

Facebook, social media, people will post pictures of new house, new dog, photos of their family, hashtag blessed.

I think all these things in our mind are what bring blessing. And actually, but in eyes of Jesus, it's not these things.

And it's not these people who are blessed. It's people who feel poor in spirit. People who are sad and mourning. People who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

They want to be better in their lives. People that are merciful. Merciful is not an easy thing to be doing or an action to do. Blessed are those who make peace. Again, it's a hard thing to do.

[25:57] Blessed when others are reviling you and persecuting you. That's not what the world calls blessed. And it gets their attention. Jesus gets their attention. That's not the people we think are blessed.

Blessed. But he goes on to speak about those who follow him are to be salt and light. They're to love differently.

They're to think differently. As he's been saying, those are being blessed. But they're to live differently and to think differently in this world. Living in a way which tells us to glorify God.

To glorify your Father who is in heaven. And then Jesus continues teaching. And he goes on then to speak about the law. This section that we have here from verse 17.

And you might think, well, that's a bit of a jump. He's gone from teaching about how we are to live an example. And then he's teaching about the law. But it's not that big a jump for you.

[27:06] Because if you think about it, he's telling you to live your life in a way that will glorify God. And if we're going to live our lives in a way that glorifies God, it's not a way that lives according to my rules or our rules.

If we're going to live a way that glorifies God before others, we live by the law that God has set out for us.

We live by his rule. We live by his word. And there's a lesson here straight at the beginning. If we're not living our lives, if we're not living our lives being in the word and being directed by the word, the chances are that our example will not glorify God.

So there's a huge importance in being in the word of God and knowing what pleases God, knowing the way in which we are to live before God, what is our duty. And so the catechism teaches us that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament teach us about our duty before God.

So we have a lesson there straight away. How we are to live our lives. But Jesus then continues, the Sermon on the Mount, talking about law.

[28:27] It's the main idea, in fact, of the Sermon on the Mount. It's what the commentators say. This idea of law and how we live according to God's law in a way that glorifies him, central to a Sermon on the Mount.

And if you have a Bible, you'll see right after in verse 21, he says, you have heard that it was said of old, you shall not murder. And then verse 27, you have heard it said, you shall not commit adultery. The law of God in the most simplest terms, the commands of God, Jesus is teaching them in the Sermon, to live lives that are based around the commands, the laws of God.

But he goes beyond that, not just to live that way outwardly, but to live in a way where these things and these commands speak to your heart and address your heart.

That's how he goes on. He develops it. You shall not murder as anger in your heart. Committing adultery as lust in your heart.

[29:42] And he goes on to the end of the sermon where he speaks about a good tree that bears good fruit. He has two images at the end of the sermon. A good tree will bear good fruit.

A good heart will have good actions. And he says, a bad heart will not bring good fruit.

A bad tree will not bring good fruit. And also he has an image of the two buildings. The one who built their house on the sand. The one who built their house on the rock.

The one who built their lives on the words of God. The laws of God is the one that is firm on the rock. The one that stands. The one that does not fall.

He is the wise man. Not a foolish man. So he's teaching them about the law of God as central. And his teaching it is he is saying it is central to your living.

[30:46] And he's saying it is central to glorifying God. So it should be something that's important for us this evening.

If we're living as Christians we should be living in a way we desire to live in a way that glorifies God. We should be living in a way according to the word of God.

It teaches us how to live. So as we look at this passage we see Christ's righteousness verse 17 and 18.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law of the prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly I say to you until heaven and earth pass away not an iota not a dot will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

That's our first point. Christ's righteousness and then verse 19 and 20 will take us to our righteousness.

[31:52] So we look at Christ's righteousness first verse 17 and 18. Now imagine you're a king imagine you've made a law for example saying that all the herrochs now Scalpachs cannot pass the border at Boglass and they have to stay in Haddus.

They cannot go to Stornoway anymore. But you as a king have decided well I need to go up to Argos or I really want to go up to town to pick up something in Tesco that I like that I can't get down here and off you go to Stornoway yourself.

And you do that every week. It won't be long before you guys are then saying as herrochs saying to the king that's not fair that's not right are you doing the things that we don't do.

Why do you have a law unto yourself? It's not right. right? Now why do I say that? Well you see the way Jesus addresses them in verse 17.

Do not think I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. They were watching Jesus and they weren't thinking that he was living according to the law of God.

[33:26] According to the law of the prophets which is the whole Old Testament. they were thinking Jesus was a rule unto himself and he was doing away with these Old Testament laws and not living by them.

They were questioning Jesus. But Jesus is saying in response no don't think I've come to do away with the law of the prophets.

I've not come to abolish them. I've come to fulfill them. you've got it wrong if you think I'm here not to live according to the law that you're to live under.

I'm not here to stroke it out. I'm not here to rub it out. I am actually here, rightly understood, to take all the requirements of the law.

I'm here to say it is done. I am here to fulfill the law satisfy its requirements. Now your catechism will teach you when you read about Jesus when he came into the world he was made under the law.

[34:47] So you say all the rules apply to him as they do for us. In one sense he became just as us. He lived just like us. He did not live differently to us.

He did not live apart from the law. He came and he did it all. Far more exceedingly and abundantly than we ever could.

Every part of the law, every demand of the law, he lived his life to glorify God and glorified God in a way that no one else could.

And because he lives a life according to the law that we're to live by, he comes into this world in our experience, we can't say it's not fair.

we can't complain against this king. He came under the law. He lived by the law.

[35:52] He did everything it asked. And we say that's fair, that's right, that's just in our eyes. He does exactly what is asked of us.

But where we fail, he succeeds. where we fall, he stands. When we fail to keep the law, he keeps it down to the very smallest bit of it.

He says all the law is relevant. He says not an iota, not a dot of the law will pass away. So when he's saying he fulfills it, he's saying all of it is relevant, he's saying I take every box, demand of the law.

The iota and the dot is like the smallest of markings in the Hebrew language. And he's saying it's all relevant, all applies, and I have fulfilled it all.

I've done it. And he fulfills the whole of the Old Testament. He fulfills all of the prophets spoke about this great king that would come, this great king that would rescue them, this great king that would save them, this great king that would provide for them.

[37:21] The Messiah king but also came as the king of Isaiah 53. He fulfilled the prophets' words even in that way.

he fulfilled the sacrifices. He paid our price of death.

He took upon us our iniquities, our sins. Takes us right to the cross. he fulfills the sacrificial laws. They call them ceremonial laws, sacrificial laws, washing laws, cleansing from sin, all these rituals that they had to do, all these customs that the Jews had.

Jesus fulfilled them. Because the Jews had to keep coming with sacrifices for their sins. They had to keep offering lambs, goats, blood had to be spilled, blood had to pay the price for their sin.

[38:38] They had to wash themselves, came into sin, they were a procedure to cleanse themselves. All these things they had to do. But as one commentator says, these laws had no lasting effect.

Recovering sins of the past and then the next day they would be sinning again. And then the process continues. It's ongoing and ongoing and ongoing and ongoing until Christ comes.

And he dies as a perfect lamb. Satisfies these laws, these rituals, ticks the box that they could not tick.

Again, the catechism tells us he satisfies the divine justice of God. The cross brings a lasting solution for them.

Fulfilling the righteous requirements of the law that no one could. Every last bit of it. He's saying, when he's saying I fulfill it, he's saying, I am righteous before God.

[39:55] I am the righteous one before God. All that I do shows you who I am.

And as Jesus is teaching in this passage about actions, commandments, going to the heart, Jesus is saying, my actions, my obedience to the commands of God, it's going to show you my heart.

It's going to show you who I am. It shows you who the heart of this king is. A heart that loves you.

A heart that loves the sinner. A heart that wants to set you free from these things that had no lasting effect.

A heart that wants to set you free from the weight of the law that you can't satisfy. He's a king that comes to meet all your need.

[41:14] Compassion's a great word. He's a compassionate king. He sees you in your need and he comes to alleviate you from your need. That's what compassion is. He sees you in your need and he sees that you can't do it.

And he knows that someone must rescue you and save you and provide for you. And so that compassion, that love, the inward heart, it's shown to us.

The cross comes as a king to set us free. He is a righteous one. He loves by the law. He satisfies the law, meets all the demands of God and he rescues his people and he rescues you if you have him to be your king.

Do you need this king? Well, that comes down to do you realize if you do need him yourself, doesn't it? that comes down to seeing your sin, that comes down to seeing your need, that comes down to seeing how unrighteous you are.

Because if you think you're righteous, you're going to say in your heart you don't need him. so that's Christ's righteousness, complete, perfect.

[42:49] What about our righteousness? From verse 19 to 20 it says, therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

But whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

We're talking about laws here and I'm sure we'd all agree that the majority of laws are there to ensure in our nation, they ensure stability, freedom, they ensure peace and enjoyment on the whole.

However, there may be laws that you resent at times. If you're driving your car and you're in a rush and you hit a 20 mile an hour limit, you resent that law and you're like, no.

And suppose when you're doing 22, you're breaking the law and you're guilty if you get caught. Maybe you cut the roundabout down at the PR.

[44:19] It's breaking the law. You're guilty if you get caught. Maybe you want to cut corners with health and safety, not provide boots, steel toe cap boots for your employers or masks against breaking the law and you're guilty.

And sometimes we can see laws as heavy things, things that suppress us, things that rob us of our enjoyment in life, things that carry this financial burden.

And you're probably saying they're things that don't bring us much joy in our hearts. Is that the way the commands of God are meant to be?

Is that the way of the law of the prophets? The whole Old Testament is meant to be. Supposing we put up the Ten Commandments on the wall there and you went through them all and you would think, well, are these things that bring you joy?

You probably agree they're good things, but you might not necessarily say that things that I'd sing about. But you go to the Psalms, the Psalmist is often singing about the law of God.

[45:43] The laws are a delight to the Psalmist to obey it. He loves God's law. And we have that in the singings that we have in the Psalms that we have too.

But where does that love come from? Well, when we were looking at Jesus, he fulfilled the law, he had a desire to do the law of God.

It was his heart to be obedient. And say, well, that love that the Psalmist has, is surely a Christ-like devotion, love, to God's word.

It overflows his heart and makes him sing about it. So what we're seeing is that the law of God should be something that gives us joy.

It should be something that is central in our lives, especially as Christians. Jesus here is teaching about the law.

[47:07] He's teaching about how we live. He's teaching about what it means in practice, addressing the heart. God. But he's saying to them, after talking about his own satisfaction of the law, how relevant it is for today, he addresses the people and says, don't you relax the commands of God.

There's a warning there that if you do relax the commands of God, it'll be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But if you do the commands of God and you teach them, those who do these things will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

So there's an eternal significance actually taught here about how we respond to the law and what our heart is like to the law.

And if we're living lives according to God's law, we should be lights on a hill, shouldn't we? We should be examples to the world.

And if you're thinking about the Ten Commandments, that law that we're to keep, and you say, well, it's a lot even them ten laws.

[48:41] and you go through them and you acknowledge well, you've not kept them, you've broken them. Even ten.

But the scribes and the Pharisees, when it refers to them here, what I'm reading from commentators is that they themselves, from the basis of the commandments, calculated that they would have 248 commands off the back of it to live by, and 365 prohibitions for them to live by.

I don't know how they did it. I don't think they did do it. But Jesus is saying, if you want to enter the kingdom of heaven, your righteousness must be better than the scribes and the Pharisees.

And you think, well, I can't even keep the tent. The scribes and the Pharisees were like the gold standard of living in their eyes.

They were the best. They were secure in heaven in their eyes. for Jesus to say, you need to be better than that.

[50:10] You need to love lives better than that. But the scribes and the Pharisees sought to tick all the boxes.

But they couldn't, really. so if we can't keep even the 10, keep the 248 and the 365, how are we going to get to heaven?

Who can get to heaven? That's maybe what you're asking. Is it all about rule keeping? Am I meant to do it perfectly? you're saying, Scott, it's all saying very legalistic tonight.

You've got rules for me to live by, you're not letting me do anything. Well, we can't.

We can't tick all the boxes. We know that. But what I was just saying is that Jesus has satisfied the law.

[51:26] And Jesus is a king. And Jesus says he'll tick the box for you. But in saying that, there's two things we need to be careful of here.

We're not saying that we live our lives by rules. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, the best we can. We do try, but that's not the central thing in our lives.

Nor do we live our lives saying that Jesus has done it. And it doesn't matter for me, because you're just saying Jesus has fulfilled the law.

Jesus has made the requirements of the law. And if I call Jesus my saviour, I profess my faith, it doesn't mean that then you can live any way you want, because the law doesn't matter.

Jesus isn't clearly not teaching that. He's saying the law still applies. the law is valid, because it's a law that teaches us how to live.

[52:55] As we said, the law of murder is addressing the heart, the law of adultery is addressing the heart, love in our hearts, meant to be shown to our enemies.

And if we're looking at the Ten Commandments and going, I've broken all of them, and we're looking at our heart now, and we're going, what hope do I have? I mean, my heart is often angry. My heart often has lustful looks. My heart often hates my enemy. when I compare myself against the standards that Jesus is heading out here, that the commands address my heart, what do you end up saying?

I can't do it. I can't keep the law. My heart is deceitful, sinful.

I can't how can I ever enter heaven? I suppose if we even had a window into hell, imagine if you could see into hell this evening and you had that realisation of what it meant, struck fear in your heart, absolute horrors of that place.

[54:42] You'd live your life differently. Maybe sometimes we need that. But you'd still have to acknowledge that your heart is sinful.

and you can't keep alone because you're still going to get angry. You're still going to have these deceitful things in your heart, greed, hatred, just flowing out of you.

You wish you could stop these things, you can't.! How can I enter heaven?

You cry out, no one is righteous, no not one. My heart is guilty. But that's it.

That's it. That realisation, when that law teaches us who we are, the law of the Jesus that addresses our hearts before God leaves us guilty, leaves us ashamed, knowing that we've fallen, knowing that we've failed, where do we go?

[56:05] We go to the one that has satisfied the law. We run to Jesus Christ, that King that tells us to come. we go confessing our inability, we go confessing our guilt, we go confessing our sinfulness, we go with our needs, we go with our cries.

I'm scared of hell, save me from hell. But Christ says, if you have me as your King, my righteousness will be God will look at you through me.

I fulfilled the law, I'm your representative, I'm one with you, but will you have me as your King? But when you come to him and bow the knee, and say, Lord, I need you, Lord, save me, Lord, rescue me, Lord, I can't do anything myself.

He takes our heart of stone and turns it into a heart of flesh, changes our hearts. And that's where the two points of the passage almost come together, where Christ's righteousness and our own righteousness join.

having fled to Christ, having acknowledged that he is the only righteous one, having called upon him as my king, having answered his call to come, having seen his compassion, having bowed the knee, he is my king, I need you, Lord, our heart is then changed.

[58:01] Our righteousness is his righteousness, but at heart has a desire to obey the law, to follow his commands.

His righteousness is what enables us to enter the kingdom of heaven, whose righteousness is perfect, exceeding the scribes and the Pharisees.

But having received that righteousness and knowing that righteousness is mine, changes your heart. And the inward heart that has changed will show itself outwardly in all that it does. You'll have a love for the Bible and you'll have a love to enact it. As Matthew Henry says, when the law of God is written on our hearts, our duty will be our delight.

God is So if the king is, if Jesus is your king and the law, the word of God is like a school teacher to you or a tutor as Paul says, what is your example this evening?

[59:44] I was in conversation with someone yesterday about the example that people leave and the impression people leave with someone else.

I can be hugely positive, can also be hugely negative, how we make someone feel, what we say, if we say anything.

And there's things that can be very hurtful, there's things that can be etched in people's minds. But at heart should be, we're not going to do everything perfectly, but at heart should be to follow God's laws, to love Christ-like lives, to teach, that's what it's saying here, teach, not standing here and teaching, but in all that we do, we teach, witnessing, day-to-day lives, applying it for Monday morning, applying it for today even, how do we keep our Sabbath, how do we keep the Sunday, what's my heart's desire on a Sunday, to put on the telly, watch something else, watch the game, or is it to ground myself in this law because it is my delight, it's a searching thing, isn't it, how am I going to speak to my colleagues when I go into work on

Monday morning, what am I teaching them about Jesus in my example, how am I teaching others when they mock me, when they challenge me, how am I teaching others when someone offends me and I don't forgive them, when someone hurts me and then I take offense, you could hold your heart, you could hold your heart against them, you'd be teaching negatively, but you could forgive them and show them a Christ-like example, how do we use our money, how do we treat those at home, how do we love our wives, our husbands, it all comes down to the heart, doesn't it, what we've been saying, it all comes down to the heart,

Jesus in his sermons addressing the heart, what's our heart like, where is our love, what's the desire of our love, because obedience flows from love.

[62:47] So as we think ahead to the Lord's Supper, you might be thinking I'm not good enough to sit at that table, I've lived a bad life, but if you trust in God, if you love his word, you love his people, but you know you need Jesus, and you acknowledge you're a sinner, and you acknowledge you battle with sin, and you fight against sin, Paul did that.

Who can sit at the table? It's not someone that trusts in what they've done, or how they've lived their lives, their own righteousness.

It's those who acknowledge have sinned, have failed, I need this king, to save me. Sin puts us all on a level playing field.

Greatest sin, smallest sin, we're all sinners. It doesn't matter how rich we are, it doesn't matter how smart we are, it doesn't matter our upbringing, who we are as sinners before God, each and every one of us.

And if we know we're a sinner, and if we know we need a Saviour, this word of God has spoken to me, and Jesus is my Saviour, and I know there's no one else in whom I can trust, in the Lord's table's for you.

[65:01] You know you're not righteous enough to be there, you know you don't deserve to be there. but because Jesus has died, Jesus has loved, Jesus calls you to come.

Maybe it's just you're saying, Lord, I need you. Lord, I'm a sinner. Now, we trust in the righteousness of Christ alone.

His righteousness is what saves us. But as we go out on Monday, as believers, we live differently. The sermon's about that, how we live before others. So if you're trusting in Christ, you love his word, and come with him, if he's your king.

but sitting at the table should be a stirring thing for the believer as well. You sit and remember what was done for them.

[66:43] You sit and remember that great love. You sit and remember that great heart of Jesus. It's nothing of ourselves. Everyone's saying that.

It's nothing of ourselves. It's all of Christ. Christ. And as we look at him, stirs our hearts, strengthen us, and motivates us again and again to live as lights on a hill.

To live as trees that bear good fruit. To live as buildings with firm foundations. To live in a way that glorifies God.

Jesus is saying you need me. Are you saying I need him?

I'll leave that question with you. We'll conclude by singing and sing psalms version of 119.

[68:03] sing psalms 119. Teach me to follow your decrees and I will keep them to the end.

Give insight and I'll keep your law with all my heart to it attend. Stand to sing verse 33 to 40 to God's praise. pace.

to follow your that I will keep them to the end.

Give insight I can I keep you all With all my heart to it attend Lead me in your commandment's path
For there, O Lord, delight I find In blind my heart towards you, Lord From selfish gain preserve my
mind O turn my eyes from worthless things

Give life according to your word To me you serve and keep you blessed So that you may be feared,
O Lord Remove from me the shame I dread Your loss and seven uprightness O how I long for you
to decrease Please bear me in your righteousness

[70:50] Close of prayer Lord, we pray that you would preserve us in your
righteousness Lord, we acknowledge our failings And so we come to you in
our great need and our great cry Lord, may we know the blessing Of being,
living lives That glorify you And find enjoyment in you So be with us as
we part Watch you hold us and keep us We pray in Jesus' name Amen Amen