

Lesson 1

Part 1: Christ Fulfills the Law

In the Beatitudes, Jesus described the character of a Christian. Next, He laid out the mission of being salt and light to manifest His glory to the world around us. Then, He would show us how to do it.

Read Matthew 5:17-20.

1. According to Jesus, what would be the wrong way to interpret His purpose in coming to earth?

In verses 17-18, Jesus makes the first of two very important pronouncements regarding the law and His teachings. Let's look first at what He had to say about the law. It is important to note the word *law* in the context of this Sermon is referring to the Moral Law from Matthew 5:21 on, but here, in verse 17, the word *law* is referring to the entirety of the law. The law is described as the Moral Law (the 10 commandments), the Judicial Law (primarily for the Nation of Israel and its circumstances at the time), and the Ceremonial Law (offerings, sacrifices, duties of the temple, etc.). In other words, everything the law teaches about life, duties, and behavior.

2. Jesus speaks of two events coinciding with each other. This heaven and this earth will not pass away until what happens?

God's law is absolute, unchanging, and permanent; and this heaven and earth will not pass away until every jot and tittle have been fulfilled. A jot and tittle are the smallest parts of the smallest letters in the Hebrew alphabet, much like our dot on the letter "i". In other words, even the smallest details of the law must be fulfilled.

The people of that day were confused by this man, Jesus. Many looked to the scribes and Pharisees as their spiritual examples. These experts on the law called Jesus into question.

3. What was the reaction of the Jews, scribes, and Pharisees to Jesus, and why did they react the way they did in the following passages?

After Jesus healed the man at the pool of Bethesda. (John 5:10, 16)

After Jesus taught in the Temple. (John 7:29-30)

After Jesus said He was before Abraham. (John 8:58-59)

4. Briefly summarize why you think the Jews and their spiritual leaders had such a difficult time accepting Jesus as the authority of the law.

Jesus emphatically stated even the smallest part of the law would not, by any means, pass away. Therefore, He did not come to destroy it, change it, or set it aside in any way. In these first two verses, He pronounces that He was and is in perfect harmony with the law and all the writings of the Old Testament. To prove this point, Jesus quotes from the Old Testament four times in His Sermon on the Mount.

5. Look up the following Scriptures, then record the Old Testament references from which Jesus was quoting. HINT: try typing the reference below into the word search on *blueletterbible.org*, then click on the “Fn” following the quote.

Matthew 4:7 _____

Matthew 9:13 _____

Matthew 19:5 _____

In His teachings, Jesus confirmed the entirety of the Old Testament. He put His seal of authority and approval on the Old Testament when He quoted from it and believed in it.

The one [Old Testament and the New Testament] casts light upon the other, and each in a sense can only be understood in the light of the other.

- D. Martyn Lloyd Jones

6. So far, we have established that Jesus did not come to destroy the law and the prophets but was in fact, in complete harmony with both. What then, did Jesus come to do? (v. 17)

We have already described the meaning of the law in the context of these verses. Jesus not only stated that He did not come to destroy the law, but He went further to say that He did not come to destroy the prophets either. The goal of the prophets was to bring the people back to the true understanding of the law - righteousness on their own merit was impossible. They needed a saving Messiah. Jesus intended to fulfill the law, as well as every type, shadow, and prophecy of Him given by the prophets.

7. Choose two of the following types of Jesus found in the Old Testament. Do some research to see how they pointed to Jesus. (A type/shadow is a person or thing in the Old Testament that foreshadows the New Testament reality of Christ.)

The Ark

Jacob's Ladder

Passover Lamb

Manna

Choice #1 _____

Choice #2 _____

The word *fulfill* does not mean to complete, finish, or add to something that has already begun. Here it means to cause God's will (as made known in the law), to be obeyed as it should be, and God's promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfillment.

8. According to Jesus in Luke 24:44, why did Jesus say the words He said while on earth?

We have already studied how He fulfilled the **typologies** found in the law and the prophets. Next, let's look at how He fulfilled some of the **prophecies** spoken of in the law and prophets.

9. Look up the following verses and record what you learn about the prophecies and Jesus fulfilling each of these prophecies.

Genesis 22:18 and Acts 13:23

Genesis 49:10 and Revelation 5:5

Deuteronomy 18:18-19 and Acts 3:20-23

10. In what other way did Jesus fulfill the law? (Hebrews 4:15)

11. The following verses confirm Jesus' fulfillment of the law and prophets. Read and record what these verses have to say about this topic.

2 Corinthians 1:20

2 Peter 1:19

In addition, we can see the fulfillment of the law in that there was no further need for the temple. Our bodies would now serve as the temple of God. (1 Corinthians 3:16)

In Matthew 5:17-18, Jesus made sure His followers understood that He did not come to set the law aside but rather to fulfill every part of it. In doing so, He showed His disciples there was more than just forgiveness. The law would continue to stand as a rule of life for His followers. Jesus came to offer reconciliation and to deliver us from the curse of the law; the Holy Spirit came to make us sons of God! They would be children who would reflect the character and holiness of their Father.

12. Read verse 19. How does Jesus describe the one who breaks the least of His commands and teaches others to do so? How does He describe the one who does His commands and teaches others to do so?

Jesus was making the point that being a Christian does not begin and end with being forgiven. We are called to follow after Him into righteous living. Those who are great in His Kingdom do just that.

13. What point do you think Jesus was trying to make with His statement in verse 20?

The scribes and Pharisees thought very highly of themselves. They believed they were the experts of the law and self-appointed judges. Jesus looked to these so-called “experts” and reminded those who listened that a haughty spirit of personal righteousness would never be enough to grant one access to the “highway to holiness,” that great and grand highway that bridges the cavern between sin and God.

14. Look up the following verses and record what you learn about the righteous living to which Jesus is calling us.

Romans 13:11-14

Galatians 5:24-25

Ephesians 4:31-32

Ephesians 5:8

15. Summarize what the Lord has taught you about the law and His fulfillment of it.

16. How will you apply what you have learned in order to live righteously for Him?

Part 2: Murder Begins in the Heart

Read Matthew 5:21-26.

17. Read and record Exodus 20:13.

As we study the Sermon on the Mount, we will see Jesus expound upon the Law. The scribes and Pharisees were primarily concerned with the letter of the law, the

mechanics, and outward appearances. Jesus wants us to understand the spirit of the law, not just the basic procedures. His focus is on the heart of the matter and what actions and attitudes will lead to the sin prohibited in the law. The portion of the law referred to in Matthew 5:21 is “*You shall not murder.*” which is the sixth commandment.

18. What did Jesus say before saying, “*You shall not murder.*”? (v. 21)

19. What did Jesus say before saying, “*whoever is angry with his brother...*”? (v. 22)

20. What is Jesus establishing with these two phrases?

21. Read verse 20 again and summarize it.

The scribes and Pharisees looked only at the letter of the law. As long as they didn’t commit the act of murder, they were in compliance with the commandment. Jesus established that obeying the commandment went much further than just avoiding the deed of murder itself.

22. What three actions does Jesus say will bring guilt in judgment in verse 22?

“Whoever is angry with his brother without cause shall be in danger of the judgment” is the first action Jesus mentions.

Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words defines *brother* as any man, a neighbor. This commandment is not limited to siblings. It teaches how we are to relate to one another. *Dictionary.com* defines *anger* as a strong feeling of displeasure or belligerence aroused by a wrong, wrath, ire.

Read Leviticus 19:17-18. What do these verses teach us about our attitude toward our brothers and neighbors?

23. Look up the following verses and record what they teach about anger:

Proverbs 15:1

Proverbs 16:32

Ephesians 4:26

24. Look up James 4:1-2. What is the source of our anger?

We read in Ephesians 4:26 that in our anger we are not to sin. There is righteous anger and our Lord shows us examples of this.

25. Look up the following verses and record what they teach about the righteous anger of God:

Psalms 7:11

Psalms 103:8

2 Kings 17:18-19

From all these verses, what have you learned about anger in regard to yourself? Have you ever been angry with someone without cause?

The second action Jesus mentions in verse 22 is saying *raca* to your brother.

26. Use *blueletterbible.org* to look up the word *raca* from Matthew 5:22 and record the definition. (This can be found in the 'Outline of Biblical Usage).

The third action mentioned by Jesus is to call your brother a fool.

27. What is the penalty for this action?

Yikes! Jesus says to harbor anger and calling names are the same as murder. It is important for us to know that Jesus is showing us where murder begins. It begins with anger.

Read 1 John 3:10-17 to discover what the Bible teaches about how to love our brother.

28. What are we not if we do not love our brother? (v. 10)

29. What is the message we have heard from the beginning? (v. 11)

From the beginning God said:

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

- Deuteronomy 6:5

In addition to loving the Lord “*with all our heart*”:

So, he answered and said, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and **your neighbor as yourself.**”

- Luke 10:27

And the new commandment:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

- John 13:34

30. Continuing in 1 John 3, what is one called who hates his brother? (v. 15)

31. First, describe love according to verse 16. Next, explain what the lack of love for our brother reveals. (v. 17)

32. Can you think of a time when you shut up your heart towards a brother or sister in Christ? If so, record it below.

33. What is the reality of this attitude regarding Matthew 5:22?

Jesus instructs us on what to do when we are not in the right relationship with our brethren.

34. Read Matthew 5:23-24. To bring a gift to the altar is an act of worship. What are some of the ways we worship today?

35. Jesus is saying before you even come to worship, make things right. Describe the level of importance Jesus is putting on making a relationship right.

36. Read Matthew 5:25. With whom are you to agree? How are you to agree with him?

Again, Jesus encourages us to make things right and to resolve things quickly.

... do not let the sun go down on your wrath.

- Ephesians 4:26

If we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart and desire to keep His commandments, we must love one another. To be angry with another is to be in danger of the same judgment rendered for murder.

The law says, "*You shall not murder.*" The Pharisees and scribes considered themselves good if they simply did not end another's life. Jesus expounds on the commandment and reveals the true heart – we are not to even harbor anger. The spirit of the law given by Jesus shows us that murder begins in our hearts. We must deal with the heart.

37. As you conclude your homework, really consider what this means. Think of any anger you have toward someone. Confess it to the Lord and go and make it right.