit that will happen and must happen once you are truly justified by faith alone.

- a) A true, vital internal and external righteousness that flows from knowing the living God!
- b) A delight in God and in His commandments and obedience to those moral commandments!
- c) A commitment to and passion for the glory of God above anything else!
- d) A life that exhibits the beatitudes!

Christ Cares For Details To The Dot  
In God's Scriptures There Will Not  
Be One Small Stroke Missed In His Plot  
All Accomplished – None Forgot  
For Jesus Died And Took Our Lot  
Then Rose To Cleanse Our Every Blot  
By Faith Alone In Christ We've Got  
A Righteousness Without One Spot  
In Christ Good Works We'll Do A Lot  
And By His Spirit Live Each Jot  
All Sin And Evil Boycott  
And For God's Glory We'll Burn Hot!