

The Sermon on the Mount speaks of what the life of a true believer ought to be. Jesus did not want the people to just follow Him physically, but also to truly know what their lives as true believers were to be like. He spoke of the Law because salvation cannot be spoken of apart from the Law. It shows us that, before salvation, we are sinners before God; and, after salvation, how we are to please God.

1. Our failure to keep God’s Laws by ourselves (Matt 5:1-12)

The beatitudes were introduced in Matthew 5:3-12. They are blessings that can be given to man. Christians need to be bankrupt in spirit, mourn for God’s favour, and have a tender heart that is receptive to God’s law before they can go to heaven, be comforted, and inherit the earth. The believer's grief over his failure to keep God’s law leads to gain. He will then long to fulfil God’s Word, show kindness toward others, have a heart cleansed from sin, and make peace with man. As a result, persecution will come.

2. God’s command to keep the Law after salvation (Matt 5:13-16)

The similitudes are shown in Matthew 5:13-16. They are illustrations to show us how to testify for Christ. Like salt, we need to slow decay and add flavour and grace to the world when we keep God’s law. We, as God’s ambassadors, are similar to a city on a hill. Our light cannot be hidden. People can see our obedience (or our lack of it) to God’s Law. Just like a candle, our purpose is to be the light to the world, shining for Jesus. If we do not fulfil our purpose, we portray a false image of Christ.

Our life is a walking Bible. Will it show an accurate or erroneous account of Jesus? When we fulfil our duty well, we point others to God. They will see that Jesus is real, and come to the saving knowledge of Christ, and then be able to glorify God acceptably. There is no greater satisfaction than for us to fulfil the purpose the Maker of mankind has given us.

3. Explanation of the Law (Matt 5:17-6:18)

We need to have a correct understanding of the law in order to live rightly. Christ fulfilled the law while on earth by 1) fulfilling the prophecies that pointed to Him in the Old Testament, and 2) obeying the law. Just as God is detailed enough to ensure that not one jot or tittle is lost from the Bible, He will not ignore any sins we commit. We need perfect obedience to enter heaven, and Christ obeyed the law perfectly on our behalf, making us fit for heaven.

In Matthew 5:21-48, Jesus corrected different misunderstandings about the law regarding our relationships with others. He raised the standard in each of them by showing how the law binds the heart as much as the actions. Therefore, we must take drastic measures against committing sins like hatred, lust, not keeping one's words, etc. We must also show love to those around us by responding with forbearance to injustices, harm, etc. Just as God the Father shows common grace to mankind, we must also show common grace to those who hurt us.

In Matthew 6:1-18, Jesus talked about laws concerning our worship. Our private worship should stay private since the important thing is our relationship with God. From the Lord’s Prayer, we learn the importance of forgiving others just as God has forgiven us.

Let us show forth Christ in our lives through our obedience of God’s Laws.

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