

>>>>>> Matthew – Lesson 09 <<<<<<<

- 1) Ok, let's pick up where we were last time but in order to get us to the right place, I need to read the last passage we were talking about before we jump into the next.

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!

- 2) Now, for verse 19 ...

Matthew 5:19 (NASB 2020)

¹⁹ Therefore,

- 3) The therefore here is because Jesus did not abolish the Law or the Prophets.
4) What he did was fulfill them.
5) And He further states that they are not going away so ...

Therefore whoever nullifies 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.

- 6) The first big question becomes –
a) What commandments are left that Jesus is talking about here?
i) What must we be careful not to nullify?
- 7) To answer these questions, we have to look at the Law and determine how Jesus fulfilled the various parts of it.
a) In fact, this may change our definition picks for “fulfilled” from last time ...
- 8) There are three sections to the Law as it was given, the Civil or Judicial, the Ceremonial, and the Moral.
a) **Civil (Judicial) Law** - given to provide unique identity for Israel as a nation that belonged to Jehovah.
i) These are laws relating to agriculture, settlement of disputes, diet, cleanliness, dress, and such things.
ii) I would assume circumcision was part of this section of the Law.
iii) They were special standards by which God's chosen people were to live before Him and apart from the world.
iv) The section of the Law ended with Israel's rejection of her Messiah.
(1) So, we might ask how is that fulfillment being accomplished by Jesus?
(a) It was through the crucifixion.
(2) Jesus' crucifixion was Israel's ultimate rejection of her Messiah. We see this clearly in two scriptures:

Matthew 27:25 (NASB 2020)

²⁵ And all the people replied, “His blood *shall be* on us and on our children!”

John 19:14–15 (NASB 2020)

¹⁴ Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Look, your King!” ¹⁵ So they shouted, “Away with *Him*, away with *Him*, crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king except Caesar.”

v) Just a little side note here John says priests (plural).

(1) Caiaphas was the only true high chief priest, but remember Annas was also a deposed high priest so it was probably the both of them that spoke.

vi) Further, Jesus clearly tells of the consequences of such a rejection – not just by individuals but by the nation:

Luke 10:16 (NASB 2020)

¹⁶ “The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; but the one who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me.”

Matthew 21:42–44 (NASB 2020)

⁴² Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures,

‘A STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED,
THIS HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE;
THIS CAME ABOUT FROM THE LORD,
AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES’?

⁴³ “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruit. ⁴⁴ And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and on whomever it falls, it will crush him”.

vii) Additionally, it is made clear throughout the Gospels and Acts that God’s people now are made up of anyone who believes in His Son and is properly brought into His body the Church.

viii) This ends God’s dealing with Israel as His only people and a nation to be set apart.

ix) With that the judicial law passes away.

x) Now, to be perfectly clear – Israel (as a whole) indeed did reject God at the point of crucifixion.

xi) However, Paul makes it clear in Romans 11 that even though they might have rejected Him, God did not reject or abandon Israel.

Romans 11:2–6 (NASB 2020)

² God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in *the passage about* Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? ³ “Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.” ⁴ But what is the divine response to him? “I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.” ⁵ In the same way then, there has also come to be at the

present time a remnant according to *God's* gracious choice. ⁶ But if *it is* by grace, *it is* no longer on the basis of works, since *otherwise* grace is no longer grace.

xii) In this passage, he continues to say that Israel did not “stumble as to fall” but rather that it was God’s plan and thru their rejection, salvation came to the Gentiles.

b) **Ceremonial Law** - governed the form of Israel's worship.

i) This is the set of Laws that deal with all the sacrifices and atonement rituals.

ii) When Jesus died on the cross, He fulfilled the ceremonial law.

iii) Sacrifices were the heart of all Old Testament worship, and as the perfect Sacrifice, Jesus brought all the other sacrifices and like requirements to an end.

iv) The Sabbath falls in this group of Laws – we are going to talk about that at some length shortly.

c) **Moral Law** - the moral law was God's foundational code.

d) Moral law includes, but is not limited to, the ten commandments.

i) It also encompasses other commands about justice, respect, sexual conduct, honesty, and loving God and one's neighbor

ii) Many of which are found both in the Old Testament and reaffirmed separately in the New Testament.

e) Jesus fulfilled the Moral Law in two ways:

i) Clarification – as we have talked about earlier.

(1) This entire sermon is really a clarification of and moving of the law to the heart.

ii) Secondly, His perfect righteousness.

(1) He obeyed every commandment, He met every requirement, and He lived up to every standard.

(2) And He did it from the heart – not just to tick the boxes.

iii) The one truth we have to say again here is that the Moral Law did not go away.

9) Part of that moral law is the ten commandments.

a) To repeat them quickly:

(1) Thou shalt not have any other gods before God.

(2) Thou shalt not make yourself an idol.

(3) Thou shalt not take the Lord's name in vain.

(4) **Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it Holy.**

(5) Honor your father and mother.

(6) Thou shalt not murder.

(7) Thou shalt not commit adultery.

(8) Thou shalt not steal.

(9) Thou shalt not testify or bear false witness against your neighbor.

(10) Thou shalt not covet.

There is one that stands out here as a real problem for us – which one is it?

b) Obviously, keeping the Sabbath.

- 10) We just stated that the Ten Commandments are part of the Moral Law.
- a) However, most theologians and scholars really consider keeping the Sabbath to be part of the Ceremonial Law.
 - b) There is a contra opinion though that really must be considered.
 - c) The command itself says to remember the Sabbath and keep it Holy.
 - i) There is an argument that can be made that that means that the essence of Sabbath observance was holiness, not resting or refraining from work.
 - ii) This argument further states that it was a provision meant to remove the heart from earthly endeavors and to turn it toward God.
 - iii) However, if we look at virtually any of the incidents where Jesus heals on the Sabbath, we find that the Pharisaical idea of the Sabbath had to do with work with a capital **W**!
 - iv) All of the healings that He performed on the Sabbath were because the person was in need – Jesus’ heart was for the person – it was not the “work” aspect that was the issue.
 - v) The Pharisees saw only the work – not the compassion that led to healing.
- 11) In the beginning of the Christianity, a large percentage of Christians were originally Jews or Proselytes.
- a) Both would have observed the Sabbath in the synagogues for the teachings of the OT and the opportunity to share Christ.
- 12) After the beginning of the 2nd century separation between the Jewish faith and Christianity became more and more apparent, this tradition faded away.
- 13) Christians from the beginning also met on the first day of the week – Sunday.
- a) In fact, some have referred to Sundays as the “Christian Sabbath” which, by the way, it is NOT.
 - b) They probably also worked on Sunday.
 - c) Of course, we got so carried away later on that we had to jump into the Pharisaical mode, and we created what we use to call “blue laws”.
 - d) These prohibited many businesses from being open on Sunday trying to force the “no working on the Sabbath”.
 - i) The earliest of these was in the Virginia colonies in 1610.
 - (1) It dictated that everyone was to go to church on Sunday and no one was to work.
 - e) Of course, all of these “blue laws” were gone by the late 20th century.
 - i) They were repealed in the state of Texas in 1985.
- 14) Ok, let’s get to some questions.
- 15) We obviously do NOT observe the Sabbath as laid out in the OT so ...

The first question we might ask is, is this commandment Still in effect?

- a) Remember, we said this was part of the ten commandments, but we also said that most scholars consider it as part of the Ceremonial Law not the Moral Law.
- b) That being said, if it is true then this was part of the worship rituals and Christ fulfilled it on the cross.

Before we answer the next question, maybe we need to read two passages, one from the OT and one from the NT.

c) Old Testament ...

Exodus 20:8–10 (NASB 2020)

⁸“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹For six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the LORD your God; *on it* you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male slave or your female slave, or your cattle, or your resident who stays with you.

d) New Testament ...

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NASB 2020)

²⁴and let’s consider how to encourage one another in love and good deeds, ²⁵not abandoning our own meeting together, as is the habit of some people, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

What do you say? Ceremonial? (passed away)? Moral? (still in effect)?

Next question, does the day of the week really make a difference?

e) No – Paul tells us in two different places that the day does not matter (with a caveat).

Romans 14:5–6 (NASB 2020)

⁵One *person* values one day over another, another values every day *the same*. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶The one who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and the one who eats, does so with regard to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and the one who does not eat, *it is* for the Lord *that* he does not eat, and he gives thanks to God.

Colossians 2:16–17 (NASB 2020)

¹⁶Therefore, no one is to act as your judge in regard to food and drink, or in respect to a festival or a new moon, or a Sabbath day—¹⁷things which are *only* a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

Are we limited to one day?

f) No – fact is that the early church met together every day for worship.

Acts 2:46–47 (NASB 2020)

⁴⁶Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

So, having discussed all that, are we handling the sabbath in the spirit of the Law the correct way or not?