

Understanding True Righteousness

Matthew 5:17-20

Introduction:

- Church goers are often guilty of throwing around religious terms without really understanding those terms.
 1. God does not want us to be people who just know the 1_____.
 2. God wants us to have u_____.
- In Jesus's day, r_____ was a term that was thrown around by the religious world
 1. Everyone knew that righteousness was a r_____ for entering the kingdom of heaven.
 2. Few u_____ what that righteousness involves.
- Today, Jesus will give us understanding of true righteousness.

Our Apparent P_____ with the Law (17a, 19)

Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets

- The Law or the Prophets (v. 17a)
 1. The Law refers to the first _____ books of the Old Testament, better known as the books of Moses.
 2. The Prophets refers to the last _____ books of our Old Testament, from Isaiah to Malachi.
 3. In Acts 13:15 the term “the Law **and** the Prophets” refers to the e_____ Old Testament. But here Jesus said, “the Law **or** the Prophets.” (see also Lk 24:44).
- Jesus focuses primarily on the _____ (v. 19)
 1. *Whoever _____ **one** of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be least in the kingdom of heaven.*
 2. *Whoever _____ and teaches them, will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*
- How are you doing?
 1. The Sabbath law (Ex 20:8)
 - a. You must work _____ six days. Do you?
 - b. You must rest on the seventh day which is S_____. Do you? (The Greek text of Mk 16:2 literally reads that Jesus rose on the *first day after the Sabbath.*) – Jesus did not change the Sabbath to Sunday, C_____ did in 321 A.D.
 2. A dietary law (Lev 11:7) – you can't eat _____. Do you?
 3. The laws of animal sacrifices – are you keeping these commands?
- The New Testament teachings

1. Acts 15 – The apostle Peter stated that non-Jewish Christians were not o_____ to keep the Law.
2. Rom 7:6 – The apostle Paul stated that **all** believers are r_____ from the Law (and he has the Ten Commandments in mind since he cites the 10th commandment)
3. This sounds contradictory to Jesus’s words of disobeying the least of the commands in the Law. But it is NOT.

The Accomplished P_____ of the Lord (17b, 18)

I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

- Some t_____ that Jesus was violating the Law
 1. Jesus challenged the man-made laws and interpretations that the Jews had h_____ from tradition (vv. 21,27,31,33,38,43).
 2. Jesus was a Jew and so was born under the a_____ of the Law (Gal 4:4) and so had to keep it.
- Jesus came to fulfill the Law
 1. By o_____ every aspect of the Law.
 2. By f_____ its purpose.
- Jesus came to fulfill the Prophets
 1. Prophecies that were an obvious p_____ of the future Christ (e.g. riding into Jerusalem on a donkey; dying for our sins).
 2. Prophecies that were designed to f_____ the role of Christ (these kinds of prophecies are only realized “after the fact” – e.g. Jesus as our sacrifice; Jesus as our priest)
- True righteousness is directly related to the ministry of Jesus and the work He did on the cross.

The Actual P_____ of the Believer (20)

Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

- How righteous were the scribes & Pharisees? – it wasn’t good enough.
 1. They were very good at keeping the m_____ rules.
 2. They were very m_____.
 3. They were very r_____.
- The purpose of the Old Covenant of laws (Ex 19:5,6)
 1. To be His p_____
 2. To be a h_____ people
 3. To be His p_____ to the world
- How did the Old Covenant laws make Israel holy? (remember the word holy means s_____ apart or different)

1. Much of the world was immoral, so God had laws of m_____.
 2. Much of the world was not particular as to what they should eat, so God had laws of d_____.
 3. Much of the world sacrificed to gods in a variety of ways. God had laws for sacrifices to be made in a particular w_____ for a particular reason and at particular times.
- How did Jesus fulfill the Law?
1. He fulfilled the sacrificial laws by becoming our s_____ (1 Pet 3:18)
 2. He fulfilled the laws having to do with c_____ (diet, bodily fluids, touching dead bodies, etc.) by becoming our means of cleansing - Acts 15:9; 1 Cor 1:30
 3. He fulfilled the Sabbath laws of rest
 - a. Matt 11:28-30 (notice the subject afterwards, the Sabbath) – Jesus gives us r_____
 - b. Heb 4:9-11 – *there remains a Sabbath rest for God's people... let us be diligent to enter that rest* = f_____ in Christ.
 4. He fulfilled the laws of m_____ (no stealing, lying, killing, etc). – the parameters of our morality is our relationship to Him not rules (Matt 22:37-40).
 5. He fulfilled the laws of the p_____ - 1 Tim 2:5

●How do we fulfill the Law?

1. The righteous requirements of the Law are fulfilled by us who w_____ according to the Spirit (Rom 8:4)
2. The Law was a tutor (teacher) designed to lead us to Christ so that righteousness would be by f_____ in Christ (Gal 5:24).
3. Are you trusting Christ as your sacrifice, your priest, your holiness, etc.? He fulfilled the Law, and we fulfill it by trusting Him.

Conclusion:

- Righteousness is not something that we work for but what Christ w_____ for.
- We attain righteousness by t_____ that His work was for us.
- Jesus is our r_____ - I Cor 1:30

If someone were to ask you, *What makes you righteous as far as God is concerned?*, what would you answer?