

Jesus Fulfilled the Law

Jesus Says: A Series on the Sermon on the Mount Part 4

Matthew 5:17-20

Hilltoppers for Christ | Worship Wednesday | 9.20.17

Things work better when they're used for their proper purpose.

- There are many products laying around the house that if they're used properly, make your life much better.
- Show slide of *BuzzFeed's* "18 Everyday Products You've Been Using Wrong"¹
- Everything works better when it's used for its proper purpose
 - It'd be really weird to use an iPhone as a paperweight rather than its intended purpose of entertaining you when you're in class, with your friends, and using the bathroom and to send memes to your friends.

Matthew 5:17-20

- This passage will teach us the proper way to view and use the Old Testament.
- One of the most prominent biblical scholars of our day. Scot McKnight writes this about our passage tonight, "[*Matthew 5:17-20*] is the most significant passage in the entire Bible on how to read the Bible...because Jesus tells us here how to read the Bible."²
- We affirm that the Bible is the word of God and that "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- We want to use the Old Testament properly. We believe the Old Testament is helpful and necessary for the Christian life.
- It is safe to say that as Christians, if we ever have questions of how to live or act look at Jesus. We're going to look at how Jesus treats the Old Testament.

Difficulties with the Old Testament

- Before we jump into our passage tonight that addresses how to properly use the Old Testament, I would like to address some difficulties some of us have with the Old Testament.
- When Jesus says "Law and the Prophets" he is referring to the Old Testament or the Hebrew Scriptures.
 - The Hebrew Scriptures were divided up into different sections: Torah (Law, Pentateuch), History, Wisdom Literature, and Prophets.

¹ Gabby Noone, "18 Everyday Products You've Been Using Wrong," *BuzzFeed*, August 23, 2017, accessed September 13, 2017.

https://www.buzzfeed.com/gabbynnoone/18-everyday-products-youve-been-using-wrong?utm_term=.soYe71Dy8#.obVQd1zVy.

² Scot McKnight, *Sermon on the Mount, The Story of God Bible Commentary*, by Tremper Longman III and Scot McKnight (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 66.

- What are some problems you've had with the Old testament or have heard others say they've had with the Old Testament?
 - Problems we might have with the Old Testament:
 - "We're New Testament Christians"
 - The Old Testament has all of those weird obscure food laws, etc.
 - The Old Testament is violent.
- Tonight we will see that the Old Testament does have a great purpose. We're going to see that Jesus says the Old Testament is necessary and good for us. We will also address these difficulties and concerns we might have with it.

Jesus did not come to abolish the Old Testament, but to fulfill it. (Matthew 5:17)

- Some folks in Jesus' day (mostly the Pharisees, Jesus addresses them in 5:20) were teaching that Jesus was abolishing the Law. They said that Jesus' goal was to do away with the Law and to bring in his new law.
- This is not true. Jesus did not have a problem with the Law. Jesus had a problem with the Pharisees' *interpretation* of the Law. Interpretation is important, Jesus says. Jesus doesn't take issues with the Law. The Law is good. The Law is from God. It's God's Word. He does have a problem, however, with the interpretation of the Pharisees.
- Jesus says that he fulfills the Law. This means that "Old Testament patterns and predictions are coming to realization...fulfilling means history has come to its fulfillment in Jesus himself--that it, in his life, death, resurrection, and exaltation and in his teachings."³
- Scot McKnight adds, "The Torah has come to its goal. The Torah hereby takes on the face of Jesus."⁴
- Illustration: If a waiter or waitress fills up a glass of water, is the cup of water useless then?
- The coming of Jesus does not make the Old Testament relevant. Instead it proves it.
- If Jesus didn't come the Old Testament would be incomplete.
 - It's like those John Cena clips. You start watching a several minute clip that is leading up a climax in a story and then, boom: John Cena.

Everything recorded in the Old Testament will be accomplished. (Matthew 5:18)

- The Old Testament is true. The Torah is true.
- No parts of the Old Testament will be incomplete.
- Iotas and dots refer to the smallest parts of the Hebrew and Greek language.
- Every prophecy will be fulfilled and every command will be fulfilled.
- For example, we are no longer kosher (that means we do not adhere to the food laws of the Law). Jesus comes and gives revisions to how one applies the Law.
 - Acts 10-11 we see that Jesus tells Peter that he doesn't have to continue to eat kosher

³ McKnight, *Sermon on the Mount*, 68.

⁴ McKnight, *Sermon on the Mount*, 68.

- Jesus affirms everything in the Old Testament, the Law and Prophets. But our understanding of the Law must line up with Jesus' understanding.

How one observes the Law affects their status in the Kingdom. (*Matthew 5:19*)

- Living out the commands of the Bible has eternal consequences.
- Jesus says to not lead someone astray. There will be consequences for those who lead others away from the ways of God.
- On the other hand, there will be rewards for those who bring others to the ways of God.

Be more righteous than the Pharisees. (*Matthew 5:20*)

- Pharisees are the spiritual elites, the spiritual super stars.
- They prided themselves on following the Law to a t.
- Two ways we are to have righteousness than the Pharisees:
- Find righteousness in Jesus, not ourselves.
 - Pharisees looked at themselves for righteousness.
- We are expected to follow the way of God better than even the Pharisees.

The Bible points us to Jesus.

- Why is the Old Testament important? It points us to Jesus.
- I've heard many others say this before when contrasting Islam and Christianity. Islam is about a book; Christianity is about a person.
- The Bible is the Word of God and, as 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for good work."
- Reading the Bible is important. It is impossible to know Jesus and God without it.
- But I've met many people who know the Bible frontwards and backwards and side to side, but are nothing like Jesus. You're reading the Bible wrong if your reading does not point you towards Jesus and forms you into more like him.
- Don't read the Bible for information. Read it for transformation.