

## Study Guide for Matthew 5:17-20

**Introduction:** We hope this guide will help you to dig into this passage and enjoy not only reading it but gleaning from it. Here are a few suggestions to help you out as you study.

- **Read the passages before and after the section you are reading.** This allows you to better get the context of the passage. It also helps you to understand and answer questions you might have.
- **Use study helps.** There are online study helps and apps that can be useful as you study a passage. Study Bibles and other hard cover commentaries are great to. We encourage you to read the passage first and glean all you can then use the resources to help you understand some of the more difficult sections. Also be aware that not all resources are good resources. Check with one of your Elders to get some help on the best resources to use. A couple of suggestions are [Blueletterbible.org](http://Blueletterbible.org). They have a website and an app, MacArthur's commentaries and website, Nine Marks website and RC Sproul's website and app (Ligonier).
- **Observation, Questions and Application.** There are many ways to help really get into a passage. Here is one. See or write down any observations you have (example: "I didn't realize that Timothy was traveling with Paul at this time".), Questions, (example: "How far is Judea from Bethlehem?") and Applications (example: This verse really challenged me to trust God in this tangible way".).
- **Below are some of the notes from the men who were preparing to teach or preach this Sunday.** We hope that they will help as you take time to get into the Word this Sunday and even beyond.

## **The Law and the Gospel**

### **(Matthew 5:17-20)**

#### **How did Christ fulfill the Law?**

**(vs. 17)**

The religious leaders were skeptical about all that Jesus did. The Pharisees and Sadducees had a difficult time keeping the law also which is why they created man made traditions that although were more cumbersome than the law they were humanly attainable. The Law seemed to be unattainable in many ways and it was. The Law was established to show man's inability to be perfect. Christ came who upheld the Law but also was able to live in a way that stayed soundly in the boundaries of the Law. This infuriated the religious and the common. The religious because it exposed their limited attempts to uphold all of the Law and the common because they were looking for freedom from the Law. We see Christ's fulfillment of the law in three specific ways.

#### **He fulfilled the Moral Law**

He was able to keep it perfectly which no one else had been able to do.

#### **Ceremonial Law**

Because He was perfect, he was the embodiment of everything that the laws types and symbols pointed to. The ceremonial law was to picture the law by using feasts and ceremonies that lived out the Law in a human way. Jesus was able to not only participate in but fulfill the ceremonial law.

#### **Judicial Law**

Christ personified perfect justice. He never acted out in a way that was contrary to the law and was always accurate to the Law.

#### **How are we to view the Old Testament (OT)?**

**(vs. 18 & 19)**

Jesus never belittled the OT. In fact, quite the opposite, While He was on earth, he reinforced it, pointed to it and obeyed it repeatedly. We also need to view the

OT not with derision but understanding that it is the foundation for the moral law that we still live out today. Why should we still use the OT?

### **It is the Word of God**

We see in these verses that Christ uses some strong words to reinforce the authority of the OT as the Word of God.

### **It is detailed and complete**

The phrase iota and dot are important ones in pointing out our need to accept and hold to every part of Scripture. Iota means stroke or punctuation and dot means individual letters. The Word of God is detailed and complete. When people start to decide what they feel is and is not what they are called to live out then that perfect standard is lost.

### **It is meant to be obeyed**

The phrase, "heaven and earth pass away" refers to the time a new heaven and earth will be established but until that time we are called to obey the Scriptures. We also see in verse 18 the call to stay attentive to the Word of God for ourselves and to teach others. The result is not that some will be left out of heaven who are His children but the placement we will have in heaven.

## **How does this impact the Kingdom of God?**

**(vs. 19 & 20)**

The religious rulers were trying to establish a "form" of the Law with their traditions and rules. It was establishing a different kingdom because it was based on man and not God. It sounded good and there was a moral core to what they taught but it was a righteousness they could humanly accomplish. The Kingdom of God was meant to bring His Word and His way of living into the World so that the redeemed of the Lord could have a standard by which to live that was attainable only through the power of God. So, what does that practically look like today?

### **Kingdom people live and teach the Word of God**

If you look again at verse 19 you see that we are called to not only understand but live and teach to others God's Word. You cannot do that unless you are in the Word yourself and then actively looking for ways to teach it to others.

### **Kingdom righteousness starts in the heart**

'The Pharisees were not born again. They did not have a personal relationship with Christ. As humans though, they lived a life that was set at a high standard. Matthew was revealing that this high standard was still not enough. The righteousness we desire does not come from the world but from God. If you are His redeemed child, then you are righteous because of what He did in you. It all starts in the heart.

### **Kingdom living is restricted to Kingdom citizens**

You cannot truly live like a citizen of Christ's kingdom unless you are His child. You can work hard, set up standards to obey and even teach others how you live if you are not His child. If you have never begun a relationship with Christ though you are only a good person not a Redeemed one.

## **Questions to consider**

- **General Questions**

What are one or two practical ways that you can live out what you learned today?

Have you ever begun a relationship with Christ? If so share "your personal God story of redemption".

Where do you have questions or observations in this passage?

- **Questions about "The Law"**

How do you think the people understand Jesus' phrase, '...the Law or the Prophets'?

How does the Bible define the phrase, 'the Law or the Prophets'?

What was Jesus saying to the people when he used this phrase?

What does this phrase mean to you?

- **Questions about "Teaching"**

When Jesus refers to teaching others, who do you see him addressing?

What is he saying to them?

What does that mean to you?

- **Questions about "Righteousness"**

What does a 'righteousness' that exceeds the scribes and Pharisee look like?

How does the Rich Young Ruler account compare or is similar?