

Sermon on the Mount: Our Sovereign Lord (Part 2)

by J. Glyn Owen

Our status in the kingdom and access into the kingdom depend on our obedience to the law and our righteousness surpassing that of the Pharisees and teachers of the law.

Duration: 53:42

Scripture: Matthew 5:17-20, Matthew 6:33, Romans 7:6, Romans 10:4, Galatians 3:24-25, James 1:22

Topics: "Sermon on the Mount"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of character in the kingdom of God. He explains that Jesus did not come to abolish the Old Testament, but to fulfill it. The sermon focuses on the role of the scriptures in the lives of believers. It highlights two aspects: the scriptures and one's status in the kingdom, and the scriptures and one's access into the kingdom. The preacher emphasizes that our attitude towards the word of God is crucial in determining our status and access in the kingdom of heaven.

Transcript

Will you kindly turn with me in the scriptures to Matthew chapter 5 and our subject this morning comes in that passage beginning with verse 17 and continuing to verse 20 we have already looked at the first half of what our Lord is expounding here. We have seen what the first two verses in that passage have to say about the scriptures in the estimation of Christ the King of the kingdom and we come today to consider what those scriptures, what role those scriptures are to play in the lives of the subjects of the kingdom and so we read as the basis of our meditation this morning verses 19 and 20. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven and whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. With the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ the rule and the power of heaven, of the realm of God the rule of the heavens, the power of the God that we cannot see has become unleashed, released and exhibited here upon earth. Jesus taught and acted with the power of God.

He tells us in one or two places that he spoke as it were and he acted as if he were the finger of God and the prophets spoke of him as the arm of the Lord revealed. It's a very suggestive picture of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah that was to come. He is the outstretched arm of an almighty God.

Now in his teaching, his authoritative teaching he has been giving as we have seen primacy of place to the promotion and the perfection of character. In expounding the manifesto of his kingdom, he began there indicating that the whole of his realm was built upon character, not upon policies arrived at by democratic processes. But his kingdom is different.

It is to be based on principles enunciated in the name of the triune God. He enunciated them with authority and he confirmed that he had such authority by the power he exhibited in other realms, in the healing of the sick, in dealing with the elements and mastering them in walking on the sea, in turning water into wine, in calling forth the dead from their graves and so forth. He had power and he had authority and with power and authority he enunciated this remarkable manifesto of his kingdom indicating that only in so far as we give heed to the terms and the teaching of his beatitudes do we become real subjects of his kingdom and are able to become salt for the earth and light for the world.

Character then is absolutely basic. Moving in thought from that general delineation of his subject's task as salt and light towards a more detailed description of particular duties in the rest of the Sermon on the Mount our Lord paused for a moment and he paused to do two things. To assure his followers that he had not come to destroy or abolish or abrogate the Law and the Prophets, that is the Old Testament.

He had come to fulfill. We were dealing with that last Lord's Day. Well that's alright.

That is his personal historical attitude to the Old Testament Scriptures. But he followed that, he followed that by indicating how those Scriptures are to be related to the subjects of his realm. To the people of his kingdom.

Not only in the day in which he lived but throughout the years until the consummation of that kingdom. His word that he came to fulfill and did fulfill to the letter and to the full his word must needs be fulfilled in the lives of his subjects likewise. If the law of God did not demean him as he followed it and honored it, neither will it demean us.

On the contrary it will mean that if we follow the same holy word we shall bring honor and glory to the Father whose word it is. So then we discover that the Scriptures are to be authoritative for us as they were for our Lord. We cannot logically or morally claim to be loyal to our Lord Jesus Christ who came to fulfill the Scriptures if we ourselves take an attitude that is liberal towards them and suggest that they can be abolished or changed or demythologized or brought up to date with 20th century thought.

To do so is to show that we are out of alignment with the thought and the attitude of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. To him the law and the prophets were final. They were the word of God.

Though he was the incarnate Son he was made under that law and he found his greatest fulfillment in honoring it. So must his servants. We come pardon me, we come therefore to the role of the Scriptures in the life of his empire and in the experience of his subjects and there are two things that are before us in these verses today.

First of all the Scriptures and one's status in the kingdom verse 19 and then we have something very important in verse 20 concerning the Scriptures and one's access into the kingdom. Two things are

distinguished here. Status within the kingdom, access into the kingdom and in both cases the word of God and our attitude to the word of God is absolutely vital.

That's what Jesus said. Now let's look at these in turn. First of all the Scriptures and the rule that determines one's status in the kingdom of heaven.

Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. So you see Jesus places before his disciples two alternatives.

Do you want to be called least in the kingdom of heaven? Do you want to be great in the kingdom of heaven? These are the two alternatives and they're the same alternatives facing you and me this morning. Whether we are to be demoted or promoted, elevated or cast on one side. It all depends, says Jesus, on this.

Whether you break one of the least of these commandments and of course one of the greatest and goes without saying the whole thrust of the passage is that. If you break one of the least of these commandments and teach others to do the same. If you say that one of the least of these commandments is unimportant, trivial, of human origin and therefore not relevant to men on earth at a given age or in a given circumstance.

If you if you disobey and then teach others you will be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, he says, if you will obey these commandments of mine or these commandments of the Old Testament the least of them as well as the greatest of them and teach others to do the same, you will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Your honor will be great.

You will not lose your reward. You will please your father which is in heaven. And your status in the kingdom of heaven will be among the great, not among the least.

Now this calls for a word of explanation. You will remember that the Apostle Paul says very clearly in one place that the Christian is not under the law. And if I know my congregation at all I believe there would be at least two dozen people who would be asking now as I have been saying what I have said.

All right, we are to obey the least of the laws enshrined in the Decalogue, in the commandments of the Old Testament. We are to be keeping them diligently, carefully, the least of them. Are we still under the law? Paul said we were not.

Now I want to distinguish between two things. First of all I want us to look at that statement of Paul's very briefly in order to see what it means. And I want to make two statements.

The first is as Paul says in one sense Christian men and women subjects of the kingdom of heaven are not under the law. In the second place I want to say subjects of the kingdom of heaven are under law. Now you can resolve the contradiction when we're through.

But let me say what I believe scripture says because I am only quoting two statements of Paul's. The one better known than the other but both of them, Pauline, and both of them as clear as crystal. First of all the Christian or subject of Christ's rule is not under the law.

Romans 6 14 puts that categorically where Paul says sin shall not be your master because you are not under law you are under grace. What does that mean? What does that mean? I'm going to deal with it in this context because I've been asked more than once in recent times something about this principle and so I'm going to spend a few moments with it here. The law has lost its power to condemn to death any and every truly Christian person.

The law with all its thunder from Sinai has lost its capacity and its power to condemn to everlasting death any man, every man, every woman everywhere who has come to faith in Jesus Christ and is subject to him and living under his rule. Christ our Lord to whom we Christians are joined by faith and hope and love and by his spirit indwelling us coming from his side. Christ our Lord died our death upon the cross long before we were born or had committed one solitary deed of unrighteousness God foresaw the whole of our wicked life and he sent the Lamb of the heavenly pastures the solitary Lamb of God he sent him forth to bear away the sins of the world and he prophesied through Isaiah the prophet and said the prophet says concerning Jehovah he says the Lord hath laid our sins upon him.

The Lamb of God, the Christ of God, the Messiah of the scriptures, the promised deliverer came forth and he came forth and God laid our sins upon him and the Apostle Peter now looking back at the event says he bore our sins in his own body to the tree all our sins were then in the future of course none of them had been committed but God as it were parceled them together and he put them all on our blessed Savior and sin bearer and he died the death that was their due and he finished with them on the cross now that being the case a believer in Christ a true believer one for whom Christ died and rose again and to whom he has given the Holy Spirit cannot again come under the condemnation of the law and that's what it means in Romans 6 where Paul says you are not under the law it cannot

condemn you to death Christian that's the context there you who have been baptized by the Spirit into Christ you have been made member of the body and you've been crucified with him and you've died with him and you're risen with him and you're ascended with him and you are as Paul puts it a man or a woman in Christ you have died let me put it to you very very bluntly like this the laws righteous demand upon those in Christ has already been met on Calvary's cross are you a Christian? then listen you have been judged you have been condemned you have been executed you say that sounds terribly queer I'm sitting here this morning well and hearty well yes but someone else undertook it all in your name this is the glory of the gospel your sins were condemned in the person of the Lord Jesus your

sin bearer you were executed in the person of your substitute substitute you died on Calvary's cross payment for your sin God will not twice demand once at your blessed surety's hand and then again at your own our God is not just is not unjust our God is a just God and a Savior so you see you are not under the law you may sin as a Christian but the law cannot send you to hell the law cannot condemn you to eternal death it has lost their power and the reason is this when Christ died he died for all your sins oh that's precious when you sin you must seek repentance for every solitary sin you commit as a Christian and learn to confess it take it to the Savior and ask him to let his precious atoning blood cover that also and manifest your faith and penitence to him but the law cannot condemn

you no Christian is under the law and that is the sense in which the Apostle Paul speaks of it now the other side of the coin which we don't hear as much about but which we need to and which comes out here in the Sermon on the Mount the Christian or subject of Christ's rule and member of his body is nevertheless under Christ's law now you say you're terribly contradicting yourself and you really get into trouble there well alright if you have your New Testament with you you can turn up to 1 Corinthians chapter 9 and verse

21 Paul is speaking in this context about willing to become anything to all men in order that by any means he might save some I'm not going into the details we've no time for that but here in verse 21 he is saying this and I'm quoting from the NIV first to those not

having the law I became like one not having the law now notice though I am not free from God's law but I'm under Christ's law so as to win those not having the law now in order to get that straight and clear let me read you J.B.

Phillips's translation same verse 1 Corinthians 9:21 to those who had no law I myself became like a man without law even though in fact I cannot be a lawless man for I am bound by the law of Christ the Christian is not under law the law cannot condemn you but you are under the law and obligated to fulfill it why? I will give other reasons before we come to the end this morning but one reason is this because of your relationship to Jesus Christ and that is where I want to focus that is what we have in our text Jesus says so and he is your Lord he died for you he's purchased the right to be the ruler of your life and he says I came to fulfill the law you must see that you fulfill the law likewise this is the rule for my kingdom now you haven't got to be subject of my kingdom you can stay outside you can be in the kingdom of darkness you can be in the kingdom of evil you may prefer to go there and to live there and to die there but subjects of my kingdom this is the rule this is the rule this is the manifesto I want you to notice those two phrases again I quote them from the NIV and from the J.B.

Phillips translation I am not free from God's law but under Christ's law whether it is the law that Christ made or the law that Christ accepted that is the law of the Old Testament to which is reference here doesn't make any practical difference in any case our Lord Jesus has laid it down that as he observed the least law so must we the least of these commandments and then J.B.

Phillips I cannot be a lawless man for I am bound by the law of Christ our union with Christ which makes it impossible for the law to condemn us to eternal death anymore also assures that we are in such intimate life union with him that we shall want to keep the law and we are under his lordship and kingship that we must keep the law let us be clear therefore that our status in the kingdom thus depends on whether we disobey one of the least of these commandments and teach men so or whether we obey the greatest and the least and teach men accordingly now I made some comment last Lord's Day morning about about liberal people in our theological colleges and other colleges and you can see the reason why I did so because you see there are people who are teaching us that parts of the Old

Testament simply have nothing to say to us today just like the second century heretic Martian who tried to write a New Testament and get rid of all its references to the Old Testament from it what a document he had it was very thin because there is so much of the Old Testament in the New well now we've changed our language and we talk about our demythologizers and so forth oh brothers and sisters we've got to take Jesus Christ seriously you may be philosophically acceptable if you take the critical approach to scripture and there are some people who will smile at you and you will be treated as if you were among the intelligentsia our Lord Jesus says if you disobey one of the least of these and teach men so and if a Jew returns up in one of our courts one day and says that though the law

of God says murder is murder the jury says it is not I tell you that jury is on a collision course with a lawgiver and the Son of God the law abiding Son the last word is not said about these things the law of God is inviolate and one day he who holds the world in his hands will cause us to stand before him and we shall be answerable for what we have done with his law I am concerned this morning with a place it holds

in our lives as subjects of the kingdom and here it is you either move up or move down the least or the great in the kingdom according to whether you obey the law or disobey it and influence others accordingly the scriptures and the rule that determines status in the kingdom now the second thing this morning is this the scriptures and the righteousness that is required for

access into the kingdom of heaven excuse me verse 20 for I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven now we are here dealing brothers and sisters with a most serious and important matter nothing less than the matter of access into the kingdom of heaven and thus our eternal salvation and well-being and we are immediately shaken out of our complacency when we hear that in order to enter heaven's kingdom we must possess a righteousness that excels that of the most excellent people of our Lord's day the most law abiding people of our Lord's day in referring to the scribes and to the Pharisees our Lord Jesus Christ was not referring to people who were known breakers of the law but he

was referring to people who were known as those who really spent their lives as they thought in attempting to keep the law and he tells his disciples now listen he says there is no way into the kingdom of heaven at the beginning no way into it unless your righteousness is greater than that of the teachers of the law and the Pharisees now let me just give you some indication of how religious and how given to righteousness so-called the teachers of the law and the Pharisees were in the Old Testament itself we find very few rules and regulations even in the Ten Commandments itself the Ten Commandments themselves you don't find many rules and regulations but you find general principles they the Jews of our Lord's day and before his day held that the law was divine they believed that as we

believe that and that in it God had said his last word and that therefore if this is God's last word everything must be in it everything that man needs to know we believe the same if it is not explicit then it must be implicit in the law this is what they believe and so there arose among them a people who became known according to the King James as the scribes but in the NIV and other translations as teachers of the law now who were they well they were the people who studied the principles of the law the law of God in its purity and they try to say how this should apply to all the multifarious duties of life in an individual's experience and they wrote tomes upon tomes upon tomes upon tomes all perverting to say how the first commandment applies to you in certain circumstances and the

circumstances varied that's what made the tomes so multitudinous and the scribes were therefore the exponents of the law the Pharisees on the other hand were the people who were more pledged than the scribes to keep not only the law of God but especially the interpretation of the law given by the scribes or the teachers of the law they were called the separated ones or the holy ones there are those who tell us that the Hebrew word for for them was a word which is used of the was used of the Puritans at a later at a later time well whether that is so or not this is what happened now we can see the lengths to which this went from the following facts for many generations this scribal law this detailed application of the principles of the law according to men this this was this was just oral

people memorized it they had good memories in those days and they taught their children to remember the oral law and it was passed down from generation to generation and we know how remarkable it was kept now in due course in the middle of the third century A.D. a summary of it was made and codified that summary is known as the Mishnah and it contains 63 tractates on various subjects of the law and in English makes a book of almost 800 pages later Jewish scholarship visited itself with making commentaries to explain the Mishnah these commentaries are known as the Talmuds and of the

Jerusalem Talmud for example there are 12 volumes and of the Babylonian Talmud there are over 60 volumes or 60 I'm not quite sure now this will give you an idea the religion of the Pharisees was a religion of

attempting to memorize and keep all these minutiae and here is Jesus facing his disciples and saying look unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees you cannot even enter the kingdom of heaven oh my dear friends Jesus did not treat entry into his kingdom as a cheap thing this is not cheap religion this is going to cost of course in the final analysis he procured our access by his own blood but when we have received it there is a discipline that is involved in obeying it that confirms that we are genuine in receiving it now let's address ourselves to the important subject before us then with a determination to discover how we can possess the quality of righteousness that exceeds and excels that of the Pharisees first of all why was the righteousness of the

Pharisees unacceptable I want to give you a few reasons one it was almost exclusively external now saying it like that we may have a feeling that it doesn't really apply to us but well hang on a moment don't conclude too soon let me read to you a few verses from the words of our Lord he's addressing the Pharisees and the scribes and he said words like this to them on different occasions Luke 16 15 for example he said to them you were the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men but God knows your hearts what is highly valued among men is detestable in the sight of God again woe to you scribes teachers of the law and Pharisees you hypocrites you clean the outside of the cup and the dish but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence blind Pharisees first clean the inside of

the cup and the dish and then the outside also will be clean and here's another one woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees you hypocrites you are like whitewashed tombs which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean in the same way on the outside you appear as people to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness you notice you notice what all this is about the religion of the Pharisee was a matter matter of keeping all these minutiae these petty laws that the scribes had initiated and had brought into existence washing pots and pans before meals all kinds of things which were superficial which were on the outside of a man which had to do with externals how long you must pray your stance in

prayer and so forth all these things which were largely external their entire religious life was orientated you see towards man and in the sermon of the mount Jesus will tell them that some of you pray before men he says and some of you when you give your arms you make so much fuss about it it's not really it's not really for God that you're doing it you're calling attention to people that you're going to give arms you see it was all manward it was external thus these people continued washing their hands their cups their pots their pans almost if not altogether oblivious to the infinitely greater importance of clean hearts and pure motives but not only was it predominantly external it was also hypocritical you have heard that note coming through in some of the passages I quoted from Jesus

already here are others for you woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees you hypocrites you shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces imagine teachers of the law doing that shutting the kingdom of heaven in men's faces not helping them to get into the kingdom but closing the door against them by the things they were teaching you yourselves do not enter nor will you let those enter who are trying or this woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees you hypocrites you travel over land and sea to win a single convert and when he comes and when he becomes one you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are that's Jesus not me oh you make your converts but what is your convert a child of hell not a child of God

you make him like yourselves and you are like your father the devil that's

what Jesus said to them you see it's not only it's not only Christ that makes converts for Christ and for God Satan makes converts Satan is evangelistic Pharisees are evangelistic there is an evangelistic zeal that springs not from heaven but from elsewhere so Jesus tells them in Mark chapter 7 the same people Isaiah was right he says when he prophesied about you hypocrites as it is written these people honor me with their lips but their hearts are far from me they worship me in vain their teachings are but rules taught by men there's the heart of it you have let go the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men you see the point the whole of their religion was orientated manward not Godward it was only a matter of going through the physical acts being present at the

right place at the right time saying the right words using the right shibboleth going through what men expected them according to the tradition of the fathers do you know anything of this my friend are you a traditional worshipper our Lord brought out the extreme contrast that we must learn to worship the Father in spirit and in truth according to the Holy Spirit energies within our souls and according to the truth of the word which tells us what God requires of us you see we could bring a hundred thousand things into our service here this morning and most of the people who would come would say it beautifies the service and many people would say my the minister of knox has really got it done it now this is up to date this is modern but it is not found in the word of God it is not found in

the law it is not found in the scriptures it is not found in the New Testament in vain do you worship me teaching for doctrines the traditions of men unless God requires it we should abstain from it the law of God must be determined not only what we believe but especially what we do in worship for worship is the most intimate act or attitude of the soul in relation directly in relation to God and if we don't accept what he says about what is to determine our worship then we might as well quit shop now as well as being external and hypocritical it was an adherence to an unacceptable of course and unaccredited standard see what the scribes and the Pharisees were doing they themselves have made the law it was the scribes who had codified the whole thing they had decided we must do this we

must behave like that so when they came to obey they were only obeying themselves in other words they were worshipping themselves they were not obeying the law of God they were not doing what God had commanded they were doing what they wanted and what they thought God wanted you know it's very easy to get there very very easy to get there especially in matters of worship but also in matters of ethics how many of us really believe that the Bible is the word of God as far as doctrine is concerned but when we relate that doctrine to our worship we want to go outside the word of God and we want to bring in ideas of men which are not found in scripture now I can't do that, I can't do it I believe that the word of God in its totality relates to the whole of life, worship in particular life in

the outside world also they worship me in vain, teaching the traditions of the rules taught by men as a matter of fact so much of it was but the worship of self, now I could go on there let me come to the next question and this brings us toward a conclusion we need a righteousness that surpasses that what is it? where are we to get it? in what sense must our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the teachers of the law and the Pharisees? well of course not in the sense of obeying more rules and regulations that's obvious, that is scarcely possible anyway our righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees in quality not in quantity now I have no time to go into this subject in detail this morning but I want to do two things because I'm expounding the sermon on the

mount and therefore I want to take two foci, the one coming before this text the other coming after it and the fact that I'm only referring to these two that must not be taken as if I were thinking for one moment that we are saying everything that is important on this subject but the first thing is this our righteousness must grow out of the kind of character represented by the beatitudes that's the first thing, our character our living out on the street in the home in the church anywhere must grow out of the kind of character that is coming into being as we obey the beatitudes of the Savior these are the basic the fundamental the determining laws of the realm these make men into salt and into light and unless our righteousness is more than just doing the right things but the right things

coming out of a heart that is in process of being changed out of a heart that is being modeled after the divine out of a spirit that is of God out of an inwardness that is not what one existed in the history of any of us unless our righteous acts are proceeding from a good heart that is poor in spirit, that mourns for sin that is a peacemaker, that has mercy on people, that is pure and so forth and unless our righteousness is proceed out of a pure heart, our righteousness cannot be much greater than that of the Pharisees and the scribes the first prerequisite is that the second prerequisite is this and here I refer to what is to come in the Sermon on the Mount and we shall be coming to it in due course our righteousness must also go beyond mere obedience to the letter of the law even the

law of God.

Tell you what I mean you look forward, you read chapter 5 and go into chapter 6 today and you will see it all there I'll summarize it for you we must go beyond abstaining from committing murder, we must learn not to be angry with our brothers, chapter 5 verses 21 and 22 we must go beyond abstinence from adultery and we must refrain from looking after a woman to lust after her Matthew 5, 27 to 28 we must go beyond simply keeping our oaths when we've gone on oath well we'll keep our oaths, we must go well beyond that says Jesus that's not enough, we must get to the point where every word of ours is true and reliable verses 33 to 37, we must not only refrain from demanding an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, we must learn we must learn even to turn the other cheek when people would

abuse us personally chapter 5 verses 38 to 42 we must not only love our neighbor but we must also learn to love our enemies, Matthew 5 verses 43 to 48, now this is the righteousness which is greater than that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law you see it's deep, it comes from the inside and it is not only deep, it is of a different quality, it is born of God it is only possible because God is at work in our souls there is no other way we can do this, I must say one other word how on earth do we get a righteousness like this you know your heart and I know mine, how am I going to get righteousness like this well my friends not not not fundamentally by my own self-effort not the labors of my hands can fulfill thy laws demands could my zeal nor respite no, could my tears forever

flow all for sin cannot atone, thou must serve and thou alone, I cannot of myself produce a righteousness like this it is the gift of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit now this was the exciting discovery of the tax collector in Jesus parable involving a tax collector and the Pharisee in Luke chapter 18 verses 10 to 14 you remember how that Pharisee was there bragging about this that and the other he says I'm not like other people are unjust adulterers fornicators what not and neither am I like this other man that's come up to pray today and that other man, the tax collector in the employ of Rome no one no one thought very much of him but he he was conscious of his sin and he came to the temple and this is what he said God he said be merciful to me notice a sinner and then came the

remarkable statement of Jesus I tell you that this man rather than the other went home justified before God man alive what does it mean? it means this, this man got impeccable righteousness the righteousness of God revealed in Christ worked out in the life of Christ as man even to his death and imparted as a gift imputed to him as righteousness you and I can only get this righteousness in the first place as the gift of God through Jesus Christ it's a gift a parcel to be received and it is out of your sense of need of it not of your ability to cope without it but out of your sense of need that you cry for it God be merciful to me a sinner but it doesn't end there having been received as a gift that same righteousness coming from God must then be worked out in life but now you see it's

something different I have received it from God and the Holy Spirit has come to indwell us and as the Holy Spirit has come to indwell us something different has come into life God has come into our lives to enable us to keep his own law and you remember from the vantage point of the Old Testament this was deemed by two of the prophets to be the high watermark of new covenant New Testament Christianity Jeremiah looking forward said oh there's coming a day when God is going to make a new covenant and this is this will be characteristic of it God will say and will do I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts what's he saying what he's saying is this that the very law of which the Old Testament writes and and tells us the principle of it will be ingrained into your soul

man so that when you read the book outside of you there will be something inside of you that will say that's right that's right there's something in here that tells me that's how I ought to live that's the way I ought to go the law is written in our hearts that's New Testament Christianity Ezekiel went further than Jeremiah and Ezekiel said this I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you I will put my spirit in you now notice this and move you to follow my decrees and to be careful to keep my laws brothers and sisters in Christ can you look that in the face is this your experience unless we know something of this we need to question our experience what it means to be a Christian is this that under the terms of the new covenant which Jesus ratified with his blood he writes his

law upon our hearts and by the Holy Spirit indwelling us he woos us he draws us he encourages us he enables us dare I say he almost makes us to obey his statutes to do his law and so we come back to Romans chapter 8 Christ sent his son and one of the reasons is this in order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit or if you want another scripture of Paul Paul says go and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling and I'm telling you to do this he says for this one reason God is at work within you both to will and to do of his good pleasure the God who has changed you and redeemed you has come to live in you by the Spirit to enable you to keep the law to make you uncomfortable when you don't and to encourage you

and lead you forward here is the righteousness that exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees it is qualitatively different it is deeper it involves the heart and the soul and the spirit in the first place and it has behind it the mighty power and enabling of the Godhead so that Paul could say in all these things the circumstances of life and death we are more than conquerors through him that loved us for the Christ who gave us the law and lives within us is able to fulfill his own purposes in us and through us have you received the gift to start on the road if you haven't do it this morning you can never work this up you can never pay for this you don't get this by just coming to church and sitting in the pew you just don't get it that way you must come to Christ you must come to God

in Christ and with a sinner's prayer God be merciful to me a sinner you may have the gift of righteousness imputed to you and the Holy Spirit imparted to you and from there on it is here to be wrought in us and to

be worked out by us it'll be a struggle demanding all our energies but our sufficiency is of God let us pray father in heaven honor your word in our lives we pray and let our lives be an honor to you forgive our sins forgive our love of the cheap and the tawdry and the superficial oh dear Lord forgive us that we have scarcely the marks of the cross on our spirits breathe upon us afresh and lead us in your way do not give us up we pray until Christ is formed in us we ask it in his holy name Amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4590.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-glyn-owen/sermon-on-the-mount-our-soveriegn-lord-part-2/>

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