

**Sunday – May 4, 2025**

**New Series: “The Flourishing Life”**



**“From Good to Great”  
Matthew 5:17-20**

Every gardener has known and walked through delayed gratification. You plant in the fall. Watch and wait as the snow covers the ground. Spring comes and you hope what you did in the fall comes to life in the new year and that animals have not destroyed your work. Jesus teaches that people had been waiting a long time for their hope to be revealed in him. He challenges people not to doubt, nor change the expectation of his coming.

**Key Verse.** *“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”  
(Matthew 5:17)*

**BACKGROUND:**

This spring we are continuing in Jesus’ famous, “Sermon on the Mount.” Last week we saw Jesus moving on from the Beatitudes and affirming for the disciples, and for us, “we are salt and light.” As such his followers act at the force that’s hold back the decay of society until Jesus comes back again. This week his focus is on our righteousness, and its source.

Read *Matthew 5:17-20* three times slowly. What words, phrases stand out to you? What is the main point you see Jesus making?

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The Old Testament laws were divided into several sections. Moral law, ceremonial law and civil law. Each had its place for God’s people to set them apart.

**Moral law-** Ten commandments- reflect God’s character and nature and are always in effect

Leviticus 19:18- *“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against any of your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord your God.”*

**Ceremonial law-** -religious rituals and practices- sacrifices, diets, festivals- set God’s people apart from others

*“And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Hebrews 10:10)*

**Civil laws-** social and legal aspects of Israel at the time- guidelines for order and fairness in God’s community.

Exodus 21:27- *“And an owner who knocks out the tooth of a male or female slave must let the slave go free to compensate for the tooth.”*

How does Jesus’ life complete each of these aspects of the law?

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Read *Romans 10:4, Galatians 3:23*. Which aspects of the law are still in effect for us today because of Jesus’ life?

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Jesus also talks about my life and behavior. Read *Matthew 5:19,20*.

How do I look for “loopholes” in the law? Which aspects of God’s teaching may I tend to soften for myself and others? How do these let me live a “good” life, but not a “great” life with God?

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**THIS WEEK:**

- What has Jesus accomplished for me that I am trying to accomplish on my own?
- What “loopholes” in my faith do I need to close to follow Jesus with confidence?