

Intro: How would you feel if someone told you: "If you want to go to heaven, you just have to be better than Billy Graham/MT
Most of us would look at that and say ... "Not going to happen" Might as well throw in the towel now!
That is kind of what I think it was like for the people that heard the Sermon on the Mount! Jesus sits them all down and says:

Lets Go over the ground rules...If you want to be my Disciple...

Mt 5:17-20 Pg 683

"You Want Me To Do What?"

Vs 21

1. Be More Righteous Than The Pharisees!

>Righteous: "Right character before God"

>More: "To overflow like a river overflowing banks"

- Pharisee: Base word: *To Separate*:
From People: *Be different than*
- Pharisees: Civic and Religious leaders all rolled into one:
- Pharisees: Very "Religious" Not always very spiritual
- What and How they Taught:
~Responsible to take the 10 Commandments...All OT Law (Leviticus etc) Interpret it for the everyday man
Problem came in here:

>Added to it: 10 Commandments: Became 613 248 Positive; 365 Negative!

>Held onto Letter; often violated Spirit

>Prideful: Did it for Men...Not Always for God! (Prayer 3 times a day; Place of Honor at Feast)

"Jesus reserved some of His harshest words for the Pharisees" (Acted one way...Reality very different!)

Applic: When Jesus said, "You have to go further than the Pharisees..."WHAT! MORE THAN 613! 3 X a Day...

2. Keep The "Law" of God!

Vs 17

When Jesus is talking about "the Law and the Prophets" He is referring to all of the OT.

Here is something that will help you tremendously when you read the OT: Understand that there are 3 Kinds of Law!

- Civil/National: Laws that pertain to the people of Israel as a NATION! Like our constitution! (Don't apply to us)
- Ceremonial: Laws related to keeping the OT system of worship: Lev: Offerings in Temple; OT WORSHIP
- Moral Laws: Laws that apply to all people in all places and times: NEVER GO AWAY!

When you understand:

- Civil laws only apply if you are part of the Nation of Israel!
- Ceremonial Laws all "Fulfilled" by Jesus and NT worship:
Heb 10:1 "The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming-- not the realities themselves. "LAMB"
- Moral Laws: Continue to be binding...for all people and all places...Helps bring things into focus

Jesus is NOT saying to the crowd...and to you and I...You have to be a better citizen of Nation of Israel; OR
You have to be a better, more faithful keeper of all the OT Ceremonial acts of sacrifice and worship!

What He IS SAYING is: You have to be better at keeping the OT MORAL LAW than the Pharisees were!

They REGULARLY MESSED IT UP!

In Jer we see what Jesus is driving at: Jer 31:33, when He said, The time is coming when I will make a new covenant: Not like Old covenant...the one I made in the desert with Moses!

"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

3. Relate To the Law The Way I Relate To The Law.

Vs 17

Jesus gives us two different attitudes, or approaches to the Law. One He discounts, and one He Endorses

- Not come to Abolish: Lit = *To abrogate, to break, annul or to repeal*
Jesus says, "Don't think for a moment that as it relates to the Moral Law, (issues of morality) I come to release you!"
 1. You cannot "Disregard" or Ignore it: Whole group of people said that: Free...do whatever we want!
 2. You cannot Break it! Can't just say, no longer bound, No longer restricted
 3. You are not set free from obligation to Obey! You can't lie, can't steal, can't take another persons spouse!

Just because I have come and fulfilled the OT Ceremonial law doesn't mean that the Moral Law doesn't apply!

Just because you are not a citizen of Israel, and the Civil law doesn't apply, you are not freed from Moral Law!

In fact, I have come to take the Moral Law to an entirely different level...which is what I mean when I say must EXCEED!

- Come to fulfill: Lit = *to finish or complete; to complete the design or drawing* ILLUS Paint by Numbers
 1. To demonstrate complete personal obedience Jesus KEPT the Law Perfectly (every detail)
 2. To Give fuller interpretation of, understanding of Jesus KEPT it from heart: *Show Spiritual Essence*
 3. To Pay Off the Obligation and Debt for all Mankind: Jesus KEPT the law by paying price of breaking it!! For US

Applic: So, here is what Jesus is saying, to them...and to us!

When I tell you that you have to be more "righteous" than the Pharisees, I'm not saying, Make it 1000 rules!

Im not saying, pray 6 times a day

Im not saying...Give 50% of your resources...

That isn't it at all...What I am saying is...Let God write His law on your hearts...and keep it from the heart!

Even if you don't get it 100% perfect every single day...Make sure that you are keeping the law...and it is REAL!

When you understand THAT.... Then all of the balance of the details of the specifics Jesus refers to makes sense:

- Murder: Heart says...Don't hate! Because that's where it starts!
- Adultery: Heart says...Don't look to lust...because that is where it starts
- Oaths: Let your yes be yes, no be no...Speak truth...from the heart!
- Revenge: Let your heart be changed
- Love for enemies...Giving to needy

In every single instance...Jesus takes the teachings of the Pharisees, the letter of the law...and he Goes for the HEART!
Here is His message..." It's not enough to just get the actions right...it's got to come from the heart!"

And when you fail...and fall...and get it wrong, which you will...

REMEMBER THIS: Jesus fulfilled the law: He PAID THE PRICE OF FAILURE: Ask Him for forgiveness

Trust Him to cleanse you, strengthen you, forgive you...Because He perfectly kept the Law...No longer has power of you!

Col 2:13-17

There was a debt...a "warrant" or a death sentence written out...GUILTY

He "Blotted it out" "erased it" Stamped it PAID!

Because of what He did on the cross!

THAT IS THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

Not that we keep the Law perfectly...but when we fail...He has already paid the price!

CONCL: So, how are you doing today? The reality is...if we aren't careful...we "Keep the Law" but our heart is far from God

We can easily become "modern day Pharisees!"

There are 3 different responses to this message: Maybe more...but 4 at least

1. "I give up!" Jesus, I can't do that...It's too much (True...without the HS living within...impossible)
2. "I Fake It!" Be just like the Pharisees...different rules...but you are so intent on keeping them...miss them completely
3. "I going to Trust Jesus and work of HS within to make it possible
4. "I fail every day...but I'm asking Jesus to forgive me when I do!"

Here is the reality...If you try to "Fulfill" the OT Law...keep it like Jesus did...on your own...Never be able to
But...If you come to the point where you realize...He fulfilled it...by living it perfectly...and dying for those who can't
THEN you open your heart to Him...ask HIM to live it out through you..By Power of the HS living within you...
THEN you can fulfill the Law!

It's a simple prayer...God I can't...but you living in me can...