

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, October 22, 2020 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study



IMPACTING YOUR WORLD BY FOLLOWING THE WORD
Matthew 5:17-20

How can a genuine believer in Jesus Christ today... a true Christian, truly have an impact on this tough, hard world we live in? What possible influence could the people described in Scripture as “poor in spirit,” “meek,” “humble,” “thirsty,” “mourners,” “merciful,” “persecuted” (see the Beatitudes) exert in a society overrun with competitive, aggressive, stubborn, often hostile individual? _____

“Before you can impact the life of another for Christ, you must have been impacted by Christ in a personal and life-changing way” You can’t be a world changer if your world hasn’t been changed by Him to start with. Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount” actually begins by giving us this introduction with how we many impact our world. This will give us a bit of a review of what we said last week.

3 Important Keys to Impacting Your World: (From the Sermon on the Mount)

- 1. To impact your world for Christ you must know Christ personally = *Matthew 5:1-12, “The Beatitudes”***
- 2. To impact your world for Christ you must reflect Christ to the world (others) = *Matthew 5:13-16, “Salt and Light”***
- 3. To impact your world for Christ you must learn to live by the Word of God daily = *Matthew 5:17-21, “Fulfilling and Living by the Word”***

This last section is where we are going to be in this study. As you will discover in Scripture, Jesus did not share the skepticism of some who may have felt like His meek and humble follower could not possible impact this tough cruel world. Rather, He emphasized the reverse. He declared that His true followers... genuine Christian were sources of indispensable ingredients that preserve and illumine a planet looking for hope, peace, and truly meaningful life... we truly can make a difference! Of course the illustrations of “salt” and “light” that Jesus

gives in verses 13-16 serve as a picture (illustration) of what that looks like, but Jesus doesn't leave it there, He moves into talking about what that looks like practically speaking... living out the Word.

READ: Matthew 5:17-20

“¹⁷ Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

We are continuing in our study on the Sermon on the Mount, and this evening we begin a new section where Jesus begins to teach us about the law. In the Beatitudes Jesus taught us about a Christian's character. In the salt and light section Jesus taught us about a Christian's influence. Here in this new section Jesus teaches us about a Christian's righteousness... in other words in order for you as a believer to impact the world you must be living out the Word, the Word of God. But in so doing he drives us back to the Old Testament, back to the Law and the Prophets which is a reference to the Word of God and its relation to us today.

- *What do you think about the Old Testament?*
- *Which do you read more, the Old Testament or the New?*
- *Is the Old Testament still important today?*

Some people say we can do away with the Old Testament, that the Old Testament is full of law, and Jesus came to replace the law with the gospel. And it's true, Jesus came preaching the gospel. But that does not mean we can simply set aside the Old Testament.

- *The Old Testament is a big part of your Bible.*
- *There are 929 chapters in the Old Testament and only 260 chapters in the New.*
- *When you break it down into actual verses and words, over three-fourths of the Bible is in the Old Testament.*
- *As a matter of fact if you took all of the Old Testament references and direct quotations from the Old Testament out of the New Testament you wouldn't have much New Testament left. There are 343 Old Testament quotations in the New Testament, as well as no fewer than 2,309 allusions and verbal parallels. The books most used are Psalms (79 quotations, 333 allusions), and Isaiah (66 quotations, 348 allusions). In the Book of Revelation, there are no formal quotations at all, but no fewer than 620 allusions.*

Perhaps the best way to determine the value of the Old Testament is to see how Jesus viewed it. What did Jesus say about the Old Testament and the law? Granted Jesus' teaching was different from the teachers of his day. He taught with authority, and he seemed to set aside many of their traditions. But was Jesus setting aside the Old Testament law? Those are some of the questions we will answer today as we look at a Christian's righteousness and Jesus' view of the law. I want you to notice in this passage Jesus does three things... it does a couple of things...

3 Things Jesus Does in Our Passage:

1. **He fulfills the Word of God (the Law and the Prophets) (v.17)** – Jesus legitimizes the Word, fulfill the Word, is the Word. We don't get to dismiss some parts of the Word because they we don't agree with them, or don't like what they say, or they make us too uncomfortable. We don't get to "cafeteria style" select what part of Scripture we want and reject those parts we don't. Remember Paul tell us in 2 Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable..." But it's more than that too... you can't have Jesus without the Word of God, because He is the fulfillment of the Word of God, it is His word and He embodies the Word. You really can't say, "Well I like your Jesus, but I don't like the Bible. It's too hard. It's too confrontational. It's too bloody and violent and wrathful. It make me uncomfortable." Folks, listen remember we talked about this a few week ago on Sunday, when we said Jesus was full of grace and truth. He is full of grace, but He is full of the truth too... and I have a feeling that if Jesus walked into this room right now we likely would be some discomfort, some uncomfortable moments, His very presence might confront our own hypocrisy and short comings. He embodies truth... the truth... the truth of God's Word. He fulfill the Word.
2. **He affirms the full authority of the Word of God (vv.18-19)** – That means He is saying that Scripture, the Word of God, the Bible is fully authoritative for your life and mine today. And not only that, it is our final and only source of authority. Folks, we must not take away from the Word of God, we must not water it down, we must compromise it, or settle for anything less or more than God Word in it's full authority to speak to our lives.
3. **He calls for a following of the Word of God (vv.19-20)** – We are to live it. Here it is... we cannot impact our world for Christ apart from His word. Here is the title of this study, "Impacting Your World Through the Word" ... you impact your world by living... doing... obeying the Word... living it out.

Let's take a look at each of these as we work this section of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

JESUS CAME TO FULFILL THE WORD OF GOD **the Law and Prophet (Matthew 5:17)*

The first thing we learn from our passage is that Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets. Look at **verse 17** where Jesus says, ¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." The phrase "*the Law or the Prophets*" is simply shorthand for the whole Old Testament... God Word. It is the very Word of God, Scripture, our Bible.

Some names for the Bible (Old Testament Scripture):

- **The Writing and the Prophet** – Sometimes it is called the Writings and the Prophets
- **The Law and the Prophets** - Sometimes the Law and the Prophets
- **The Law** - Sometimes just the Law
- **The Prophets** - Sometimes just the Prophets

Jesus came preaching a new message about the Kingdom of God. Did this mean that he was setting aside the Old Testament? Jesus' words in verse 17 answer that question with a resounding, "No!" Jesus did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets but to fulfill them.

That is a mysterious phrase, isn't it – "Jesus came." It means that Jesus came from somewhere else, and that he came on a mission. He describes that mission in various ways throughout the gospels but here he sums it up as saying he came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets.

You cannot set Jesus against the Old Testament, because Jesus was for the Old Testament, not against it. Jesus did not come to abolish the Old Testament but to fulfill it. So how did he do this? In what ways did Christ fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures?

3 Ways Jesus Fulfilled the Demands of the Law and Prophets (The Word of God):

1. Jesus fulfilled the demands of the law - First of all he fulfilled the demands of the law. And he did this in two ways...

2 Ways Jesus Fulfilled the Demands of the Law:

(1) By His life - Jesus lived a perfect life of obedience to the law... the Word. The writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 4:15, *"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we were, yet without sin."* Jesus fulfilled the demands of the law by his life because he lived a perfect life in obedience to the law. Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus was *"tempted in every way, just as we are – yet was without sin."* Jesus may have set aside some of the traditions of the day, but he never set aside God's commands in the Old Testament. He lived a perfect sinless life of unswerving obedience to God's perfect and holy law.

(2) By His death - He took the law's punishment for our sin. Paul says it like this in Galatians 3:13, *"¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")"* Jesus fulfilled the demands of the law by his death and resurrection because he took the law's punishment for our sin. Galatians 3:13 says, *"¹³ Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")"* The law's demands were pretty simple – keep it or die.

- Jesus kept it, so he didn't have to die. None of us kept it, so we all deserved to die.
- Jesus fulfilled the demands of the law for us, so we don't need to die.
- Jesus fulfilled the demands of the law when he died for us, taking the law's punishment for our sin.
- And he demonstrated that the price had been paid when he rose again from the dead.

So that's the first way Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures – he fulfilled the demands of the law.

2. Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies - Secondly, Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies.

READ: Luke 24:13-27, "The Road to Emmaus"

After his resurrection Jesus met his disciples on the road to Emmaus notice what he told them in verses 25-27, *"²⁵ Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He ^[3]expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."*

Beginning with the book of Genesis, Jesus took them through the Old Testament showing them how the Scriptures all pointed to him. Jesus told the Jewish people of his day in John 5:39-40... just listen to these word of Jesus... he said, ³⁹*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.* ⁴⁰*But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*” In other words the entire Old Testament pointed forward to Christ. The great Christian theologian, James Montgomery Boice writes, “It is stated as plainly as it can be stated. If you reject the Bible, you will reject Jesus Christ. If you believe the Bible, you will accept him. He is the subject of it.”

The whole Bible is about Jesus. Make it down!

3. **Jesus revealed the true meaning of the law** - How did Jesus fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures? He fulfilled the demands of the law. He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. And then thirdly, he revealed the true meaning of the law. Jesus uses an interesting phrase throughout Matthew chapter 5. Again and again Jesus says the words, *“But I tell you...”* or *“But I say to you...”* He would quote the common interpretation of the Old Testament, and then he would say, *“But I tell you...”*
- J. A Bengel points out that... “Whereas the prophets said, “Thus saith the Lord...” and the apostles said, “It is written...” only Jesus says, “But I tell you...”
 - As John R.W. Stott writes, “His purpose [was] not to change the law, still less to annul it, but ‘to reveal the full depth of meaning that it was intended to hold.”

Jesus revealed the true meaning of the law which had to do with your heart and your motivations, not just your outward behavior.

The apostle Paul reflected Jesus’ teaching when he wrote in Romans 13:9-10... just listen to these words, ⁹*For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,”* ¹⁰*“You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”* ¹⁰*Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.”* Notice that the commandments are not replaced by this rule but summed up. We love our neighbor not by ignoring God’s commands but by keeping them.

Jesus fulfilled all of the Old Testament in all of its parts. He fulfilled the demands of the law. He fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. He revealed the true meaning of the law. That’s our first point from this passage. Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets.

JESUS AFFIRMED THE CONTINUING AUTHORITY OF THE WORD OF GOD **the Law and the Prophets* (Matthew 5:18-19)

Secondly, Jesus affirmed the continuing authority of the law... the Word of God as seen in the Old Testament. Look at verse 18 of our passage where Jesus says, ¹⁸*For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.”*

If we learned from verse 17 that Jesus did not come to destroy God's Word but to fulfill it, we learn from verse 18 that nothing can destroy God's Word.

Verse 18 is a very interesting statement grammatically in the Greek. Jesus uses two very powerful statements in this verse that many don't get, but I think it adds depth to how authoritative and powerful God's Word really is.

2 Strong Statement by Jesus in Matthew 5:18:

- (1) **Jesus uses the strongest positive statement possible = "for assuredly I say to you"** - Jesus begins **verse 18** with the words, **"For assuredly, I say to you..."** or you Bible may say, **"I tell you the truth..."** which is **the strongest positive statement possible**.
- (2) **Jesus uses the strongest negative statement possible = "by no means"** - And when he says nothing will **"by no means"** pass away or disappear he uses **the strongest negative statement possible**. Jesus held the very highest view of the Old Testament Scriptures (God's Word) and its authority.

Notice what Jesus says about the Word of God again in **verse 18-19**, **"¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."** **What is He telling us about the Word of God here?**

There are three things we learn about God's word from verses 18-19. First of all the word of God stands forever.

Jesus is telling us 3 things about the Word of God (in Matthew 5:18-19):

1. **Jesus is telling us the word of God stands forever** - Jesus said that God's word is more permanent than the created world around you. Why? Because God's word came first. It was God's word that created the world. The world is dependent on God's Word, not vice versa. **Isaiah 40:8** says: **"The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever."** The law is an expression of God's righteous character; therefore it is permanent and unchanging. Jesus, Himself said in **Matthew 24:35**, **"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."** And when heaven and earth do pass away, what does the Bible tell us then? Listen to what Peter writes in **2 Peter 3:13** under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, **"Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."** And so God's perfect righteousness as revealed in the law continues even into the new heaven and earth. The word of God stands forever.
2. **Jesus is telling us every part matters** - Secondly, every part matters... every part of God's Word matters. Jesus said in our passage, **"Not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."** Notice **verse 19** again, **"¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."**
 - **"one jot"** - The "smallest letter" of the Hebrew alphabet was the Hebrew letter **'yodh.'** You can see what it looks like if you turn to **Psalm 119:73** in your Bible. There's the

Hebrew letter ‘yodh’ at the beginning of that section. Pretty tiny letter, isn’t it? that is “one jot.”

- **“one tittle”** - The “least stroke of a pen” refers to a tiny stroke that differentiated one letter from another. You can see an example of this if you turn to **Psalm 119:81** and look at the Hebrew letter ‘kaf’ at the beginning of that section. Now hold your place and turn to **Psalm 119:9**. Compare the ‘bet’ right before verse 9 with the ‘kaf’ right before verse 81. Do you see the difference? It’s hard to tell, isn’t it? The only difference is the tiniest stroke of a pen on the ‘bet’ on the lower right hand corner of the letter. And yet that tiny stroke is what makes the difference between the Hebrew letter b and k. Does it matter whether you use a b or a k in a word? Absolutely! It’s the difference between bin and kin, beep and keep, bite and kite. It could change the whole meaning of a sentence.

What is Jesus saying about the law? **Every part matters from the smallest letter to the least stroke of a pen.**

- Or as Francis W. Beare put it, “The law remains in force to the last dot on the last ‘i’.”
- James Montgomery Boice writes, “We must remember that Jesus Christ was the author of Scripture during the Old Testament period, that subsequent to that he was the one who came and lived on earth to fulfill it, and then that he inspired the New Testament writers to interpret correctly the things he had already done.”

Every part matters. Remember our passage in **2 Timothy 3:16** where Paul writes, **“^{d6} All Scripture (all Scripture) is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”**

Jesus said in **John 10:35**, **“...Scripture cannot be broken.”**

What was Jesus’ view on Scripture?

- God’s Word is absolutely reliable and true – all of it.
- The Old Testament is just as important as the New.
- You can’t have one without the other.
- You cannot remove the Old Testament and have the full revelation of God.
- You don’t get to pick and choose which commands you like.
- Every part matters.

3. **Jesus is telling us we must practice and teach all of it** - The word of God stands forever. Every part matters. And thirdly, **therefore we must practice and teach all of it.** Notice **verse 18-19** again, **“¹⁸ For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. ¹⁹ Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”** Verse 18 teaches us the law’s authority. Now **verse 19** teaches us that we must obey the law. Look at **verse 19** where Jesus says, **“¹⁹ Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”** Jesus says there are no “little” or “lesser” commands in Scripture. Even breaking the “least” command can disqualify you for the kingdom. The word translated “breaking”

here refers not so much to an isolated instance, but rather in relaxing the requirement, doing away with the commandment, changing what God has said in his word. *What do you think this says to what is happening in our day where God's Word is being watered down and so, so compromised? Is that a violation of what Jesus is teaching here? Why/how?*

Notice the close connection between breaking and teaching. **Once you start breaking God's commands, you will teach others to do the same.** *How? In what way? How are you teaching other to break God's Word when you break God's Word yourself in your own life?*

And listen, when you teach others to break God's commands, you will certainly be breaking God's commands yourself. I like what **Fredrick Bruner** says about this verse... he says, **"If we belittle Scripture, we will ourselves become little in the kingdom."** Now if you want to be great in God's kingdom, then Jesus says you should practice and teach these commands.

Notice Jesus' emphasis on practice and teaching. **Jesus says not only should you practice what you preach, but you should teach what you practice.** He says the same thing later on in the Great Commission. **"Go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."** (Matthew 28:19-20)

The question often comes up, what about the civil and ceremonial laws in the Old Testament? Are we still supposed to keep those today? The civil laws separated Israel from the nations around them and provided specific applications of Biblical principles for the nation of Israel. What about the laws having to do with the temple and the sacrifices? The ceremonial laws pointed forward to Christ. They were fulfilled in his death on the cross, so we no longer keep those laws today. But that does not mean that they do not continue to have lasting significance. **John Calvin** said about the ceremonial laws, **"It is only their practice that was abrogated; their significance was actually given more confirmation."** Jesus said, **"If you love me, you will obey what I command."** (John 14:15)

Once again, we don't get to pick and choose which commands to follow. If we love Christ, we will seek to keep all his commands. If Jesus came not to destroy God's law but to uphold and fulfill it, how much more must we as his followers practice and teach all of God's commands.

Jesus loved the Old Testament, and he upheld its authority in the strongest of terms. 1) The word of God stands forever. 2) Every part matters. 3) We must practice and teach all of it. Jesus confirmed the continuing authority of the law.

JESUS PROCLAIMED THE NEED FOR LIVING THE WORD OF GOD **the Law and Prophet (Matthew 5:19-20)*

So far we have looked at two main truths from this passage of Scripture: 1) Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets. 2) Jesus confirmed the continuing authority of the law. And now we come to the third main teaching in this passage: 3) Jesus proclaimed the need for a greater righteousness. Look at **verse 20** with me... Jesus says, **"²⁰For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."**

This verse would have dropped like a bombshell on Jesus' listeners. You have to understand, when it came to righteousness, the scribes and the Pharisees were considered superstars in this area. They were the Billy Grahams and Mother Teresas of their day. The people had an actual saying back in New Testament times, *"If only two men could enter heaven, one would be a scribe and the other a Pharisee."* If anyone was righteous enough to enter heaven, it had to be the Pharisees and teachers of the law.

The righteousness Jesus calls us to live by and the righteousness He calls us NOT to live by:

- 1. The righteousness Jesus speaks against - the righteousness of the Pharisees and teachers of the law** - But here in verse 20 Jesus says that even their righteousness was not enough. There were three things wrong with the righteousness of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, and we find all three of them in Matthew 23 (**READ: Matthew 23:1-13**).

3 Things Wrong with the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees:

- (1) It was self serving (Matthew 23:5-7)** - First of all, their righteousness was self-serving. Look at Jesus' words in Matthew 23:5-7, *"Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'"* They were not being righteous out of love for God but out of show for men. Their righteousness was not God-directed but self-serving
 - (2) It was partial (Matthew 23:23)** Secondly, their righteousness was partial, not complete. Look at Jesus' words in Matthew 23:23, *"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices – mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law – justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former."* They were not obeying all of God's law, only the parts that mattered to them.
 - (3) It was external only (Matthew 23:25-28)** - Thirdly, their righteousness was external only. Look at Jesus words in Matthew 23:25-28, *"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness."* God demands righteousness in your heart, and their righteousness was external only.
- 2. The righteousness Jesus calls us to live by = the greater righteousness** - The truth is our own righteousness can never get us into heaven, because we can never obey God's law perfectly. We need a greater righteousness to enter the kingdom of heaven. Let me share with you four things the Bible tells us about this greater righteousness.

4 Things About the Righteousness We Need to Get Us Into Heaven (Greater Righteousness):

- (1) This righteousness was testified to by the law and prophets** - First of all, it was testified to by the law and prophets. We read in Romans 3:21, *"But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify."* Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets which testified to this greater righteousness he would bring. So how do you obtain this greater righteousness?

- (2) ***This righteousness is credited to us by faith in Christ*** - That brings us to our second point. This greater righteousness is credited to us by faith in Christ. Look at Paul's words in **Philippians 3:9**, "... not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ – the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith." This has to do with your justification. Even though we are sinners, we are given a righteous standing before God in Christ. Christ's righteousness is credited to us by faith
- (3) ***This righteousness is worked in us by the Holy Spirit*** - Thirdly, this greater righteousness is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. We read in **Romans 8:4**, "...that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit." This has to do with your sanctification. In other words, we are not only given righteous standing before God, but God is working out Christ's righteousness in us by the Holy Spirit
- (4) ***This righteousness will get you into the kingdom of heaven*** - And then the fourth thing you need to know about this greater righteousness... it is the only type of righteousness that will get you into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus ends with a warning in our passage in **verse 20** "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20) This has to do with your glorification – your entrance into heaven after you die. When Jesus says, "you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven," he uses that strongest negative statement possible in the Greek once again. As **James Boice** once said: "Hell is full of human righteousness." Without this greater righteousness, Jesus is saying you don't have a chance.

Do you want a righteousness that surpasses the Pharisees and the teachers of the law? God offers it to you through Jesus Christ. **Romans 10:4** says: "Christ is the end of the law [that is, the fulfillment of the law] so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.")

CONCLUSION

Today's application is a simple one for all of us.

1. **If you believe in Jesus, then you will believe what he said about Scripture.**
2. **And you believe what Jesus said about Scripture, then you will be a person of this book.**
 - **You will read it**
 - **you will learn it**
 - **you will study it**
 - **you will treasure it**
 - **you will practice it and teach it to other.**
 - **It will be your sole authority and guide for all of life**
 - **You will not pick and choose but rather believe and obey**

Jesus came to fulfill the law and the prophets... the Word of God. Jesus affirmed the continuing authority of the law. Jesus proclaimed the need for a greater righteousness. And it's all right here in God's Holy Word