

>>>>>> Matthew – Lesson 08 <<<<<<<

1) Ok, picking up where we left off last time, let's talk about us being light.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NASB 2020)

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

2) If you stop to think about it, the first statement made here is phenomenal! “We are the light of the world” – no pressure here?

a) This statement may also be a little confusing as well because Jesus says in ...

John 8:12 (NASB 2020)

Jesus Is the Light of the World

¹² Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “**I am the Light of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.**”

b) So, if Jesus is the light of the world and He says to us that “we are the light of the world” how do we deal with that?

c) I think Paul answers the question very well in two different letters – first he says to the Galatians:

Galatians 2:20 (NASB 2020)

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

3) In Philippians he says it plainly ...

Philippians 1:21 (NASB 2020)

²¹ For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

a) The common idea in these two scriptures says we, as disciples of Christ, must live **as** AND **for** Christ and by doing so, we are shining lights showing clearly what Christ is like.

i) As that likeness of Christ, we are indeed the light of the world because we are true representatives of Christ.

4) Another aspect of what Jesus said was:

the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life

The question that comes to mind is does that fit us as well?

a) I think my answer would be yes! If we are indeed being as Paul indicates he is then if someone follows us – our living the pattern of Jesus – then this would apply.

i) Obviously, they would NOT believe in us BUT would through our example believe and trust in Christ.

Agree / Disagree?

5) In the rest of this passage Jesus also makes clear several other things:

- a) If we are truly that light as we should be, then we must be like a city on a hill – we must not hide our Christlikeness.
 - i) The city on a hill cannot help but show its light!
- b) And if we are truly that light, we will make no attempt to hide our light no matter what the cost.
 - i) The reason of course is so that the light that we are will be seen by our works and those works will bring glory to Christ and God as it should be.

So, back to us as disciples – What are ways in which we hide our light?

- 6) Hiding our light:
 - a) Denying Christ by our actions - sinning.
 - b) Failing to cease opportunities to share Christ with others.
 - c) Not being ready to cease opportunities even when we have them –
 - i) lack of knowledge
 - ii) lack of any plan as to how to approach the person
 - iii) being afraid to share.
 - d) Being too “right”
 - i) overbearing – “Bible thumping”
 - ii) too zealous – making people run when they see us coming.
 - e) Living just like the rest of the world.
 - i) being quiet when we should speak
 - ii) speaking when we should be quiet.
 - iii) going along with the crowd
 - iv) denying the truth
 - v) letting sin dim our witness for Christ
 - vi) ignoring the needs of others
 - f) Being a “grumpy Gus” all the time.
- 7) Of course, showing our light is exactly the opposite of those traits:
 - a) Never denying Christ by our actions – doing our best not to sin.
 - b) Always keeping our antennas up so we can cease opportunities to share Christ with others.
 - c) Staying in the Word and being prepared.
 - d) Not being overbearing.
 - e) Not living like the rest of the world.
 - f) Showing our joy as we meet and talk to others.

8) These short teachings on salt and light are very important teachings of Jesus.

- a) The **key takeaways** here are two-fold:
 - i) **First** – there is a difference between being Salt and being Light

So, somebody take a stab at verbalizing those differences?

- (1) To me, salt is what we are to those around us – brothers and sisters or not.
 - (a) Kindness, help, compassion, service and so on.

- (2) Light is what we show to others by our lives – always showing Christ and giving glory to Him and God the Father.
- ii) **Second** – we have to be both to the world if we are to be what God wants us to be. We can't be just salt or just light.

Matthew 5:17-18 (NASB 2020)

¹⁷ “Do not presume 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 of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished!

9) First, let's get some facts laid out. Law and Prophets:

- a) Law – commands of the Pentateuch (the Torah) – Genesis through Deuteronomy
- b) Prophets were the collective rest of the writings of the Old Testament.
- c) In synagogues on the Sabbath, a rabbi would read a portion of the Law and a portion from the Prophets.
- d) In the Jewish mind, these were distinctive – very much like we consider the old testament and new testaments to be distinctive. (obviously not in the same way content wise).
- e) When Jesus speaks of the Law he is not talking about the extra stuff the Scribes and Pharisees have added.

Matthew 15:7-9 (NASB 2020)

⁷ “You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy about you, by saying:

⁸ ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS,
BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME.

⁹ ‘AND IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME,
TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN.’ ”

10) “smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen”.

- a) In the KJV, this was translated as jot and tittle.
- b) The smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet is the “yod”
 - i) It is a character that was about the size and shape of an apostrophe.
- c) The word stroke here literally means “little horn”.
 - i) It refers to the small extension marks that help distinguish some Hebrew letters that are very similar.
- d) This concept says several things to me clearly:
 - i) First, the law is and has been protected.
 - ii) Second, he is talking about the Law – not the added stuff from the pen of man (scribes and pharisees).
 - iii) Finally, the word “accomplished” indicates that God does have a true plan for the Law to not necessarily pass away but be completed. We are right in the middle of that!

So, we might ask; Why can't the Law go away?

11) Paul says a lot about this in Romans but, in 3:20 he really gives one compelling reason ...

Romans 3:20 (NASB 2020)

²⁰ because by the works of the Law none of mankind will be justified in His sight; for through the Law *comes* knowledge of sin.

How do we define sin – do we use the Law?

- a) The Law defines God's morality and how he wants us to live.
- b) Without knowledge of sin, we are back to our own "moral compasses" – not a good place to be
 - i) Self-will rules in most cases – also NOT GOOD!
 - ii) And Satan is ready to pounce!
- c) The other questions we might need to think about are if the Law was abolished.
 - i) What would Jesus fulfill?
 - ii) What would be the moral code we are to live by?

12) Next, we should consider along with all that, scripture tells us that the Law is perfect...

Psalms 19:7–8 (NASB 2020)

⁷ The Law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

⁸ The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

13) If the Law is perfect, then what does Jesus mean when He says He is fulfilling the law?

14) Looking at the word "fulfilled" if we go to our old friend Webster, we get a myriad of possibilities.

- a) To put it into effect.
- b) To meet the requirements of.
- c) To measure up to.
- d) To end.
- e) To develop the full potential of.
- f) To convert to reality.

15) The Oxford gives ...

- a) bring to completion or reality; achieve or realize (something desired, promised, or predicted).

16) Olmstead in the BHGNT says the following about this word in context...

Conclusions about meaning of fulfilled (πληρῶσαι) here must take into account Matthew's use of the term elsewhere and the force of both this paragraph (5:17–20) and the extended discussion that follows (5:21–48, the so-called antitheses).¹⁵

17) Looking at a sample of these, I'm sure you will recognize them. We will of course, study them in full very shortly.

¹⁵ Wesley G. Olmstead, *Matthew: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, ed. Lidija Novakovic, vol. 1, Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2019), 85–86.

Matthew 5:21–22 (NASB 2020)

Personal Relationships

²¹“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be answerable to the court.’ ²²But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be answerable to the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.

18) Again, just one example – we will go over these in detail when we get there...

Let me read those definitions again and everybody pick the one or ones you think best describes what Jesus is actually doing?

- (1) To put it into effect.
- (2) To meet the requirements of.
- (3) To measure up to.
- (4) To end.
- (5) To develop the full potential of.
- (6) To convert to reality.
- (7) Oxford – bring to completion or reality; achieve or realize (something desired, promised, or predicted).

19) One other quick comment here which echoes something else that Olmstead said.

- a) The fulfillment of the Law was another part of Jesus’ mission.
- b) His teachings are such that, as we have said, the Law moves to the heart.

20) Jesus did not add to – He simply clarified.

- a) And the clarification was done in a way that showed the hypocrisy and deceit of the way the Pharisees were demonstrating conformance to the law.

21) The reason for keeping all of the Law was finally being realized.

- a) Changing from one showing how good we were in relation to the law by how many we kept or didn’t break, to one of heart.

22) Jesus makes this abundantly clear in the “woes” of chapter 23:23 when He says ...

Matthew 23:23 (NASB 2020)

²³“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the Law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these *are the things* you should have done without neglecting the others.

23) This means keeping the Law because of how it changes our lives, our relationships, and helps others.

24) And, most importantly, it becomes the most concrete way to bring glory to our God.

25) Christ further brings this into perspective by what he says next.