

# The Law & The Prophets: A New Covenant Perspective

Long Beach Alliance Church • January 31, 2016 • Elder John Carriveau

*Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*

~ Matthew 5:17-20

## 1) What about that mountain?

A) Mountains can represent Kingdoms in Scripture.

i.) Isaiah 51:24-25; Ezekiel 28:16; Daniel 2:34-35 & 44-45; Hebrews 12:22-24, 28

ii.) Jesus has come preaching the Kingdom of Heaven.

## 2) Let's read our passage: Matthew 5:17-20

A) This passage serves as a transition from the Beatitudes/Similitudes, and an intro to the teachings that follow.

## 3) Jesus wants to be absolutely clear - He's come to fulfill, not to abolish!

A) He's emphatic because He is going to interpret passages in ways the scribes and Pharisees never would.

i.) What are The Law and The Prophets? The whole Old Testament

## 4) Question: If we have the 5 books of the Law, the Prophets and the other Writings, why does Jesus need to explain it further?

A) Jesus is announcing the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, which also brings the New Covenant.

i.) As a group, New Covenant people are different than Old Covenant people. Hebrews 8:6-13

a.) They ALL know the Lord savingly. They can ALL accept the spiritual implications of The Law and The Prophets.

b.) So, Jesus is about to teach New Covenant concepts in an Old Covenant context, and It WILL ruffle feathers.

## 5) Question: It seems Jesus is implying at least some of the Law can "pass away." Is that possible?

A) Moral Law - No!; Ceremonial Law - Yes.

## 6) "Losers" try to make the Law more palatable to carnal people. "Winners" teach faithfully.

## 7) We will be lost if our righteousness doesn't exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees.

A) Human/Self righteousness vs. the Righteousness of Christ imputed through faith.

## 8) Free yourselves of Old Covenant thinking

A) Examples: Tithing & Sabbath Keeping.

# GROWTH GROUP GUIDE • WEEK 4: MATTHEW 5:17-20

## OPENER

"There is plenty of law at the end of a nightstick." -Grover Whalen

What is the purpose of laws in our society? Do they help or hurt us? If God gave man laws to live by, how is it that we as Christians say we don't really have to obey all of them?

## DISCUSSION

- How have you understood the Christian's responsibility to the Law of God? Have you thought of it politically-like our nation should follow God's Law? Have you thought of it as irrelevant to Christians ("it's not a religion; it's a relationship!")? Have you found it to be a requirement of you?
- Have you ever read the Law, as in the rules set up by God in Exodus-Numbers (or more succinctly in Deuteronomy)? There you would find many direct quotes from God. From your experience in the Law, what do you think God is like?
- What do you think about Jesus fulfilling the Law? What do you think that has to do with you as an individual, or all of God's people?

## BIBLE STUDY

Read through Matthew 5:17-20

- What is Jesus' relationship to the Law? 5:17
- How long will the Law stand? 5:18
- Who are the least in the Kingdom of Heaven? 5:19
- What are those greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven known for? 5:19
- Who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven? 5:20

Read through Deuteronomy 18:15-22

- What does Moses promise to the people? 18:15
- Why does God not speak to people audibly and directly and instead uses a human mediator? 18:16-17
- After years of silence from God, the Jews were looking for a prophet like Moses described here. As John mentioned, it's significant that Jesus stood on a mountain (like Moses did) and preached on the Law, as Matthew is a book written to Jews to make the point that Jesus is the one they have waited for (a King like David and a Prophet like Moses). Take note of what this passage says the prophet to come will be like.  
 18:15 -  
 18:18 -  
 18:20 -



## MAKING ROOM TO MAKE DISCIPLES

Discuss your plans for the big game! It's next Sunday, so you should already have an idea what you or your group is doing. Remember, you aren't meeting next week. It's a chance to sacrifice your weekly taste of heaven (being with the redeemed) for those who are perishing.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Father, we are so in need. We don't yet understand perfectly what we are to do about Your Law. We love you with great hopes of loving You more. Please speak to our hearts about what obedience to You means. Thank You for sending Jesus to fulfill what we cannot. Please forgive us for submitting to an old master and for relaxing your Law. Lord, please forgive us for expecting others to submit to the old master or relaxing Your Law to sound more appealing to others. Please give us great hopes for the people we know that do not yet know You. Please, Jesus, let us be instruments of grace. Amen.