Matthew 5:17-20

Impossible Righteousness

Jesus tells His disciples how to have a blessed life *O how happy* vs 1-12 then tell them who & what they are Salt & Light in the world Salt to savor—abundant life & Light to expose darkness bring to light, Life-Jesus.

We are in a crisis of culture w/o absolutes, non-existent values, no right or wrong--we've abandon truth for relativism Elementary school.

Prayer & bible reading banned in 1960's Ten Commandment removed Nov 17 1980 46 years ago--did it help or hinder America, better or worse society?

What's so bad about Honor your parents, do not commit murder, do not steal, do not lie, do not commit adultery, etc.

If we have no laws every person does what is right in his own eyes & chaos, confusion, anarchy takes its place. We have a Supreme Court Justice confirmed who was can't or unwilling to give definition of woman. Ketanji Brown Jackson *I'm not a biologist* she said & this person is making decisions for 343 mil people determining the direction of our nation-product of progressive education which eliminated God, bible & prayer from schools

Toll on society-No basis for common sense or right & wrong all is arbitrary, how I feel I make my own rules which creates social instability, erratic enforcement of laws & increasing bizarre behavior in unstable pepole

Jesus addresses the issue of moral absolutes, basis for right & wrong. Because misdirected leaders who misinterpret laws, mislead people

17 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

Christians tend to toss out all that came prior to Jesus bringing grace into our lives for salvation. Dispensation of grace eliminates commandments?

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God's law reveals God's nature ***Ps 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*** Law not intended to make us righteous but a mirror to show where we fail. Radar to show speed. Teacher pointing failing student to tutor, trainer, Jesus. ***Gal 3:24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.***

Law can't save but condemns, drives to Gods' mercy. Broken law demands payment, a sacrifice. Jesus came to pay the price for sin ***Rom 8:3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was thru the flesh, God did; sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh & as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh.***

18 "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished. 19 "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, 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.

God's law is good & lasting…what's so bad about loving God w/ all your heart, mind soul & strength….not taking Him name in vain, using it as a swear word or not making dumb idols who are less than you or loving your neighbor or not making false accusations…absolutes to live by.

Times change and so does society. Courtrooms gradually shifted toward secular or optional phrasing as constitutional law & court rules evolved away from God to protect freedom of conscience *"so help me God"* became optional or was dropped in many courts over time in favor of phrasing like "Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?" I Do

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Now it's illegal to pray *Lords prayer* in school since 1962 & in 1963 bible reading in classrooms illegal. 1980 Ten Comm removed-every person can do what is right in their own mind..No longer God in charge but I'm in charge

Is 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word our God stands forever.

It's fashionable in pulpits not to step on toes. Pressure to imply the Bible is tolerant of certain sins. To annul the lest command is to relegate yourself to least in the kingdom. I said over the pulpit 13 years ago every pastor in Hawaii should speak out on same sex marriage to be voted on during a special legislative session. The Hawaii Marriage Equality Act was passed Nov 2013 Gov Neil Abercrombie signed it into law & in affect for 13 years

Jesus said ***Mk 10:6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. 7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; 8 And they two shall be one flesh: so then they are no more two, but one flesh. 9 What therefore God has joined together, let no man seperate.***

20 "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Impossible Righteousness. How can I be more righteous or better than those who made it their life's work to live according to the Law. Back then a favorite saying was circulating *"If only two men make it into heaven, one will be a scribe, and the other will be a Pharisee'*

Scribes were torah scholars who analyzed, explained and interpreted the Law, the Torah.

Pharisees practiced these laws to the most minuscule detail. Sect of the bruised and bloodied.

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The problem w/ them it was all outward show ***Matt 23: 25"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. 26"You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also. 27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. 28"Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.***

Jesus is saying you must go further than pious religiosity. Pharisees were cold legalists. Porcupine religion lots of fine points but hard to get next to. Bad attitudes. Then Jesus contrast what they taught w/ God's intent. Scribes as today radically depart from scripture & bend the true meaning to accommodate culture. Be true to the word of God and your life will be blessed and abundant. ***Jer 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.***