

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

May 12, 2024

SUMMER ON THE MOUNT

Greater Than the Law
Matthew 5:17-20
Pastor Matt Manning
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NOTES

Pastor Matt talked about how to seek out an inner righteousness that’s consistent with our outward behaviors. A life characterized by obedience to God, driving by our love for Jesus and others, keeps us from becoming legalistic.

MY STORY

Do you think the phrase, “Never judge a book by its cover” is wise? Why or why not? Talk about a time when your first impressions were way off.

WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO HEAR?

“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 say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”
(Matthew 5:17-20)

How did Jesus fulfill the law? What do you think He meant by these words?

What does it mean to “relax” when it comes to the a biblical principle?

What are the consequence for those who relax in regard to the law?

If we’re not under the law, but under grace, what does it mean to obey God?

Read Exodus 20:1-17 to reference the 10 Commandments.

What practical examples can you think of in terms of “relaxing on the commandments”? What commandments are you a stickler about? Are there any that you feel aren’t as relevant today or that our culture doesn’t deem important? Explain.

What did Jesus mean when He said: *“unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven”*. The Pharisees knew the law, yet they weren’t good enough to be worthy of the kingdom of God. What hope, then, do we have?

Looking back at your notes from this week’s message, was there anything you heard for the first time, stuck with you, challenged or confused you?

What is the one important thing you will take away from this weekend’s message or our community group discussion? Is there any challenge, difficulty or praise that you would like to share with the group for prayer?



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What does God want us to hear? Based on the passage and the questions above, what “takeaways” do you think God has revealed to you?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO DO?

Pastor Matt said, “Now, covenant isn’t a word we use often in our culture, but a covenant at its basic level is an oath-bound relationship between two or more parties. Simply put, a covenant is a set of agreements between two people.”

With whom are you in a covenantal relationship, even if it’s unspoken? (Many friends essentially have covenants between them) What are the agreements in that covenant, spoken or unspoken?

How does the law show us practical ways to obey God in the context of our relationships?

What happens to a believer’s heart who strives to obey God, motivated and driven by a love for Jesus and others?

How does this approach help us to avoid legalism?

What does God want us to do? Flowing out of our reading and interpretation, what action does this passage or the Spirit’s leading, call us to?

WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?

What is a clear commandment of Jesus that’s the most challenging for you to follow consistently? What needs to happen to help you get rid of that “speed bump”?

What’s your current level of consistency between your inner self and your outward actions? What small steps could you take to bring these into even closer alignment?

What does God want ME to do? What is the personal application and action step God is calling you, personally, toward?