

iii. Our righteousness has to surpass that of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law!

a) The Pharisees paid extra attention to what Jesus called lesser important commandments, and no attention to what He called the weightier commandments (23:23).

b) We cannot have a righteousness that surpasses that of the Pharisees *if* we prioritize God's commands in a way similar to the Pharisees.

B. True mercy starts in Jesus Christ who demonstrates God's heart in the Law.

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Read Matthew 5:20. What are some of the difficulties you think many might have with this verse?
- What does Jesus mean by "will not enter the kingdom of heaven"? Why is it important to recognize the already *and* not yet aspects of entering the kingdom of heaven?
- The Christians who were the likely first recipients of Matthew's gospel were in an extremely overcrowded city. How might this have effected their hearing of Jesus' message in Matthew 5? Or, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near"?
- What was right about the Pharisees' righteousness? What was wrong with it? (The rest of Matthew helps answer this.)
- How do the Beatitudes function as an instrument panel for us in this world? What is the danger of ignoring it?
- Do you think your attitude toward "Jesus' Bible" has been in line with what He calls for in our text? Is any adjustment needed?

DISCIPLE 1.0.4

Surpassing the Righteousness of the Pharisees

Jerry Cisar — March 10, 2019

Text: Matthew 5:17-20

Introduction

I. *What did Jesus mean by "enter the kingdom of heaven"?*

Matthew 4:17; 5:3, 10, 20

A. The Original Audience: (Syrian _____)

- i. How would that audience hear "enter the Kingdom of Heaven"?
- ii. Today, there are two extremes in dealing what it means to "enter the kingdom of heaven."
 - a) Not Yet
 - b) Already
 - c) We need an already/not yet perspective, but we must get right which parts are already and which are not yet!

II. What Was Wrong with the Pharisee's Righteousness? (20)

- A. If we are honest, this text is difficult for us.
 - i. Because we don't want it to say what it apparently says

FD Bruner: "I find the intention of this argument praiseworthy—the intention of preserving the gospel of free grace and faith. But the exegesis is wanting."

- ii. Jesus is quite clearly speaking about "your righteousness" not His.

B. What was wrong with the Pharisees' righteousness?

- i. They failed to see and practice the intent of the Law!
 - a) Mat 15:8
 - b) Mat 23
 - They don't practice what they preach.
 - They create loads of rules and put them as burdens on people's backs and then don't do a thing to help them carry them.
 - They do everything in order to be seen and loved by the people.
 - They love being called Reverend, or Pastor, with great respect.
 - They had a great evangelistic zeal for converts, but converted them to evil.

c) The Core Issue (23:23-26)

- d) "Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'" (Matt. 9:13; see 12:7)

- ii. To surpass their righteousness, the Beatitudes have to be our instrument panel.

C. A Reminder about the Beatitudes

- i. These eight divide nicely in to four descriptions that complement each other.

Carter points out that the first four describe, "not personal qualities but oppressive situations of distress or bad fortune." In other words, these are not character traits as much as they are life conditions.

The second four are involve human actions that restore people from those oppressive situations.

- ii. The correspondence between the first four and the last four works by working from the outside in.

Where disciples meet the poor, mourning, meek, and deprived of justice with mercy, shalom-restoration, clean hearts and hands willing to get involved in messy lives, and persecuted doing so, there the kingdom of heaven has been entered into! *This is the church being the church!*

III. Are You as Committed to the OT as Jesus is? (5:17-19)

A. What is your attitude toward Jesus' Bible?

- i. Not only was the OT Jesus' Bible, which he learned and loved, it was the Bible which the apostle's used when the church began.
- ii. Vv17-19 makes clear that He did not come to lower the standards!