

Sermon on the Mount—The Kingdom and the Law

Matthew 5:17—19

The first part of the Sermon on the Mount presented the type of person who will be allowed entrance into the Kingdom. Those who are poor in spirit (humble enough to realize their need), those who mourn (when they see Christ coming to take over the earth), those who are meek (allowing themselves to be under Christ's control), those who hunger and thirst after righteousness (after being surrounded by unrighteousness during the Tribulation), those who are merciful (showing kindness to those in need during the Tribulation), those who are pure in heart (they have been made pure by Christ), the peacemakers (those who announce or bring in peace. This is looking to the Second Coming when peace will be brought in) and those who are persecuted (those who remain righteous through intense persecution during the Tribulation.)

There are many who interpret this to mean that good works will be your ticket to heaven. As in all generations, no one can come to God except through faith. Those who have a genuine faith will be poor in spirit, will mourn, will be meek, will hunger and thirst after righteousness, etc. The same can be said about us in this Age of Grace. We don't try to emulate the fruit of the Spirit to get saved, rather when we come to Christ by faith we are able to produce the fruit of the Spirit through God's power. Those going into the Kingdom will emulate the Matthew 5 characteristics because they have faith in their Messiah.

So far Christ has told us the type of people who will be allowed into the Kingdom and what their reward will be (Matthew 5:1—12). He then explains that Israel will be used to be a testimony to the world by being salt (making God's Word appetizing to the whole world) and light (reflecting God's light to the rest to the world). Israel's light will show the world the glory of the Father. Christ now details the Law that will be put into effect in the Kingdom.

Mosaic Law

The Mosaic Law was fulfilled through external actions. The 10 commandments are only a small portion of the Law. There are 613 distinct ordinances broken down into three categories; moral, civil and ceremonial. The Bible never separates the Law but treats it as a unit. Many say we are still under the moral tenants of the Law but that we do not need to heed the civil or ceremonial parts of the Law. Paul makes it clear that we are not under any part of the Law (Romans 6:14; 7:4—6; Galatians 5:18) but instead are under the law of the Spirit who indwells us (Romans 8:2). The internal Spirit has replaced the external Law.

Jesus makes it clear that He did not come to earth to abolish the Law. There are many churches that teach the Law was abolished at the cross and use Ephesians 2:15 to prove it and thus go against the clear statement by Jesus in Matthew 5:17.

Ephesians 2:15—16¹⁵ by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace,¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

The first error is in not understanding that the Law was done away with only for those who are members of the Church, the Body of Christ. All unbelievers are still under the Law and are being condemned by the Law (Romans 3:19; 1 Timothy 1:8—10). If this is true then the Law surely has not been abolished.

Romans 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The second error is in not understanding that the cross made it possible for the abolition of the Law for believers but not at the time of the crucifixion. Note carefully the wording of Ephesians 2:16. We were reconciled into one body through the cross not at the cross. So instead of Jesus abolishing the Law at the cross, He fulfilled the Law and made it possible for those of us who are in the Body of Christ to be dead to the power of the Law by means of the cross. This was only revealed through the Apostle Paul for today's believers. You must also realize too that Christ didn't even talk about the cross until Matthew 16:21. This passage has nothing to do with the cross.

Also, Jesus said He did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. This is in reference to the books written by Moses and the books written by the Prophets in the Old Testament. Jesus' mission was to fulfill the Prophets by showing up at the exact time He was suppose to show up and do exactly what was recorded in the prophetic writings concerning Him. The Gospels are a record of Old Testament prophecy being fulfilled. He also completely fulfilled the Law by keeping the Law, obeying every jot and tittle of the Law.

Kingdom Law

Anyone who breaks the smallest part of the Law and teaches others to do the same will be called the least in the kingdom. They still have a place in the kingdom but it will not be in a place of great authority. Israelites who practice the Law to the letter will be given the most authority. They will be responsible to teach the Gentiles the Kingdom Law (it will be similar to the Mosaic Law but there will be changes). This Law will be supernaturally implanted in the hearts of the Jewish nation (Jeremiah 31:31—34). They will have no need to teach each other the Law because God will put His Law inside their hearts and give them the ability to completely obey the Law. This will not be true for the Gentiles. They will need to study the Law and understand the Law so as not to break the Law. If they do break it then they will need to pay the price (just as we do in this age). An example of this is given in Zechariah 14:16—19. If the government of Egypt does not go to Jerusalem to worship the King (Jesus Christ) they will experience a drought.

From this we can see that those who break the Kingdom Law will be considered the least in the Kingdom. They will still live in the Kingdom but will be treated as we would treat a criminal. Only those who are able to follow the Law to the letter will rise above the rest of the inhabitants and be considered great. Since it will be impossible to follow the Law by human effort, only those who are believers will be great in the Kingdom.

Isaiah 2:2—4 ¹ The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

² Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. ³ And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.

It is in this Millennial Kingdom that Israel will be raised high above the Gentile nations and her light will be obvious to all who are living on the earth at that time. They will be acting as priests—bringing the Gentiles to Christ. Many Gentiles will be saved during this time but many more will reject Christ as their King when Satan is loosed from his 1,000-year captivity.

Zechariah 8:20—23 ²⁰ "Thus says the LORD of hosts, '*It will yet be* that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities. ²¹ The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, "Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go." ²² So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.' ²³ Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'""

Isaiah 61:4 ⁴ Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, They will raise up the former devastations; And they will repair the ruined cities, The desolations of many generations. ⁵ Strangers will stand and pasture your flocks, And foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers. ⁶ But you will be called the priests of the LORD; You will be spoken of as ministers of our God. You will eat the wealth of nations, And in their riches you will boast.

If you recall, Ruth was a Gentile (Moabitess) who followed Naomi, her Jewish mother-in-law, back to Judea and became a God-fearing woman. Ruth is a picture of Gentiles in the Millennial Kingdom. Those who learn the Law and worship Christ will be blessed for it. When Satan is set free at the end of the 1,000 years, those who follow Christ will be saved while those who follow Satan will be cast into hell.

For previous notes and additional mid-Acts materials please visit www.MidActsTruths.com