

Sermon on the Mount - Part 3

by William MacDonald

The Sermon on the Mount presents the Lord Jesus Christ as King of the Jews and sets forth the principles that will guide the kingdom, describing the ideal man in Christ's kingdom as one who is poor in spirit, mourns over sin and suffering, is meek, hungers and thirsts after righteousness, is merciful, pure in heart, and makes peace.

Duration: 41:41

Scripture: Matthew 5:3-9

Topics: "Sermon on the Mount"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. He emphasizes that these teachings are humanly impossible to follow, highlighting the need for the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life. The preacher also mentions that the world we live in is filled with impurity and temptations, but God has provided provisions for believers to overcome sin through the Holy Spirit. He concludes by stating that the principles taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount will be the guiding rules in his future kingdom.

Transcript

Matthew 5, 1. And seeing the multitude, he went up into a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Now, just by way of introduction, I think we should remind ourselves tonight that Matthew's gospel has a distinctly Jewish flavor to it. The purpose of Matthew's gospel is to present our Lord Jesus Christ as King of the Jews, and this will help us in reading and studying this wonderful book. For instance, the first chapter opens the gospel with the lineage of the King, and that shows him to be

descended from David, which was absolutely necessary.

Then we have the birth of the King, and then we have just a brief reference to the early life of the King. You have his forerunner, John the Baptist, introduced, and then, interestingly enough, you have the temptation or the testing of the King. And now we come in chapter 5 to the Sermon on the Mount in which the Lord Jesus sets forth some of the principles which will be guiding rules in his kingdom.

Now, I think that we all realize that the Lord Jesus came 1900 years ago and offered himself as King to the nation of Israel. He came unto his own, but his own received him not. The nation of Israel wanted a mighty military deliverer, but they didn't want to give up their sins.

They wanted a Messiah, but they didn't want to repent. And so when the Lord Jesus presented himself to them as King, their answer was, we will not have this man to reign over us. And God said, in effect, if you don't want him, I do.

And God took his blessed son back to heaven. Now, in a coming day, the Lord Jesus Christ is going to come back to the earth, and he's going to set up his kingdom, the kingdom that Israel refused in that day. And the principles that we're going to be studying in these three chapters are principles which will hold sway when he comes to set up his kingdom.

But just a minute, these principles apply to us, too, because the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God exists in a spiritual way wherever Jesus Christ is acknowledged as rightful ruler. If you're saved tonight, you bow to the sway of our blessed Savior, and therefore these principles are for you. Now, in studying the Sermon on the Mount, one of the first things that we'll notice is that the teachings here are humanly impossible.

And I like to say that, and I like to shock people by saying that, because it's good to remind ourselves all the time that the Christian life is a supernatural life. It's a life that cannot be lived in the energy of the flesh. If my life is no different tonight than the life of ungodly, unfaithful people around me, then I'm not living the Christian life.

You can be sure of that. The Christian life is absolutely different. Make no mistake about it.

Now, for instance, in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus said, If somebody slaps you on this side of the cheek, you turn that side, too. Now, that isn't human. That isn't just the way your flesh reacts when somebody slaps you on that side of the face, is it? And what I'm trying to say is that it takes divine life to live the Sermon on the Mount.

It's only as the life of the Lord Jesus can be lived out in me than anybody will ever see the Sermon on the Mount practiced before their eyes. And this is what makes it so ridiculous when you say to a person, Are you going to heaven? And they say, Oh, yes, I'm going to heaven. And you say, Well, how are you getting to heaven? And they say, Well, I'm getting there by the Sermon on the Mount.

I think we want to remind ourselves right at the very outset that the Sermon on the Mount is not the way of salvation. The Sermon on the Mount is for those who are already saved. You know, it's a good thing in studying your Bible to watch out to whom the Lord Jesus is speaking.

And you'll notice that in this passage we read, he's speaking to his disciples, not to the multitude. In fact, I don't know any key that will help you in the Gospel of Matthew better than that. So look and see, is the

Lord Jesus speaking to a mixed multitude? Is he speaking to saved and lost, or is he only speaking to saved? Well, here he's only speaking to saved, as it were.

He's only speaking to the disciples. The multitude wasn't here when he spoke these words. And it presupposes that the ones to whom he is speaking have divine life.

Verse one, Seeing the multitude, he went up into a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came unto him. Somebody has said, Each time you look within this book, five things observe with care, of whom it speaks, to whom it speaks, and how, and when, and where. Well, you know, I try to follow that little rule in just a simple way, because I'm just a simple fellow.

And every time I open my Bible and read a passage of scripture, I try to remember of whom it's speaking, to whom it's speaking, and how, and when, and where. And this helps me greatly in my study of the word. Now, these verses we read tonight are known as the Beatitudes.

It's a big word. Don't be afraid of it. It's just a Latin word for blessings.

Notice that each one begins with the word blessed. Well, the Beatitudes, that's just another way of saying this is a list of blessings that's all. Now, what they do is describe the ideal man in Christ's kingdom.

Now, mind you, this isn't the ideal man in Durham today. If I were to go down and interview some of your great business executives and say, how did you get to the top? They wouldn't say to me, well, I just humbled myself under the mighty hand of God, would they? Well, it might be the occasional one that would, but that isn't the rule today. That would be the exception today.

When the Lord Jesus Christ comes back and sets up his kingdom, it's going to be the rule and not the exception. In fact, if you were to interview these great business executives and say, how did you get to the top? He'd say, the story of my success is written on every flinging door, push and pull, and that's about it. But that isn't what you read in the Sermon on the Mount.

It's very, very different from that. For instance, the Lord Jesus said, first of all, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. What does that mean to be poor in spirit? Does it mean to be down in the mouth? No, it doesn't mean that at all.

It means to have a right appraisal of ourselves, to realize that we are nothing, to realize that in us that is in our flesh dwells no good thing, to realize that Christ is everything. That's what it means to be poor in spirit. To be poor in spirit is to be a broken man before God.

You know, the longer I live, the more I feel that two of the most important words in the Christian life are love and brokenness. And I've lived the Christian life quite a few years now, and it wasn't until two years ago that I ever heard anybody pray this prayer, Lord, break me. And I have never prayed it myself until then, even.

And you know, I'm just going to, in a passing way, suggest to you tonight, as we begin the study of the Sermon on the Mount, I don't tell you to do it carelessly. But as you search your soul before God, and as you get down on your knees in the next few days, maybe you'd like to weigh in the balances of the sanctuary whether you'd really Lord. You know, that's what it's got to be if we're going to be the ideal man or woman in the kingdom of heaven.

I often think in this connection of a cult. You know that a cult is never of any good as far as service is concerned until it's first broken. It isn't.

It's just a wild beast careening over the pasture. You take that cult and you break it, and then you can put the harness on it and use it in service. You know, there's a spiritual principle involved there.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed is the man whose spirit has been broken by God. His is the kingdom of heaven.

You know, when the world wants to paint the portrait of a great man, you've seen these portraits, haven't you, in the huge gold frame. They take a man and they see him behind a mahogany desk, and there's all the gold-plated fixtures on the desk and all the brocaded curtains behind him. That's a picture of finery.

And there he sits, Mr. Big himself behind the desk. He's at the pinnacle. He's at the top of the ladder.

You know, when God wants to paint the portrait of a great man, he shows you a man on his knees. And of the two portraits I know which I like the best. I'd like to suggest to you tonight, my dear friends, that man is at his best when he's on his knees before God.

Something to think about, isn't it? Man is at his best when he's on his knees before God. I don't know why we spend so little time on them. Garvey said once, the greatest glory of the creature is subjection.

Wonderful, you know, wonderful. The greatest glory of the creature is subjection. And we show our subjection when we're bowed in the dust before God.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. It's going to be nice in the millennium when Christ reigns and you look around and most of the people you see will be poor in spirit. People who don't have an exaggerated idea of their own importance, but people who see themselves as nothing before God and realize that all their sufficiency is in Him.

And then the second beatitude says, blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. So that is what the world says. The world says, blessed are they that are out having a gay time.

Blessed are they that are out living it up to the hilt. Those are the ones who are happy in the world's estimate of things, but not in God. He said, blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

What does it mean? Dear friends, it means that this man is a believer. He's in a world of sin and sorrow and suffering and death, and he's affected by it. And he mourns over his own sin and the wasted years of his own life.

And he mourns over the adversities that are coming upon the people of God. And he mourns over the terrible condition of sinners that are going down to the pit of hell. And he cries unto God that he might never get used to seeing people going down to hell.

And he mourns over the terrible condition of affairs in the world. And he mourns over a rejected Christ. And God looks down from heaven, and he says, it doesn't seem so now in this world.

You'd never think that this was a blessed man in this world. But I'm looking down, and I know what's going on. And I say, blessed is that class of people who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

And it says, blessed are them each, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the meek. What does it mean to be meek? Does it mean to be just a softy? Does it mean to be a sissy? No, it doesn't mean that.

To be a meek man is to be a man who doesn't bite back. You know, when somebody says some sharp-cutting thing to you, it's easy for the tongue to just snap out like fangs, isn't it? You have to be careful of the tongue, because it's a slippery plate, and it's apt to slide at any time. A meek man is a man who can take abuse and show nothing but kindness.

There was a dear man of God in England some years ago, and it was said of him that the surest way to receive a kindness from him was to show him a discourtesy. Isn't that wonderful? The surest way to receive a kindness from this man was to show him a discourtesy. Dear friends, that's the Sermon on the Mount.

That's living Christ before men. And I tell you, that's what this poor old world of ours is looking at. The world can't stand it.

It breaks the heart of the world when it meets that kind of behavior. The world expects us to fight back, and when they find that we don't fight back, it takes the wind out of their sails. It pricks their balloons, and they have no more ammunition.

God knows what he's saying. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. And this will be literally true when the Lord Jesus Christ comes back in his second advent.

This is a class of people who will enter the millennium with Christ, when righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. And then it says, blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Well, if you were writing that the way it is in the world today, you'd say, blessed are they who hunger and thirst after bribery and greed and corruption, for they shall be filled.

Isn't that the way it is? Well, it may be not in Durham, but it is in Chicago. But God knows. He said, no, that's not according to my plan.

Blessed are they that have an insatiable appetite. You know, dear friends, it befits us as children of God to be righteous in all our ways. I'm sure that all of you who are in business today realize that Satan is at your front door every day with all kinds of temptations to compromise.

I was in a Christian home recently, not here, and it came out that a man who ran an oil business offered this Christian a reduction of a couple of hundred dollars on his real estate tax exemption if the Christian would merely give his oil business to this man. What do you do in a case like that? Is it righteous? Dear friends, it isn't righteous. It isn't righteous.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. And this is just typical of what's going on in the world today. You do this for me, I'll do this for you.

And this type of cooperation, as they call it, is the rule. It won't be in the millennium when the Lord Jesus Christ reigns, ruled, it says, with a rod of iron, and unrighteousness will be put down. There'll be no room for grafters and bribers then.

And then it says, blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Now, what is a merciful man? Well, a merciful man is a man who has an adversary in his clutches and could really give it to him and doesn't.

That's really what it means.

It means someone has wronged you, and now the tables have been turned, and you're able to get your knife in now, and that's being merciful. It's treating others the way the Lord has treated us. And God says, I'm looking down, I'm looking for the ideal population in my kingdom, and this is what it's going to be made up of, those who treat others the way they would want to be treated.

And then I love this next beatitude, it says, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Dear friends, we live today in a monstrous system of impurity. Everything in life about us is calculated to drag us down into sin.

The modes and fashions of the day have no other purpose than to trip up the child of God. And I want to tell you, it's just as possible for a Christian, humanly speaking, to walk on water as it is to pass through this scene without falling into sin. But God has made provisions.

God has given us his Holy Spirit, and as we stay close to him and the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to walk on water. As long as we keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus, we're able to live the supernatural life. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

And this not only has to do with pure thought, it has to do with pure motive, too. It has to do with motive, a single eye for the glory of God, putting the Lord Jesus first, and ourselves last. And then it says, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

You know, isn't it wonderful to see someone who, before he was saved, was nothing but a troublemaker, and after he's saved, he devotes his life to making peace. Peace in the home, peace in the church, peace in the community. God says, that's the type of man that's blessed, a man who makes peace.

There's an interesting proverb in the Old Testament that says, only by pride cometh contention. You ever notice that? Wherever you find contention among people, watch out. It's pride, you can be sure of it.

When we're really broken and humbled before the Lord, when we're willing to take the lowly place, there's no room for contention. Take two to make a fight. That is a good Irish fight, and one can't do it.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. And then it says, blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of God. Now, of course, in the world today, the general idea is to get through life as comfortably as possible, and don't do anything for which you'd have to bear reproach, and for which you'd have to suffer shame, and certainly nothing for which you'd have to suffer persecution.

And God says, yet in my kingdom, just to the very nature of things, my people are in a scene that is hostile to them. They're surrounded by enemies, and they're going to be persecuted. If they live godly in Christ Jesus, they will suffer persecution.

He said, blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Sometimes we're persecuted for our own ignorance. Sometimes we're persecuted for our own folly, for our own stupidity.

There's no reward in that. If we're persecuted for wrongs that we've done, we're only receiving what we richly deserve. But this is persecution as a result of testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I was talking to a brother just today, and he said that he had been put in a certain job as a spike job, and yet he was carrying it out to the glory of God. That's the type of thing that you have here. You know, it's wonderful, the testimony that Christians can bear in business today and show these principles to the world about.

And I'll tell you, if we do that, people come to us and say, why is it you're different? And then the door is open, and all you have to do is walk in for the glory of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Some of you know Howard Bosworth.

He used to be at the canteen in Fayetteville. Last summer, he and I and two others were driving back to Dr. Woodring's funeral, and as a result of Howard's testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ, a police officer on the Pennsylvania turnpike took very unfair advantage of him. And as a result of a minor traffic skirmish, Howard was taken before a justice of the peace, and he was fined seven dollars.

And when he came back to the car and we had asked him what had happened, he said this, and I'll never forget it as long as I live. He said, I don't have any bruises or scars on my body for the name's sake of the Lord Jesus, so I guess seven dollars isn't too much to pay. And we all knew why he paid the seven dollars.

It was because of a faithful, sincere witness to the Lord Jesus Christ, and God so blessed it is that type of a man. And you know, it takes backbone, doesn't it? It takes spiritual fortitude to take a stand like that. One of the most pathetic things in Christendom today is the lust that Christians have to be like the world.

And I think this is especially strong among our Christian young people. It makes me sad, although I feel the same motions working in my own life. And yet it's so contrary to the mind of God.

As I read the Sermon on the Mount, what stands out to me in neon letters is that God wants me to be different. God doesn't want me to be like the world. He wants me to stand out from the world, and my ways are not to be the ways of the world.

That's the whole idea of the Christian life. They think of a friend in Holland, Michigan. Before he was saved, Paul Fredrickson asked an atheist to go to church with him, and the atheist said, why should I go to church with you? Your life is no different from mine.

He wasn't so dumb, was he? Why should I go to church with you? Your life is no different from mine. You know, that was the first step in Paul's conversion. That started him down the road, the conviction of sin.

And before very long, he was a child of God through faith in the Lord. And then it says, blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you falsely for my sake. Dance in that day, you might just as well say, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

In other words, what the Lord Jesus is saying here is, when men persecute you, and when they revile you, and when they say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, mind you, not for mistakes you've made, for my sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven. Why? Because you're in good company. This is the way they treated the prophets all down through the centuries.

And it is, too. Why, it's wonderful to go back down to the Old Testament scriptures and see how those prophets stood out, embodied consciences. They'd rather die than lie, and they cried out against sin and corruption, but the people started pelting them with stones.

And so the Lord Jesus says to his people, now when that happens to you, just remember you've joined a valiant band of martyrs down through the centuries. Then in verse 13, the Lord Jesus says, He is the salt of the earth. Now, you know, I can think of at least three purposes for salt.

First of all, salt is good in your food, isn't it? It kind of adds zest to living, and I believe that Christians fulfill that function in the world today. You know, it would be a dreary world without Christian people in it. The world doesn't think so.

They think they'd be glad to get rid of us, but I want to tell you, it'd be a pretty bad world without the Christians in it. And then salt prevents the spread of corruption, doesn't it? And in the old country, they used to take codfish, and they'd put so much salt on it that the fish would stay on forever. You know what I mean? It would just preserve that salt, and if you wanted to soak it for a few nights and get the salt out of it, you could eat it the next day if you borrowed it.

Well, salt has that function, too. It prevents the spread of corruption, and it adds zest to living, and then something else it does, it whets your appetite, or at least your thirst. The more salt you eat, the thirstier you get.

And I believe that Christians are in the world to prevent the spread of corruption, and when the church is taken out of the world, then begins the tribulation period and begins a time of trouble in this world that the world has never seen or ever will see thereafter. And then I believe that Christians are here so that people will say from the bottom of their heart, I'd like to have what you have. So the Lord Jesus says, You're the salt of the earth, but if the salt had lost its flavor, for which shall it be salted.

It tends forth good for nothing but to be cast out and underfoot. Now, this salt in your table tonight was pure salt, and it can't lose its flavor. If it lost its flavor, there wouldn't be anything left.

It's pure salt. But back in the old Bible times, salt was mixed with all kinds of impurities. When you put salt in your potatoes, you get a little sand, too, and a few other things.

And it was possible for the salt to lose its flavor, and you'd still have something left. But watch out. What you had left was good for nothing.

You couldn't put it out in the fertilizer pile because it would make the land well. It just wouldn't help at all. You put it in the ground, oh, it doesn't help the ground a bit.

In fact, the only thing you could do with it was make a little walk up to your door so people could walk on it. That's the only thing it was good for. And what does it mean? Well, I believe it means this, that the Christians are the salt of the earth.

Now, the Lord Jesus has just been telling us how the salt can have its flavor in the Beatitudes. This is how the salt has its flavor. Now, he says, if you lose your flavor, you've lost the purpose for which you've been saved.

And the world has nothing but contempt for a half-hearted Christian and walk on you. In other words, they trample your testimony underfoot. The world is going to love you anyway.

But I do believe this, that if I'm out and out for Christ, although they might not love me, they'll have respect for me. But if I'm a world-borderer, if I'm trying to live for two worlds at the same time, if the salt has lost its

flavor, the world has nothing but contempt for me. And as I say, they put my testimony down and just walk all over it.

Isn't that what it says? Ye are the salt of the earth. If the salt has lost its flavor, wherewith shall it be salted? It stands for it's good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden underfoot. I notice this several times in the Bible, that the Christians are put in the world, they have a function.

If they don't perform that function, there's no other function. I'm thinking now of John chapter 15, he said, I am the vine and ye are the branches. Do you ever think about the branches of a vine? What are they good for? Dear friends, they're only good for one thing, for bearing fruit.

You can't take the branches of a vine and make a good Duncan Spice set of furniture out of it. Haven't done it yet. You can't take the branches of a vine and even make a good fire out of it.

It isn't even good for a good fire. All it's good for is for bearing fruit. And that's why God put us down here with the branches of the vine.

Let's perform the function he gave us. Then he says, ye are the light of the world. What does that mean? Well, it means that the Lord Jesus didn't intend that we should be the terminal of our blessings.

He didn't intend that he should pour down blessings upon us and that they should come in and flood my soul and stop there. He intended that I should be a channel, that the blessings should come down to me and flow out to others. In other words, as the light of the world, I'm intended to propagate the truth of God.

I'm intended to shine forth the word of truth to others. It says a city that's set on a hill can't be hid, and that's our function, to be like a city set on a hill. You know, light is a wonderful thing.

I was thinking of when John Glenn was orbiting the earth. Remember how the people in Perth, Australia put on their light and he went over at night? And I don't know, I forget how far up he was, but he could see the lights of Perth. And the darker the night, the brighter the light.

How that's exactly the case with us as Christians. The dark, and it's getting pretty dark, I want to tell you. And this poor old world of ours, well, the brighter the light should shine.

We're the light of the world. Those of us who are believers in the Lord Jesus, a city that set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men take light a candle and put it under the bushel.

That's a funny thing to do, isn't it? You go into your home at night, everything's dark, and you light a candle and you hurriedly put it under that bushel basket. Well, you say nobody would do that? No, nobody would do it. The people do it.

What do you think that bushel basket refers to? Well, a bushel basket was a measurement used in business. And you know, it's possible for us to become so occupied in business that people don't see the candle burning. Isn't it? I just wonder if that isn't what this means here.

Lighting a candle and putting it under the bushel, it means that the light of your testimony isn't visible because the cares of this world and the pressures of business have crowded out the things that really count. Well, he said, no man lights a candle and puts it under a bushel, but on a candlestick and he gives us light unto all that are in the house. That's what he wants us to do.

He wants, he shines in our hearts for the outshining of the gospel of the glory of Christ. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good work and glorify your Father, which is in heaven. I've noticed this about a candle, that the function of a candle is not to light itself.

The function of a candle is to throw the light around it, isn't it? And that's true of us. The purpose of our shining as lights in the world is not to attract attention to ourselves. It's to attract attention to the Lord Jesus Christ.

True Holy Spirit ministry always exalts the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the test of ministry that's really in the spirit of God. The candlestick is shining a light over on the ark.

And then the Lord Jesus says in verse 17, Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till all be fulfilled.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach them so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise.

In the Old Testament, God gave his people the law, and the law enshrined God's principles for his people. The law included not only the Ten Commandments. It included the ceremonial law and various other legislation for the people of God.

When the Lord Jesus came along teaching the principles of the kingdom of heaven, the obvious response from the scribes and the Pharisees were, Oh, you've come to destroy the law. You're saying the law is no good. You're putting an end to the law.

And so the Lord Jesus utters these words that we've just read. Think not that I'm come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

Now, this portion of scripture does not teach that Christians are under the law. A lot of people take these verses and say, See, they teach that you're under the law after you've been saved. And if you're under the law, then you ought to be keeping the Sabbath, because that's one of the Ten Commandments.

Remember, the Sabbath is to keep it holy. Now, what does the Lord Jesus say in this passage of scripture? Did he say in these verses that the law would never pass away? Did he say that? No, if you look carefully, he didn't say that. The Lord Jesus doesn't say here that the law would never pass away.

It says the law would never pass away until all was fulfilled, and that's just exactly what he came to do. It's just exactly what he came to do. He fulfilled the law in his life, and he paid the dread penalty of the law in his death for us on Calvary's cross.

And now we read that we are not under law, but under grace. So the Lord Jesus didn't come to destroy the law. He magnified the law and made it glorious.

He insisted that the law must be fulfilled, that the penalty of the law must be paid, and he paid it, and he fulfilled it. It says not one jot or tittle will pass. You know, the jot or the jod was the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet, and the tittle was just a little dot, like the dot on our eye.

And so he's taking the smallest letter and the smallest mark in the Hebrew alphabet, and he's saying it must be fulfilled to the utmost. And then he came and actually fulfilled it. And notice that last verse in that section, verse twenty.

He said, For I say unto you that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now, what does this mean? Well, dear friends, the scribes and the Pharisees were very careful to observe the smallest details of the law in an external, outward way, but their hearts were full of corruption and greed and bitterness and malignity and all the rest. See if I could give you an illustration of that.

Well, it's going on in Israel today. You know, God told the Jewish people that they should let the land lie fallow every seven years. Well, now there are Jewish farmers over there in Israel today, and the law says now don't cultivate for seven years.

You know, they take the land and they go down to some legal office and they transfer the title of that land to an Arab, and then they go ahead and cultivate, and it isn't their land anyway. Of course, if the Arab tried to get it, pity him. But what does it mean? Well, it means it's kind of an outward observance, and so the Lord Jesus said, I'm not mocked.

He said, your righteousness has to be more than an outward righteousness. It has to be an internal righteousness. These scribes and Pharisees had an outward show of religion, but they denied the power thereof, and the Lord Jesus says that will never do.

God desires truth in the inward part, and I think it's good to emphasize that at the close of our meeting tonight that God is not a ritualist. People think that by going through religious ceremonies and religious rituals that they please the heart of God. God isn't pleased by that.

God's pleased by the inward type of faith that's taught here in the Sermon on the Mount. He wants reality. He wants a life that's on the beams for him, and not just a religion of externals.

May the Lord help us to be real before him. You know, one of the wonderful things about going through a portion of Scripture like this is that in the days to come, the Spirit of God will bring these things back to us. You think, well, I didn't hear anything tonight that I didn't know before.

Well, that's true. But you know, it's wonderful how the Lord can use it to refresh our minds, and then in work, when somebody treats us unkindly, what a joy it'll be to think, now, how can I reward that with a kindness? It'll be wonderful to see souls saved and a work done for God as a result of this type of Christian living. Shall we look to the Lord? Father, we come to thee tonight, and we thank thee for thy precious word.

Every word of God is pure. How we realize it as we go over it here tonight. We thank thee for the cleansing power it has in our lives.

We realize that just walking through this world, we pick up defilement. Our feet become dirty, and so do our hands, and so do our minds. Oh, God, how refreshing it is to come to the word of God and to know the cleansing of the word of God.

And Lord, we've been dealing with some very real principles tonight, the principles which should guide those who are subjects of Christ's kingdom. And Lord, now we just pray in a simple way at the end of the

meeting that thou wilt help us not only to be hearers of the word, but doers also. We pray to thee that we might be pioneers, that thou wilt give us ingenuity as we go forth to manifest Christ to others.

Help us not to pattern our lives after other Christians. Help us not to look at the other saints at the gospel center and say, well, that's what a Christian should be, but help us to go to the fountain himself, to the Lord Jesus Christ. And as we study his life in the gospel, oh God, by thy power, may it be reproduced in us.

And Lord, we do ask for any who might be here tonight with burdened, troubled, sad hearts. Perhaps some are here under the load of sin. They still do not know forgiveness of sins.

Oh God, we pray tonight that they might come without any delay to the feet of the Lord Jesus and turn their lives over to him and begin this supernatural life empowered by the spirit of God. We do ask it as we give thee our unsainted thanks in the worthy and precious name of the Lord. Thank you very much.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7670.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/william-macdonald/sermon-on-the-mount-part-3/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net