



the
JESUS
MANIFESTO

Inside Out

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Matthew 5:17-20 NLT

¹⁷Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. ¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. ¹⁹So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

²⁰But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

In Jesus' life, his teachings, his actions, everything about him completed what was anticipated in the Old Testament.

False Narrative

The Law, that which we read about in the Old testament has little bearing for us; we live in the grace of Christ and his work on the cross.

- The Law sends us to Jesus to be justified, because it shows us our inability to please God ourselves....
-But after we come to Jesus he sends us back to the law to learn the heart of God for our conduct and sanctification.
- The Law is not the source of rightness, but it is forever the course of rightness.

Who do we allow to have authority in our lives?

Genesis 3:6 NLT

She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her.

Let not carnal libertines imagine that the Messiah is come to discharge them from the obligation of divine precepts and yet to secure to them divine promises, to make them happy and yet to give them leave to live as they like.

Matthew Henry

A Christian is a person who acknowledges and lives under the authority of God's word...

Jl Packer

Being Shaped by the Word

The ancient writers knew full well the desperate human problem of knowing how to live and they recognized the law revealed by Jehovah, Israel's covenant-making God, to be the only real solution to this problem.

Dallas Willard

Luke 18: 21-23 NLT

The man replied, "I've obeyed all these commandments since I was young." When Jesus heard his answer, he said, "There is still one thing you haven't done. Sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me. But when the man heard this he became very sad, for he was very rich.

The righteousness of the righteous was inadequate for admission to the kingdom, though, disastrously, it was sufficient to blind many of their need for repentance: as a result, *"tax collectors and harlots are going into the kingdom before you"* Matthew 21:28

Isaiah 64:6 NLT

We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.

Jesus is not demanding more righteous deeds by human effort, he is demanding a more righteous heart by divine grace; not a conformity to external rules but a conformity to the character of Christ.

Jesus Narrative

To succeed at keeping the law one must aim at something other and something more- one must aim to become the kind of person from whom the deeds of the law naturally flow.

Luke 6:43-44, 45b NIV

No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit... For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

The Sermon on the Mount does not prescribe in a concrete, comprehensive way the behavior expected of God's children, for such behavior is neither reducible to, nor the straight forward result of compliance with, a corpus of rules. Rather the Sermon on the Mount provides illustrations of the kind of attitude and action which will and must characterize those who thrill in what it means to be children of a benevolent heavenly father.

Stephen Westerholme

Spiritual Practice: Memorization

To grow as apprentices of Jesus we need to be a people who are desiring to learn from Him. Through the entirety of the Bible we see the character and heart of God revealed. If the scripture is going to be the ruling authority in your life, you have to be in it. We will not grow in our relationship with God apart from an intentional practice of reading and memorizing the scripture.

Dallas Willard has said, *"Bible memorization is absolutely fundamental to spiritual formation. If I had to choose between all the disciplines of the spiritual life, I would choose Bible memorization, because it is a fundamental way of filling our minds with what it needs. This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth. That's where you need it! How does it get in your mouth? Memorization."*

Jesus, when tempted in the desert at the start of his ministry (Matthew 4), turned to the scripture as his response. It was the ground upon which he stood in the face of temptations and trials. The question becomes where do we turn and what comes to mind in our times of trials and temptation.

The point of living under the scripture is not so we have this big checklist of do's and don't, but that it changes our hearts. Jesus encourages us in Matthew 5:19 NIV, *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.*

This week we encourage you to engage in the practice of memorizing scripture, allowing it to be the thing that will fill your mind and heart. Consider memorizing either Psalm 23 or 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 this week. You likely are familiar with these passages, and so you may have a head start already! You may also want to choose a verse or two from your daily Bible reading that has been meaningful to you and memorize it or perhaps a section from the Sermon on the Mount.

We highly recommend the free app "ScriptureTyper" to help you memorize (available across all platforms).