

Study Guide



Matthew 5:17-20 – September 17, 2017

Christ Came to Fulfill the Law

Welcome (40 Minutes)

Be intentional to have authentic relationships...

Worship (5 Minutes)

As the group transitions from of a time of fellowship to a time of intentional study of the word, it is important to facilitate that transition with a time of worship. This can look like praying together, singing songs together, or rejoicing in what the Lord has done throughout the week.

Word (45 Minutes)

As we look at Jesus' five discourses in Matthew, we see Matthew and the other disciples "at the feet of Jesus." These teachings are in the context of Jesus' calling and equipping the twelve apostles to go and make disciples of all nations. In our nine months of studying Jesus' five discourses of Matthew we will be sitting at the feet of Jesus learning the ins-and-outs of being disciple-makers ourselves. Our prayer is that we will be challenged to understand that we were saved in order to be disciple-makers and that we will be inspired to sit at the feet of Jesus to be equipped for our calling to be disciple-makers.

For further study on this weeks study please check out the following pages...

Action Step

This week let's memorize Matthew 5:20 and be able to explain what it means. Have everyone recite it in group and then discuss what it means.

Calendar

September 17th— [Connection Group](#)
September 17th— Kid's Shine
October 7th— [Parenting Conference](#)
October 29th— [Fall Festival](#)

Welcome (40 Minutes)

As you fellowship with one another, please be intentional about sharing what the Lord is doing in your lives. Get to know one another and encourage one another. Are your conversations pointing one another toward Christ?

Worship (5 Minutes)

If you are looking for a song to sing this week, here are the lyrics to "[Death Was Arrested](#)":

Alone in my sorrow and dead in my sin
Lost without hope with no place to begin
Your love Made a way to let mercy come in
When death was arrested and my life began

Ash was redeemed only beauty remains
My orphan heart was given a name
My mourning grew quiet my feet rose to dance
When death was arrested and my life began

Oh, Your grace so free
Washes over me
You have made me new
Now life begins with You
It's your endless love
Pouring down on us
You have made us new
Now life begins with You

Released from my chains I'm a prisoner no more
My shame was a ransom He faithfully bore
He cancelled my debt and He called me His
friend
When death was arrested and my life began

Oh, Your grace so free
Washes over me
You have made me new
Now life begins with You
It's your endless love
Pouring down on us
You have made us new
Now life begins with You

Our savior displayed on a criminal's cross
Darkness rejoiced as though heaven had lost
But then Jesus arose with our freedom in hand
That's when death was arrested and my life
began

Oh, Your grace so free
Washes over me
You have made me new
Now life begins with You
It's your endless love
Pouring down on us
You have made us new
Now life begins with You

Oh, we're free, free
Forever we're free
Come join the song
Of all the redeemed
Yes, we're free free
Forever amen
When death was arrested and my life began

Oh, we're free, free
Forever we're free
Come join the song
Of all the redeemed
Yes, we're free free
Forever amen
When death was arrested and my life began

When death was arrested and my life began
When death was arrested and my life began

Commentary: Read Matthew 5:17-20

Jesus has been teaching his disciples (and us) the true characteristics of a disciple (Matt. 5:2-12) and he has explained that as disciples we are the salt and light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16) - meaning that we are to have a morally and spiritually uplifting effect on the world. In Matthew 5:17-20, Jesus begins to define further this character of a disciple and these good works in terms of righteousness. The point of this passage is to lay down a general principle of righteousness which will be explained in detail in the verses that follow (Matt. 5:21-7:29) which we will study in the weeks to come.

Jesus has established himself as the supreme authority over everything - even over the Law, the Prophets, and the Law and Prophets (Scriptures) as the one who fulfills the Scriptures. Having established that authority Jesus moves from third person (bless are...), and second person (you are salt and light) to first person (truly I say to you...). Having all authority of heaven Jesus reaffirms the authority of Scriptures until the time heaven and earth pass away at Jesus' final return. Why does he establish his authority over all Scriptures and the authority of the Scriptures, because He is reacting to the Scribes and Pharisees who have been exalting themselves in authority and relaxing the commandments in order to be able to claim to be the righteous keepers of the law and judge of others (Matt. 5:17-19). In the verses that follow Jesus will continue to teach by His own authority ("you have heard it said...but I say..." (Matt. 5:21-7:29). This reveals to us that a proper understanding of the law addresses the heart and not just outward behavior. This is what Jesus means when he demands righteousness that exceeds that of the scribes and pharisees (Matt. 5:20). **The righteousness Jesus demands is a righteousness that flows from a new heart of faith rather than just a merely external behavior. The righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees was purely an external righteousness. But Jesus says that it's not enough to be righteous on the outside if you are not righteous on the inside. What Jesus is demanding is not more righteous deeds by human effort, but more righteous hearts by divine grace that shows how gracious and powerful God is.**

It is by this divine grace and authority Christian disciples must follow Christ, not the Pharisees. We have no liberty to try to lower the law's standards and make it easier to obey. We will not enter the kingdom of heaven by mere external, religious, self-righteousness keeping the rules, but by trusting in God's promise to declare us righteous by the righteousness of Jesus. **Jesus' disciples are declared righteous by faith in Jesus Christ, are given new hearts and minds filled with the Spirit of God which gives them new desires to know, obey, and teach the Scriptures from the heart.** This is the exceeding righteousness Jesus is talking about and this is the exceeding righteousness that Jesus will discuss in the verses that follow (Matt. 5:21-7:29).

Discussion

1. In verses 17 & 18 Jesus is talking about his attitude toward the Law and the Prophets—which is the whole of the Old Testament. What does he clearly say is not his attitude or intent toward the Old Testament?
2. What does he clearly say is his attitude or intent toward the Old Testament?
3. How did Jesus fulfill the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 1:21-23, John 19:33-37, Hebrews 4:15)?
4. Why might people mistakenly think that Jesus came to abolish the Law and the Prophets (Mark 1:21-22 and Mark 3:1-6)?
5. In verse 18 what do you think is meant by the phrase “until all is accomplished”? Not the smallest part of the Law will pass from it “until all is accomplished” when heaven and earth pass away. Why is the Law no longer needed when heaven and earth pass away? How is everything accomplished when heaven and earth pass away?
6. In verses 19-20 Jesus talks about how his followers should relate to the Law. What does he say in verse 19 about the one who relaxes even the least of the commandments and teaches others to do the same?
7. What will be the attitude toward the commandments of the one who is called great in the kingdom of heaven?
8. What does Jesus say in verse 20 is characteristic of those who will enter the kingdom of heaven? Does exceeding the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees mean more and more obedience to the Law(s) or deeper and deeper obedience to the Law? Read over verses 27-30 to gain insight into what deeper and deeper obedience to the Law looks like as compared to the letter of the law, “You shall not commit adultery”.

9. Please read Jeremiah 31:31-33 and Ezekiel 36:25-27. These passages give a description of the New Covenant that was ushered in with Jesus. These passages describe what it means to be “born again” (John 3:3-8). Do these passages say that the Law will no longer be relevant to the person under the New Covenant? What do these passages say about the new relationship between the Law and the person under the New Covenant? How do these OT passages relate to Jesus’ statement in Matthew 5:19-20?

10. Does Jesus mean by his statement in verse 20 that a person becomes qualified to enter the kingdom of heaven by keeping the Law? What does he mean by this statement in verse 20?

11. Examine yourself. Is God’s moral law written on your heart? Is God’s Spirit within you, causing you to walk in his statutes?

Action Step

We must never forget that we have been sent by the Son of God to make disciples who make disciples. Each week we are giving you action steps to take. Jesus has sent you out to make disciples and it begins by learning God’s Word and engaging people. **This week let’s memorize Matthew 5:20 and be able to explain what it means. Have everyone recite it in group and then discuss what it means.**

Matthew 5:20:

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The Commentary section was adapted from The Message of The Sermon on The Mount; John R.W. Stott; 1978.

All scripture quoted is from the ESV

Walk (30 minutes)

After enjoying fellowship, worship, and time in God's word together, it is now time to pray together as a group and encourage one another in the faith. It is very easy for this portion of the group time to be consumed by the other portions. However, this segment of the group time is crucially important. It answers the question, how do we apply what we are learning in Matthew to our lives today?

Many groups have found that it is helpful to sometimes break up into a men's group and a women's group for the purpose of being able to be more transparent and honest as we encourage one another and keep one another accountable. I encourage you to try this in your groups.

In addition to praying for, and encouraging, one another, this portion of the group time should also be used for planning how your group can participate in God's work outside the walls of our church – "neighbors and nations." Discuss with your group some ideas on how you can be intentional with building relationships with your neighbors and co-workers. What can your Community Group do to impact the area around you?

Here is a list of local ministries Norris Ferry is actively involved in:

Hub/purchased
Young life
Heart of hope
First priority
Ark-la-Tex crisis pregnancy center
Community renewal
Grief counseling
Celebrate recovery
Samaritan counseling
Last call ministries
Golden age ministries
Rescue mission
Luke's lighthouse
FCA

May the Lord bless and encourage you as you are in your groups this week! Know that we are praying for you on a weekly basis and that we are here to help you in any way that we can!

Walk Prayer & Missions

For further information visit
norrisferrychurch.org or contact Jared
Clary (clary@norrisferrychurch.org)

Calendar

September— Hurricane Relief
October— South Sudan
March— NOLA
June— Serve Shreveport
July— Central America