

The New Covenant- Kingdom Actions & The World

Pastor Becker

Introduction

Matthew 5:13-20

Body

In our last lesson Jesus was telling us how we ought to *be* in the Kingdom of God.

In this lesson, He's showing us the behavior that will naturally follow in a believer's life when we *are* who we need to be.

Matthew 5:13

- Two characteristics of salt: Preservation and influence
- Application:
 - These characteristics are both always present, or both always absent. They are inseparable.
 - We are to *Preserve* those things God has entrusted to us:
- Losing your "Savor", or saltiness.
- If you lose your distinctive qualities (preservation and influence), i.e., your saltiness, how will the earth be salted?
 - What will take its place?
 - Salt substitutes are out there, but they just can't quite replicate the distinctive qualities of real salt.

- People, by and large, can tell if you're the real deal or not!

Matthew 5:14-15

- Jesus now switches from the analogy of salt to that of light.

John 8:12

Matthew 5:16

- Light is meant to be seen, to shine forth, to make itself known.
- We let our light shine by our good actions. By demonstrating Jesus to those around us.
- When we do this, it is God who receives the glory, not us. It is His character being perfected and revealed in us. Not ours.

Matthew 5:17

- Up to now, Jesus has spoken of the ideal character of His disciples, and of their need of allowing that character to appear through their actions. Now Jesus turns to speak of the position that they should hold towards the soon-to-be Old Covenant.

Matthew 5:18

- Here Jesus emphasizes the permanence of the law. He cannot and will not destroy it. It will remain forever. It is, quite literally, God in written form.

Luke 21:33

- The Old Testament remains relevant for Jesus' followers, but none of it can rightly be interpreted until one understand how it has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Every Old Testament text must be viewed in light of Jesus' person and ministry and the changes introduced by the New Covenant he instituted.

Matthew 5:19

- Having established the absolute authority of God's Word, and specifically His law, He now lays out the danger of setting parts of His law aside, or declaring them no longer relevant. Even "one of these least commandments."

- If you do not adhere to *all* of God's Word, believing that some of it just does not apply to us today, and worse, teach others the same, you will suffer obscurity in the kingdom of heaven.
- However if you do believe and follow the *entire* book, and then teach what you've already professed to be true while depending on God to give the ability to live accordingly, God will reward you with spiritual greatness.
- Although this verse does not say you will be removed from God's kingdom for teaching something other than God's Word, other verses do:

2 Peter 1:20–21; 2:1

Revelation 22:18–19

Matthew 5:20

- Here Jesus introduces the Pharisees. They were not currently in the kingdom at all. He mentions them precisely because they were an example of the greatest righteousness imaginable within Judaism.
- He does not challenge their close attention to the law, but uses them to demonstrate that in the New Covenant, discipleship and a right relationship with God will require a greater righteousness than is currently possible.

Conclusion

Our actions will reflect who we are on the inside.