

Genuine “Gospel” Goodness

Matt. 5:20

I. The Kingdom of God: Jesus is talking to poor, desperate masses and His 12 disciples.

A. The Beatitudes show an **upside-down** kingdom in its *values*—distinct from the world

B. The Rest of the Sermon shows an **inside-out** kingdom in *ethics*—distinct from religion

Read text (v.20) and PRAY

II. **READ** it in Context (v.17-20)

- Jesus talks about OT Law (v.17-19)—FULFILLED and PERPETUAL—Craig C.
- Jesus has *fulfilled* the Law for us—obeyed its precepts, satisfied its penalties

*** However, this paragraph is about how **Christians** are *also* to practically obey the Law! ***

How will you keep the Law (not “if”)—**CHOOSE**: 2 ways, 2 trees, 2 foundations—Tim Keller

- Will you keep the Law like the **scribes** and **Pharisees**?—**religious leaders**
- What is a *scribe*?—seminary professors, professional bible teachers
- What is a *Pharisee*?—“separate:” monks, nuns, Amish, professional law-keepers

Martin Lloyd-Jones: “The trouble with the Pharisees was that they were interested in details rather than principles, in actions rather than motives, in doing rather than being.”

- The rest of the Sermon shows **how it looks** for our righteousness to *exceed* theirs:
 - Gospel believers **should** handle **anger** better than the Pharisees
 - We handle **lust** better
 - We handle **matters of justice** better (*an eye for an eye . . .*)
 - We handle **conflict** better (*love your enemy*)
 - We handle **marriage** better
 - We handle **charity** better (*don’t let your left hand know what your right is doing*)
 - We handle **prayer** better
 - We handle **fasting** better
 - We handle **money** better (*you cannot serve God and money*)
 - We handle **anxiety** better (*tomorrow will worry about itself*)
 - We handle **judgment** better than the Pharisees
 - Our **reward** from God is better than that of the Pharisees

******Jesus doesn't demand *less* righteousness, but perfect, God-like goodness (5:48)—**HOW???**

2 Kinds of Righteousness: **hollow** obedience (“scribes and Pharisees”) and **heartfelt** (“you”).

III. The Righteousness We Reject—Jesus on the Temple Mount: **READ Matt. 23:1-33**

- **HOLLOW** righteousness makes us **look like this**: **12 images** Jesus uses:
 1. Actors—hypocrites
 2. Judges—“they sit on Moses’s seat”
 3. Taskmasters—load people with burdens hard to bear
 4. Gatekeepers—*shut* the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces!
 5. Pompous Clergymen (phylacteries, fringes, “rabbi, teacher, scribe,” **titles**)
 6. Blind Guides
 7. Nit-pickers (strain out the littlest gnats!!!)
 8. Camel-swallowers—**absurd** to an onlooker
 9. Filthy cups (crusty *spittoons*)
 10. Whitewashed tombs
 11. Poisonous Vipers
 12. Children of hell

“Don’t be that guy.” The appearance of godliness, but denying its power—**2 Tim. 3:5**

- The pursuit of **HOLLOW** righteousness renders you: disgusting to God and empty inside
 1. Hypocritical
 2. Exclusive
 3. Obsessive
 4. Vain
 5. Materialistic (the gift over the altar)
 6. Near-sighted
 7. Deceitful
 8. Boastful

Hollow righteousness **burdens you** and *tells you to be someone you’re not*. No **joy** in this.

BUT . . . Keeping up the act is exhausting. Wearing a mask isolates you. Checking off the list is tedious. Going through the motions burns you out. Hollow righteousness leaves you **empty**.

Jesus **lifts your burdens**, then *tells you to be yourself*! It’s inside-out righteousness.

- Everything you hate about empty religion, Jesus also hates, because He is **JOY**!
- Jesus wants to free you, by His love, from the **burden** of *pride or fear-driven obedience*

IV. The Righteousness We Receive—Justification and New Birth

1. A new legal standing: *forgiving real guilt & crediting real obedience*

2 Cor. 5:21: For our sake, He (God) made Him (Jesus) to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the **righteousness** of God.

Rom. 3:28: For we hold that one is **justified** by faith apart from works of the law.

Rom. 4:5: And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as **righteousness**

Rom. 10:4: For Christ is the end of the law for **righteousness** to everyone who believes.

- The new man “*fulfills the Law*” in a **legal verdict**: JUSTIFIED!

2. A new human nature—“born again”

Eph. 4:22-24: Put off your *old self*, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and [be] renewed in the spirit of your minds, and [put on] the *new self*, created after the likeness of God **in true righteousness** and holiness.

Rom. 6:17-18: But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become *obedient from the heart* to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of **righteousness**.

1 John 3:9: No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for *God's seed abides in him*; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.

- The new man “*fulfills the Law*” in our **liberated life** (daily love to God and man)

V. The Righteousness We Radiate—“Progressive Sanctification”

- The Person and Essence of God dwell in you now!
- God is light. God is love.
- Light and love radiate outwards to touch the world and declare themselves!
- **Be who you are!**

Matt. 5:14-15: You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Matt. 13:43: Then the righteous will **shine** like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

VI. The Resource for Righteousness: the Spirit of Jesus within all **believers**

- We have a **new** relationship with God, a **new** covenant agreement with Him.

Ezek. 36:26-27: I will give you *a new heart*, and a *new spirit* I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put **my Spirit** within you, and **cause you to walk** in my statutes **and be careful to obey** my rules.

- God the Spirit walks with us in relationship, **helping** us keep the Law of God!!!

Phil. 2:12-13: *Work out* your own salvation with fear and trembling, for *it is God who works in you*, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Gal. 5:16: But I say, *walk by the Spirit*, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

- The **presence** of Jesus creates **contented friendship**
- The **revelation** of Jesus awakens **gratitude**—“demands my soul, my life, my all”
- The **love** of Jesus sweetens our **obedience**—“compels us”
- The **power** of Jesus enables our **service**

How do we tap this Resource?

- i. **Enjoy** a **daily** relationship with God. **Hear** His Word. **Walk** with Him consistently.

William Temple: “Religion is what a man does with his solitude.”

VII. Applications

1. RECEIVE legal **verdict** of “righteous”: repent and believe in Jesus Christ today!
2. BELIEVE in your new *identity* and new-birth *nature*:
 - Forgiven
 - Loved
 - Worthy
 - Connected
 - Useful—to God and others
3. **BE** who you are—consistent obedience

1 Cor. 5:7: Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, **as you really are**.

4. Invite God’s Spirit into your life through daily relationship in His Word!
5. **Teach** others to radiate the righteousness of God (aka “do the commandments”).
 - “Do them and *teach* them”—**Matt. 5:19**

Can a Pharisee ever be saved? Yes. By God’s GIFT of righteousness. **Phil. 3:2-9**