

Law Fulfilled

Matthew 5:17-20

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17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

18. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Commentary:

I. Christ asserts in this passage his superiority to the law of Moses but declared he had not come to destroy (demolish, break into pieces) the law, but to fulfill the law.

A. Any modification of the law was sure to cause the ire of the Jews who had made the law into a virtual idol.

B. Colossians 2:14-16, Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

C. No change in the law would occur until "all things be accomplished," until all parts of the law had been fulfilled.

D. Jots and tittles were comparable to our crossing of "t" and dotting of "i", the minutest markings of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

II. The Old Testament is of great value to Christians, but it is not the Christian's law.

A. Romans 15:4, For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

III. Even one of the least of these commandments of the law was not to be disregarded or disobeyed by the disciples.

A. Jesus was the ultimate interpreter of the law.

B. When the law was fulfilled, the law ended . . . at the cross.

IV. If the righteousness of the disciples did not exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, the disciples would never see (experience) the kingdom of God.

A. This certainly does not say much for the righteousness of these arrogant self-righteous hypocritical religious bigots.

B. The righteousness of the Jews consisted of externals, ceremonials, rituals, liturgies and formalities.

C. Jesus told his disciples that their religion must be one of the heart!

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Questions

1. What is the difference between *destroying* and *fulfilling* the law?

2. What are *jots* and *tittles*? _____

3. Who is the *least in the kingdom of heaven*? _____

4. Who is the *greatest in the kingdom of God*? _____

5. What degree of righteousness must we have in order to enter the kingdom of heaven? _____

6. Of what value is the Old Testament to Christians? _____
