

“Christ, the Law, and the Christian” (Matt 5:17–20)
GCC, 8/7/22, Morning Worship

Introduction—The *disparity* of scripture concerning its *profitability* and *programmatically* nature

Main Idea: Jesus IS the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets and as the fulfillment, he will authoritatively tell us what the law does and does not mean and what true righteousness does and does not look like

- I. What does it mean that Christ came to *fulfill* the law and the prophets (v. 17)?
 - A. Different views:
 1. Theonomy (Full continuity)
 2. Dispensationalism (Radical Discontinuity)
 3. New Covenant Theology [or Progressive Covenantalism] (Bait and Switch)
 - i. *Eschatological fulfillment and*
 - ii. *that OT laws prophetically foreshadow and point to Jesus’ own teaching.*
 - B. The Biblical View: *Eschatological Fulfillment*
 1. The Use of πληρώω (*pleroo*) in Matthew—(Fulfillment Formulas)
 - a. A *fulfillment formula* refers to the fulfillment of prophecy (e.g., 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 27:9)
 2. Law and Prophets prophesied, and Jesus is the fulfillment
- II. The Abiding Validity of Law (vv. 18–19)
 - A. Christ is upholding the validity and authority of the law
 1. What about the Civil and Ceremonial laws? Are we SUPPOSED to DO those and TEACH those?
 - a. Even in Jesus’ ministry, you already see, with his unique authority, starting to alter our understanding of the civil and ceremonial aspects of the law (Mark 7; cf. John 8)
 2. With the coming of Jesus, it is not that the law is done away with (i.e., “destroyed”), it is that the law finds its eschatological *fulfillment* in him
 - a. “The law is unalterable, but that does not justify its application beyond the purpose for which it was intended.” –R. T. France (Cf. Heb 7:12 and 1 Cor 7:19)
 3. The law of God is now *refracted* through the person and work of Jesus Christ
 - B. Least and Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?

- III. Contrasting Forms of Righteousness (v. 20)
 - A. Not *Imputed* Righteousness but *Imparted* Righteousness
 - B. Jesus is contrasting two *different* definitions of righteousness
 - C. How Matt 5:17–47 hangs together
 - 1. The law is *fulfilled* in Christ (v. 17)
 - 2. The Law *refracted through Christ* is *always* authoritative (vv. 18–19)
 - 3. Two Kinds of Righteousness according to the Law Contrasted (v. 20)
 - 4. Six Antitheses Between Concocted Righteousness and Kingdom Righteousness (vv. 21–48)
 - i. Vilifying anger and reconciliation (vv. 21–26)
 - ii. Adultery and purity (vv. 27–30)
 - iii. Divorce and remarriage (vv. 31–32)
 - iv. Oaths and truthfulness (vv. 33–37)
 - v. Personal injury and self-sacrifice (vv. 38–42)
 - vi. Hatred and Love (vv. 43–47)
 - D. Which Kind of Righteousness best describes the prevailing disposition of your life?
 - 1. Why do you obey? Do you obey to *get* what you want or do you obey *because that's who you are*?
 - 2. Identity or agenda?
 - 3. Desire or duty?
 - 4. Delight or dread?

Questions for application and Discussion:

- 1. Do you use the doctrine of Christ's *fulfillment* of the law to excuse yourself from obedience or gratefully oblige yourself to following your Savior?
- 2. Does Christ's *fulfillment* of the law (all three divisions: civil, ceremonial, and moral) mean that *every law* in the Mosaic Covenant is to be understood and applied in the same way in the New Covenant?
- 3. In Mathew 5:21–47, is Jesus contrasting the Law of Moses with the Law of Christ?
- 4. Does the *kind* of righteousness we practice matter? Why is external obedience devoid of internal desire an inadequate description of Kingdom people?