

# *Who Do You Say That I Am?*

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository  
Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

26- The Kingdom of Heaven and Its Citizens- Part 6  
The King Fulfills the Law and Brings in The  
Righteousness of Faith- Part 2

---

Church August 21, 2022

## **Matthew 5:17-20**

**17 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.**

**18 "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.**

**19 "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**

**20 "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.**

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;  
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen*

Now as I told you last time- this Passage in **Matthew 5** is perhaps, one of the most important Passages in the entire Bible. So, I pray that we can understand this Passage rightly and fully; and that I can preach it rightly and fully- because it really is that important.

And I told you last time that there are at least 5 Subjects being dealt with here in these 4 inspired and infallible verses:

1. The *Importance* and *Permanence* of “*God’s Law*”
2. What did Jesus mean when He said He came to “*fulfill*” the Law?
3. What is the connection between Jesus fulfilling the Law and the “*Righteousness of God*”?
4. What is “*Human Righteousness*”?
5. What is the “*Righteousness of Faith*”?

... and all five deserve to be explained and explored rightly and fully so we can comprehend what Jesus was talking about.

Now last time, we began to look at #1 and I want to continue this in today's Sermon.

## **1. The Importance and Permanence of God's Law**

So, exactly what is the "*Law of God*"? In the New Testament, the word, "*Law*" is used in at least five different ways:

1. It refers to the 39 Books of the Old Testament
2. It refers to the "*Pentateuch*"- the first five Books of the Old Testament
3. It refers to the "*Covenant at Sinai*"- the "*Mosaic Covenant*" and the Commandments Moses received there
4. It refers to the "*Authority of God*" throughout His Creation
5. It refers to a "*Summary Statement*" of God's Demand for perfect Obedience

... so, it will be very confusing if we speak of a "*Law-Gospel Distinction*" without making clear what we mean by the word, "*Law*" when we say it. Now the "*Law-Gospel Distinction*" is the Division between what belongs to the Old Testament and is no longer applicable to Christians today and what belongs to the Believers in Jesus. So, an example of something that the Law of God *commanded* but which is no longer applicable today- would be "*Animal Sacrifices*." Nobody is to sacrifice an Animal today- precisely because the "*once for all Sacrifice of Jesus*" supplanted and superseded the sacrifice of Animals. **Hebrews 10:11-13** says,

**11 Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;**

**12 but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD,**

**13 waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET.**

So, even though God, at one time, **COMMANDED** that Animals be sacrificed- the Sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross- is so utterly superior to that Old Testament Command- that if anyone were to sacrifice an Animal today- He would be sinning against God and would be waging war against the Grace of God and the Lord Christ Himself.

Now the Conversation about the “*Law-Gospel Distinction*” has been going on for over two thousand years- and it involves huge and complex Issues- which we don’t have time to get into this morning. But I think that when people just constantly say, “*Law, Law, Law, Law*”, and yet don’t define what they mean by that word- they add to the Confusion.

So, let me tell you what I mean when I say that there is a clear Distinction between the Law and the Gospel in the Bible. Because when I say the word, “*Law*”- I do NOT mean that the Law is NOT the first five Books of Moses. Now why is that? Because the “*Pentateuch*”- the first five Books of the Bible (written by Moses)- includes the Book of **Genesis**, which contains the “*Abrahamic Covenant*” of which the Apostle Paul teaches in **Romans**, that God said that Abraham was “**justified by Faith ALONE**” (**Genesis 12, 15; Romans 4:1-3**).

And Paul uses that very same Passage from **Genesis** to illustrate the Gospel in **Galatians 3:6-10**:

**6 Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

**7 Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.**

**8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."**

**9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.**

**10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."**

So, then we must understand that the Pentateuch is preaching the Gospel in **Genesis 12: “In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:3)**. So, the Pentateuch preached “*Justification by Faith ALONE*”- which is the biblical Gospel- and it pointed to Jesus when it did it.

And then **Galatians 3:17b** says,

**... the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.**

And the phrase, “**the Law which came 430 years after**”- is *obviously* referring ONLY to the “*Mosaic Law*”- which is different from the “*Law*” found in **Genesis**- precisely because Moses was not even born when the events of **Genesis** took place.

So, that means that we now have a “Law *within* the Law”. The “*Law of Moses*” is found within the “Law” of the Pentateuch (**Genesis**). And that means we have to clarify which “Law” we are talking about when we use that word. Do you mean the “*Pentateuch*” and its Message; or do you mean the “*Specificities of the Commandments of the Mosaic Covenant*”- which came 430 AFTER the first “Law” and yet doesn’t annul the Covenant made with Abraham and is used by Paul to illustrate the Gospel?

So, the “Law”, in the sense of the Pentateuch or the entire Old Testament, teaches that the “Law”, in the sense of the Commandments given at Sinai (*the Mosaic Law*), is NOT the Path to Justification. So, in that sense- the Pentateuch goes to war against the Mosaic Covenant as the means by which we move into a “*Right Standing*” (Righteousness) with God.

So, there is no “*Law-Gospel Distinction*” if by “Law” you mean the Pentateuch. Both the first five Books of the Old Testament (*excluding* the Mosaic Covenant) and the New Testament are both preaching the *same* Message; and they are both distinguishing the Gospel from the Mosaic Covenant (the Law of Moses).

Now why is that? Because embedded in the Mosaic Law given at Sinai is an ultimate Principle that if you seek to be justified by “*Commandment-keeping*”- you must be absolutely Perfect in keeping those Commandments or you can’t be justified at all.

So embedded in the “*Mosaic Law*” is this Principle that it is truly “*All or Nothing*”. So, for example, if you want to be circumcised- in order to find Favor with God- then you have got to keep the *whole* Law. If you want to be justified- that is, come into a “Right Standing” with God through “*Law-keeping*”; “*Rule-keeping*”; or “*Commandment-keeping*”- then you have got to keep it ALL- *perfectly*.

So, it is NOT the entire Old Testament- but what was embedded in the “*Law of Moses*” that was and is the enemy of Grace. It is the notion that a human being can come into Righteousness with God by keeping Commandments- that fights against the Grace of God. And in verse 17- Jesus is referring to the ENTIRE Old Testament- because He used a very familiar phrase that the average 1<sup>st</sup> Century Jew would have understood. So, when Jesus said,

**Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets...**

... that phrase, the “*Law or the Prophets*” was used back in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century to refer to the ENTIRE 39 Books of the Old Testament. But then when he finished verse 17 and said,

**... I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.**

... He was addressing that *part* of the Old Testament- the “*Law of Moses*” that *demanded* perfect Obedience to the Commandments that God had given to Moses.

So, we saw last time that Jesus *loved* God’s Law; and He *honored* God’s Law. And when He said that- He was talking about the ENTIRE Old Testament. But when He said He was going to “fulfill” the Law- He was referring to that *portion* of the Old Testament- *the Mosaic Law*- that demanded perfect Obedience in order to be in “Right Standing” with God.

So, we see that Jesus was NOT against God’s Law (all 39 Books). And yet we also see that Jesus WAS in Favor of a “*Great Change*” concerning the Requirement of the “*Law of Moses*”- that demanded perfect Obedience- in order to earn God’s Favor. because *in addition* to all that Jesus said concerning His *support* of God’s Law- He also said this:

**I did not come to abolish but to fulfill... not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished ...**

... and by using the word, “**fulfill**” and the word, “**accomplished**”- Jesus WAS advocating for a “Great Change” *within* God’s Law that ONLY He could bring about. So, even as He discussed His great Love and Honor for God’s Law- Jesus did NOT want things to *continue* with certain portions of God’s Law as they had for hundreds and hundreds of years.

At the end of both verse 17&18- Jesus indicated that He was going to do a “*New Thing*” with a part of God’s Law- that had never been done before. And that “*New Thing*” is what the “*New Covenant*” is all about. So, the Life; Death; and Resurrection of Jesus is going to bring into Reality a radical Departure from the normal understanding of some areas of God’s Law. In other words, the “New Thing” that Jesus was going to do- would actually “FULFILL” the Law of God. And yet, this radical Departure would actually *accomplish* EVERYTHING that the Law itself promised.

Now the word that was translated here into English as “**fulfill**” comes from a Greek word (*pleeroo*; Strong’s # 4137), that means: *to complete; to consummate; to bring to an end; to carry out; or to perform*. And the word, that was translated into English as “**accomplished**” comes from a Greek word (*ginomai*; Strong’s #1096), that means: *to come into existence*.

So, there is something about a *part* of God’s Law that needs *to be brought to an End* (**fulfilled**) by Jesus. And then there is something else that needs *to come into Existence* (**accomplished**) by what ONLY Jesus can do- in, by, and through bringing that something to an End.

So, we see then, that the Law of God- in the sense of the ENTIRE OLD TESTAMENT is Permanent and will forever describe what loving God looks like. What is NOT Permanent is the “*Law of Moses*”- which is also called the “*Law of God*” or the “*Mosaic Law*.” THAT is the part of the Law of God that Jesus “fulfilled” and that has been “accomplished”.

## **2. What did Jesus mean when He said He came to Fulfill the Law?**

What we first have to understand is that the Glory of Jesus Christ shines more clearly when we see Him in His proper Relation to the Old Testament. He has a magnificent Relation to all that was written before He was born. It is not surprising that this is the Case, because He is called, the “*Word of God incarnate*” (**John 1:14**). So, would not the “*Word of God incarnate*” be the sum total of the “*Word of God written*”? I ask that you would consider these Summary Statements and the verses and passages that support them.

**1. All the Scriptures bear witness to Jesus.** Abraham rejoiced to see Jesus and Moses wrote about Jesus. And in **John 5:39&46**, Jesus said:

**You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me... For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.**

**2. All the Scriptures are about Jesus Christ, even where there is no explicit Reference.** So, there is a “*Fullness of Implication*” in all the Scriptures that points to Jesus; and is satisfied only when He has come and done His Work. The Anglican Theologian, Graeme Goldsworthy said,

“The meaning of all the Scriptures is unlocked by the death and resurrection of Jesus”<sup>1</sup>

**Luke 24:27**

**Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**

**3. Jesus came to fulfill all that was written in the Law and the Prophets.** All of it was pointing to Him, even where it is not *explicitly* prophetic. So, Jesus *accomplished* what the Law *required*.

---

<sup>1</sup> Graeme Goldsworthy, *Preaching the Whole Bible as Christian Scripture*, 54

**4. All the Promises of God in the Old Testament are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.**

And that is true whether the Old Testament is talking about Land; or Covenants; or Temples; or Righteousness; or Salvation.

So, when you have Jesus, sooner or later you will have both Jesus and everything else that God promised.

**2Corinthians 1:20**

**For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.**

**5. The Law was kept perfectly by Jesus.** And in that sinless State- Jesus was then able to absorb all of the Penalties of the Law that was against God's sinful people- when they were poured out on Him. Therefore, the Law is now manifestly NOT the Path to Righteousness- Jesus is. And that means that the ultimate Goal of the Law is NOT That we would keep all of its Commandments- but that we would look to Jesus Christ, for our Righteousness.

**Romans 10:4**

**For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.**

Therefore, with the Life; Death; and Resurrection of Jesus- virtually EVERYTHING has changed! And Matthew wanted his first-century Jewish brethren to know:

**1. The Animal Sacrifices have *forever* ceased- because Jesus fulfilled all that they were pointing toward.** So, Jesus Himself was the final, unrepeatable Sacrifice for Sins.

**Hebrews 9:12-14**

**12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.**

**13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,**

**14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

**2. The Levitical Priesthood that stood between the Worshiper and God has *forever* ceased.**

### **Hebrews 7:23-24**

**23** The former priests, on the one hand, existed in greater numbers because they were prevented by death from continuing,  
**24** but Jesus, on the other hand, because He continues forever, holds His priesthood permanently.

**3.** The physical Temple in Jerusalem has *forever* ceased to be the geographic “Center of Worship”.

Now, Jesus Himself is now the “*Center of Worship*”. In the New Covenant, Jesus ALONE is the “*Place*”; the “*Tent*”; and the “*Temple*” where we meet God. Therefore, Christianity has no “*geographic Center*”; no Mecca; no Jerusalem.

### **John 2:19-21**

**19** Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

**20** The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

**21** But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

### **John 4:21-24**

**21** Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.

**22** "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

**23** "But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.

**24** "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

### **Matthew 18:20**

For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst."

**4.** The Food Laws that set Israel apart from the Nations of the world have been fulfilled and are *forever* ended in Jesus.

### **Mark 7:18-23**

**18** And He said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you

not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him,

19 because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.)

20 And He was saying, "That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.

21 "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries,

22 deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness.

23 "All these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

**5. The establishment of Civil Law on the basis of an ethnically rooted people, who are ruled directly by God, has *forever* ceased.**

The new "people of God", who will inhabit the new Kingdom of Heaven are no longer a "unified political body" or "an ethnic Group" or "a Nation-State" like they were in the Old Testament. Under the glorious New Covenant- the "People of God" are now "Aliens" and "Strangers" among ALL ethnic Groups and all States throughout the whole world.

Therefore, God's Will for Nations and States is NO LONGER taken directly from the Old Testament "*Theocratic Order*"- but should now be "*Re-established*" from place to place and from time to time by the various "Means" that correspond to God's sovereign Rule over all peoples. And these "Means" will always correspond to the fact that genuine Obedience, rooted as it is in Faith in Christ, *CANNOT* be *coerced* by Law.

The Nation or State therefore is grounded *in* God; and is accountable *to* God- but it is NOT expressive of God's *immediate* Rule.

### **Romans 13:1**

**Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.**

### **John 18:36**

**Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."**

### 3. What is the connection between Jesus fulfilling the Law and the “Righteousness of God”?

And in order to find out what the Answer is to this Question- we need to understand two other Concepts:

1. Obedience to God’s Law
2. The Righteousness that comes from that Obedience

You see, God gave Mankind His Law- for two reasons:

1. Obeying God’s Law honors and glorifies God
2. Obeying God’s Law produces Righteousness in us

... and this is all because without God’s Law- Mankind would *annihilate* itself. And that is a form of the Love of God to undeserving Humans.

We should understand that History proves conclusively that the Lust to do whatever is “*right in our own eyes*”- is NOT the Path to Joy or Peace or a Fulfilled Life. It is the Road to absolute Ruin and Destruction. And every single Civilization that engaged in that wayward and perverted “*Liberty*”- no longer exists on the earth. So, in His Mercy- God *imposed* His Law on Mankind, in part, to stop us from being utterly destroyed.

But *why* does God’s Law have to be *imposed*? Why not simply allow Mankind to see the inherent Value; and the great Wisdom; and the staggering Beauty; and the unarguable Importance of God’s Law? And once they see God’s Law for what it truly is- all of Mankind would then voluntarily choose to obey it, right?

Well, they *might*- IF all of Mankind were not already “*Fallen*”. But they *are* Fallen- ALL of us are “*Fallen*”. And every soul who has ever lived; or who is alive right now; or who will ever live- has been radically ruined by the “*Original Sin*” of Adam when he sinned in the Garden.

But please remember, being “*Fallen*” is NOT about what we “*DO*”- but it is about who we “*ARE*”. It is about the very Core of our Being- the “*DNA*” of our human Nature. And that was best illustrated by Jesus when He said this in **John 3:19**:

**This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.**

Now please take note that Jesus did NOT say that we are judged

by God because we “DO” Dark things- but because we “LOVE” the Darkness itself. And to make matters even *worse*- the Lord Christ said that we love the Darkness RATHER THAN the Light. In other words, we love the Darkness INSTEAD of loving the Light- Who is Jesus. So, given the choice- without any interference by God- 100% of ALL of lost and fallen Mankind would *voluntarily* choose to Love the Darkness rather than Love Jesus. So, the Fall *destroyed* our Ability and Desire to love God- *freely*. And that is what it means to be “Fallen”.

Now remember that us loving God was the GREAT and FOREMOST COMMANDMENT:

**Matthew 22:37-38**

**" 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'  
38 "This is the great and foremost commandment.**

... and that means that being “Fallen” is NOT the long list of various Sins that we commit. Being “Fallen” means that we don’t have either the Ability or the Desire to love God- *freely*. But even though we don’t love God- we don’t stop loving. And so, we place our Loves and our Affections:

- On *other* Things (Idolatry)
- On Things that God made (Materialism)
- On Things that are passing away (Paganism).

... anything and anybody EXCEPT God. So, in our “fallen State”- we do NOT love God- *normally or naturally*.

And the Bible says that satan has blinded us to the Value; and the Wisdom; and the Beauty; and the Importance of God’s Law- precisely because he has blinded us to the Value; and the Wisdom; and the Beauty; and the Importance of God Himself!

Another way of saying the same thing is the way the Apostle Paul was “moved” by God the Holy Spirit to write **2Corinthians 4:3&4a**:

**And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving...**

Here, the Apostle said that satan has “**blinded the minds of the unbelieving**”. Well, what is it that satan does NOT want the unbelieving to see? Paul continues in verse 4:

**... the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

So, satan does NOT want the unbelieving to “*see*”; or “*behold*”; or “*comprehend*”; or “*acknowledge*”; or “*embrace*”; or “*love*”- something he called,

**the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

And then in verse 6- he says the same thing- only using different words,

**2Corinthians 4:6**

**For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.**

So, I suggest to you that, “**the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**” (v.4) is the *same thing* as: “**the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ**” (v.6). And THAT is what satan is terrified of. And THAT is what he works so hard to blind the minds of the unbelieving- so they won’t (can’t) see. And that means that these two Statements are simply different ways that the Bible talks about,

**The inherent Value; the great Wisdom; the staggering Beauty; and the unarguable Importance of God Himself.**

In other words, the unbelieving have never seen God in His Glory! Satan has blinded the minds of the unbelieving- so they will not behold God in His Glory! So, the ONLY Cure; the ONLY Fix for this- is for the Leaders of the Church to preach the Gospel- in such a way- that *reveals* or *displays* or *shows* God- in all His majestic Glory! And then the Blindness that satan has placed on the mind will melt away and people will then see or behold or love- God! And when they love God- they will then *respond* to that love- by loving and striving to obey God’s Law.

But I see that as a Problem because the Pulpits of the modern American Church are filled with Politics; and Social Issues; and Moral Pronouncements; but they are not filled with God. They are not filled with God and the *particularities* of His Glory. And so, the people of the modern Church are left with very vague

*generalities* about God that leave their heads empty of the infinite Majesty and Worth and Awe of the spectacular Glory of God!

And that is why, for example- most modern church-goers are no longer captured or overwhelmed by **the Glory of God's Eternality** and our minds no longer explode with the Knowledge that God never had a Beginning. We are amazed at the special effects of the latest Movie or the latest app on our smart phones- but God's people are no longer amazed at **the Glory of God's Omniscience**- that makes Quantum Physics look like a first- grade Reader. Or **the Glory of God's Wisdom** and we no longer stand in awe of the fact that God has never and will never be counseled by anybody! Or **the Glory of God's Omnipotence** in that God is so Omnipotent; so Almighty- that without God's Allowance- no man or beast or angel or demon on earth or in Heaven or in hell or under the earth moves one single inch! Or in **the Glory of God's Providence** whereby no bird hops on the ground and not one single leaf in the Amazon Forest falls to the ground and not one hair on our head turns white. Or **the Glory of God's Word** which upholds the entire universe and all the atoms and all the subatomic particles in it as well as all the galaxies and all the stars. Or **the Glory of God's Power** to walk on water; and raise the dead; and heal organic diseases; and curse fig trees; and open blind eyes; and raise the dead. Or **the Glory of God's Purity** whereby Jesus Christ never, ever sinned one single time; Jesus never had a bad Attitude for even one millisecond; He never lusted- not one single time; He never coveted- ever; He never was envious or enacted vengeance. Or **the Glory of God's Trustworthiness**- God *always* keeps His Word and He has never let one single Promise fall to the ground; and He *cannot* lie. Or **the Glory of His Justice**- whereby- at the end of all time- There will be no outstanding Accounts left open. And *everything* will be forever settled either on the Cross or in Hell. And every man, woman and child will either be redeemed- or they will burn forever in Hell- and there will be absolutely no Injustice. Or **the Glory of His Patience**- as God endures decade after decade after decade of Blair Bradley's Sin and agonizingly slow Sanctification. Or **the Glory of God's Slave like Obedience**- as Jesus fully embraced the most excruciating Death ever invented by Man in humble and joyful Obedience to His Father. Or **the Glory of God's Wrath** which one day will be poured out in such infinite Fierceness that men and women and children will cry for the rocks to fall on them to hide them from the Face of the Lamb of God. Or **the Glory of God's Grace**- which justifies the ungodly; or **the Glory of God's Love** that dies for us while we are yet sinners.

But until we grasp; and until we are overwhelmed with all of the *particularities* of God's Glory- to the point where we thunder it from our pulpits;

and are consumed by it in our own daily lives; until we make God to be so magnificently Attractive in all of His various Attributes- trying to obey God's Law is utterly impossible!

You see, no Lost person loves God. At all. And thus, no Lost person sees any Value or Beauty; or Wisdom; or Importance; at all in the Law that God gave. Satan has truly blinded their Minds.

Okay, but what about those who are saved? Their Minds have been Unveiled; they behold the Glory of God; they love what they see; and they are being changed into what they see. And that means they are saved. So, don't saved people obey God's Law?

Well, they certainly *want* to. And that is *why* God gave us His Law. God gave His Law to us because He desires that we *obey* it and *adhere* to it. And Salvation *facilitates* that Obedience.

So, yes, saved people strive to obey God's Law. They *struggle* against the lusts of their fallen Flesh (by the Power of the Holy Spirit) to be humbly and joyfully submitted to the Authority of God's Law in their daily lives- all to the Glory of God.

And that is what "*Worship*" actually is- judging God to be so Valuable; so Important; so Good; so Beautiful; so Wise; and so Glorious- that He *deserves* that we struggle to obey Him. And that is what obeying God's Law *is*- obeying God Himself!

Okay, but *why* do saved people have to "struggle" to obey God's Law? If the Law of God is so Great- shouldn't obeying it be easy? Yes, it should. But the reason it is NOT easy for even saved people to obey God's Law- is because even though their Souls are saved- their Flesh is still "Fallen."

You see, Salvation is about the Soul of an individual being so radically transformed that they now love God; and they love the "*Things of the Spirit of God*" (**1Corinthians 2:14**). But the Flesh of all saved people still is unconverted; and it still wants and loves Sin and Darkness.

So, the Christian Life is one that is in a constant Struggle with three Enemies:

1. The World
2. The Flesh
3. The Devil

So, IN His Mercy and BY His Grace- God comes to the elected (chosen) but unsaved individual, who is spiritually dead- and God- *all by Himself*- gives him "new, spiritual Life." And in giving him this new Life- He radically and eternally *transforms* his fallen Nature. And this is what being "*Born Again*" is all about.

And once that individual experiences the Miracle of the New Birth- his eyes are open- and he can see; his ears are unstopped- and he can hear; and his heart transformed- so he is both able and willing to believe. And with those new eyes and ears and heart- the individual becomes aware of his Sins and how terribly insulting his Sins have been against God- and God the Holy Spirit brings this person under great Conviction. And, at the same time, this person is also gifted with the Ability (Power) and the Desire (Will) to repent; and to trust in (place his Faith in) Jesus *personally*- and in His finished Work.

And the Hallmark of the New Birth- is NOT sinless Perfection. And neither is it perfect Obedience to God's Law. What identifies those who have experienced the Miracle of this New Birth is a "*Gift of Love*" that God gives us for *Himself*!

But *why* does God have to gift us with a Love for Him? Once again, we lost that Love in the Fall. So, what the New Birth grants us is an overwhelming and undying Love for God. And this is what the Apostle John was talking about when he said this in **1John 4:19**:

**We love because He first loved us.**

So, the Reason; the *Catalyst*; the *Origin*; and the *Genesis* of our love for God- is the Gift of Love that God gives to every born- again Believer. We do NOT already possess a Love for God. We love almost everything EXCEPT God, as Lost people. So, God has to provide this Love for Himself to us- and He does that in the New Birth. Another way of understanding this- is our Love *for* God is a Gift *from* God.

So, now that we have this new, spiritual Life; and now that we have this Gift of Love for God- we *respond* to all that God has done in us and for us and to us- by struggling against our own fallen Flesh and every other Obstacle- to obey God's Word; God's Commandments; and God's Law. And we engage in this Struggle- precisely because we love God.

So, this Struggle is NOT an Act of Human Choice or an example of Human Will-power. The Struggle to obey- *automatically* flows out from this Gift of Love that God has given to us in the Miracle of the New Birth. So, when we were Lost- we sinned by default. We really didn't even have to think much about it. Sinning came natural to us. But now that we have received this new, spiritual Life in the Miracle of the New Birth- we now love God- without really thinking about it. And it is out from this Love that flows our Obedience. So, our Obedience now- is by default- because it is the "*Obedience of Faith*".

... to be continued

Amen. Let's pray.

© 2021-2022 by The Covenant of Peace Church. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America

The Covenant of Peace Church PO Box 2906 Gulfport, Mississippi 39505 [www.covenantofpeace.net](http://www.covenantofpeace.net)

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of a verse- by- verse “Journey” through the **Gospel of Matthew**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this Transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete Copyright Statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.