

Mathew 5:18-20-Surpassing Righteousness

18 For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a letter shall pass from the Law, until all is accomplished!

God's word is forever, _____, and God watches over His word to make sure that this is the case. Truly God has preserved His word. So, we can bear witness of Jesus' words in Mathew 5:18. And then, after we have been reminded of the _____ of transmitting the Word of God accurately,

19 Therefore, whoever nullifies one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

We don't keep the law of circumcision, but Paul reminds us in Romans 2:29b tells us **29 ... and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from people, but from God.** Which means that we that we cut off our desires of the flesh that we may be sanctified in heart, set apart for service. So it is a _____ requirement.

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So, Jesus is saying that the Law in the Old Testament has not become _____ with the New Covenant, but revealed more fully by Jesus. For example, we don't keep the law of circumcision, but Paul reminds us in Romans 2:29b saying **29 ... and circumcision is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from people, but from God.** Which means that when we that we cut off our desires of the flesh that we may be _____ in heart, allowing ourselves to be set apart for service, this _____ God in a way that physical circumcision never could.

1st Corinthians 10:6-11 lets us know that God has given us the Old Testament to provide _____ for us of what to do, and what not to do. God has given us the Old Testament to show us who He is and what He expects so that we do not make the same _____ of those who fell away.

And we also look at the Old Testament and see how it illuminates our _____ of Jesus.

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

And so Jesus has to explain the Old Testament from God's _____. But first, Jesus is going to have to _____ people's thinking about the Pharisees a little. See, if people already think that they have the _____, then they stop looking for the truth. Jesus begins to draw this contrast between a _____-based righteousness that ends up being self-righteousness, and true righteousness based on _____ to God and trust in Him.

One of the purposes of the Jesus' sermon is to show us that we cannot hope to _____ in what Jesus is calling us to do without the help of the Holy Spirit. The Pharisees, in their rule-making and traditional _____ of the law had built for themselves a little play world in which they could pretend that they were being righteous, and in which they could be successful in attaining a kind of righteousness based on their own terms and their own definition of righteousness. Refusing to be righteous according to God standards, they simply re-_____ what it meant to be righteous in such a way that they could meet the standard.

Because everyone thought that the Pharisees were the most righteous people, these Pharisees then had a reputation for being these righteous people to uphold. And for some, this got in the way of their salvation—they began to believe what everyone else thought of them, and forgot that God can see beyond outward appearance. (See Mat 23:27-28,)

One of the best examples of Jesus _____ the Pharisees on their elevation of their traditions above the Laws of God is found in Mark 7:5-13, when the Pharisees accuse His disciples of breaking one of their traditional teachings regarding ceremonial washing of hands before eating.

Man's interpretation of the Law vs. God's interpretation (Mark 7:5-13)

Jesus doesn't even bother to address their tradition regarding washing hands, knowing that while it's a good practice, the Pharisees were _____ in ascribing holiness to it. They were adding to the law that God had given them, and Jesus is _____ their authority to add on to what God has given them. In _____ that by obeying their traditions, they were somehow pleasing God, they were only showing that they loved the traditions that they'd set up more than they loved God and His words.

Jesus gives them just one example among many of their putting their traditions above what God had commanded, continuing in verse in Mark 7:9-13 **He was also saying to them, "You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition. 10 For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'The one who speaks evil of father or mother, is certainly to be put to death'; 11 but you say, 'If a person says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is, given to God),' 12 you no longer allow him to do anything for his father or his mother; 13 thereby invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that."**

Jesus confronts their elevation of _____ above the Word of God. The Pharisees were practicing self-righteousness, not righteousness. Paul explains the outcome of this in Romans 10:3 **For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.** In seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to God's _____, which is Christ Himself.

God is concerned about Justice, about liberating the oppressed, about integrity in our dealings with others, and conducting ourselves honorably in everything that we do. God, indeed cares about social justice, but it must be a social justice rooted and coming forth from what He has said. We don't practice good works for their _____ sake. The good works that we do must flow from our loving _____ with Jesus, and be motivated by the Holy Spirit. We must always put our relationship with Jesus first. Otherwise, we end up turning the good works into an idol, _____ the good works, and leaving Jesus out of the picture. Jesus reminded us just a few verses ago, the true reason for our works in Mathew 5:16 **16 Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.** Giving _____ to God is what it's all about.