

Lesson #4: A Biblically-Centered Life

Jesus' teachings freaked many people out. At times he appeared to be replacing the Bible with His own teachings. He often gave the Bible a new meaning unlike what all the teachers of the Bible said it meant. Questions naturally arose. Where did Jesus stand on the Scriptures? Did He think His followers should believe it and obey it?

Jesus answered these questions in His Christian manifesto. He affirmed the Jewish belief in the accuracy and authority of the Scriptures. His followers were to live a life centered on the Bible, which would now include His life and teachings.

Do you follow the Son of God or the Word of God? Both! You cannot separate the two.
You follow the Son of God as directed by the Word of God!

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.”

“Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly 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. 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. —Matthew 5:17-20

Jesus relationship to Scripture (vs. 17)

1. He did not come to abolish it.



2. He did come to fulfill it.

- ◆ Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the Messiah.

- ◆ Jesus fulfilled the ethical requirements of the Law.

✦ Jesus filled the Scripture with the right meaning.

3. He added His teachings to it.

✦ As God, His words were God's words. (John 10:30-33)

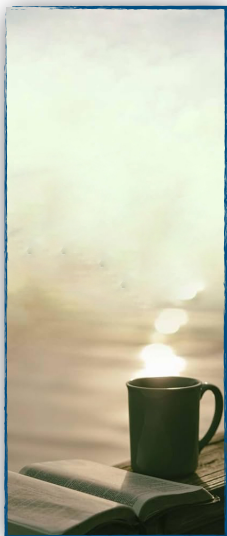


✦ He expected full acceptance and obedience to what He said. (John 14:12)

✦ The epistles are the rest of the teachings of Jesus. (John 16:12-13)

✦ Jesus is the final word from God. (Hebrews 1:1-2)

Jesus view of Scripture (vs. 18)



1. Every part of Scripture is enduring.

2. Every part of Scripture is authoritative.

3. Every part of Scripture is accurate.

“You cannot say you are faithfully following Jesus and have a different attitude toward the Scriptures than Jesus had.”

Jesus statement about Scripture (vs. 19)

- Setting aside God’s commands leads to irrelevancy.
- Practicing God’s commands leads to greatness.

Pressing questions

#1: What is our relationship to the Old Testament Law?

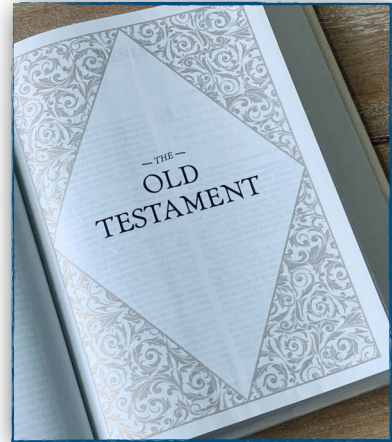
- To be “under the law” means your standing with God is being determined by how well you keep the law.



- To be “under grace” means you have been redeemed from the condemnation the law brings because you have placed your faith in Christ.

- The relationship of the New Testament believer to the Old Testament:

- ✦ The ethical demands are still binding.



- ✦ It's history is still instructive.

#2: What does verse 20 mean?

“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.”
—Matthew 5:20

- ✦Your righteousness before God must be greater than the Pharisees.
(By placing your faith in Christ.)

- ✦Your righteousness of heart must be greater than the Pharisees.
(By having thoughts and attitudes that are pleasing to God.)

- ✦Your righteousness in lifestyle must be greater than the Pharisees.
(By raising your standards to fit Christ's teachings.)

Reflect

- ✦ How would you describe your attitude toward the Bible? Should it change in light of Jesus's teachings we studied in this lesson?
- ✦ What is your habit for learning from the Bible? What simple step could you take to learn what it says and means better?
- ✦ What teachings or commands from Scripture do you struggle accepting and obeying? Why?

Do

- ✦ Target one command of Jesus you struggle obeying to practice every day this coming week.