# Whoever Does Them & Teaches Them

Matthew 5:17-20

Key Verse 5:19

*“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.”*

Look at v.17

1. **What context is “Law and the Prophets” usually used? (**[**Matt 7:12**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%207%3A12&version=ESV)**,** [**22:37-40**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+22%3A37-40&version=ESV)**)**

* The expression “Law and the Prophets” is used to express their summary; to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength AND to love our neighbor as ourselves.
  + **Matt 7:12 -**“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the *Law and the Prophets.*
  + **Matt 22:37-40 -** And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the L*aw and the Prophets.*”

1. **What then does Jesus mean “I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them”?**

* Jesus didn’t come to set aside the Law and the Prophets but he came to do all the law and the prophets.
* No one had ever fulfilled the Law and the Prophets. Moses was the closest to obeying fully but even Moses broke the Law, sinned and was unable to fulfill all righteousness.
* Jesus came to uphold the full law of God as the Lord God intended the Law to be. That is living a life full of justice, mercy and faithfulness (Matt 23:23)
* By living out and fulfilling the Law and the Prophets, Jesus presented himself as the pure lamb of God.

1. **What was Jesus’ life like as he “fulfilled them”?**

* Jesus life, as he lived out the Law and the Prophets, was dedicated to glorifying God and sacrificing to benefit others. His life expressed love to God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength. His life was centered on others, loving his neighbor, laying down his life and doing good to all people.

Look at v.18

1. **What does Jesus’ words reveal about the permanency of the Law?**

* Until heaven and earth disappear we can’t ignore God’s law. We must learn it, understand it and do it.
* Our obligation to the Law is a positive commitment to learn the ways of the kingdom of heaven. Every good citizen wants to understand the laws of their nation and follow them so that they can live harmoniously with their king and his rules.

1. **What does this permanency mean for Christians?**

* As citizens of the kingdom of Heaven we are called to learn the laws, precepts and commands of our new kingdom. We want to be good citizens, not poor representatives of the kingdom.

1. **Do Christians need to fulfill the Law like Jesus? (**[**Matt 7:12-14**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+7%3A12-14&version=ESV)**,** [**Jam 2:8**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%202%3A8&version=ESV)**)**

* When Christians “hunger and thirst for righteousness” they will naturally obey the law and thereby live as “salt” and “light” for those lost in the darkness.
* Now, we aren’t obligated to fulfill the Law to be considered righteous. That is impossible, for we have already broken the Law and can never be made perfect by it. Only Jesus “fulfilled” the Law perfectly but as Jesus’ disciples and citizens of the kingdom we need to be learning the priorities of the kingdom of heaven and doing good to others,living a life that is pleasing to our Father in heaven.
* Christians must pay close attention to the Law and learn why it’s called the “royal law”.

Look at v.19

1. **What prior point is Jesus referencing by saying, “Therefore”?**

* Jesus is referencing our need to obey, follow and do what God’s Law commands.

1. **Why is “relaxing” the Law and “teaching others the same” wrong?**

* James 2:12 says, “So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.” Relaxing the Law and teaching others the same is setting others up for great failure in the judgment. Instead of preparing others for success, relaxed teaching sets others up for failure. This isn’t loving people at all.

1. **What relationship does the Law have with greatness in the Kingdom of Heaven? Why?**

* Jesus says that whoever “does them” and “teaches them” will be called “great in the kingdom of heaven”. Such people prepare others (and themselves) to stand in the judgment of the righteous.
* Anyone who prepares others for success in the coming judgment, by doing and teaching the Law, are a true blessing to their brothers and sisters.

Look at v.20

1. **How good was the “righteousness” of the scribes and Pharisees? (**[**Matt 23:1-3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+23%3A1-3&version=ESV)**)**

* Matthew 23:1-3 - “Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat, 3 so do and observe whatever they tell you, but not the works they do. For they preach, but do not practice.
* The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees wasn’t that great. Outwardly they did some things right but inwardly they missed major areas of the Law.
  + Matthew 23:23-24 – “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

1. **Why is it difficult to “enter the kingdom of heaven”?** [**Matt 7:21**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%207%3A21&version=ESV)**,** [**18:3**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2018%3A3&version=ESV)**,** [**19:24**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2019%3A24&version=ESV)**)**

* **Matthew 7:21** - “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
* **Matthew 8:3** - and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.
* **Matthew 19:24** - Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”
* God cannot be mocked and he knows who actually believes. We shouldn’t think that it’s easy to enter the kingdom of heaven because it takes a lot of self-reflection, repentance, sacrifice, learning, overcoming failure and faith in Jesus’ cross and resurrection.
* These days, salvation is painted as a one-time event where we first believe and are thereby set for success. The truth is that when we first believe we start our journey to the kingdom of heaven but it’s a challenging path requiring Christians to carry their cross, lose their life and follow Jesus. It’s glorious and Jesus is helping us immensely but we shouldn’t discount the reality and challenge.
* Therefore, a Christian can’t say that they believe in Jesus’ cross but then not follow Jesus by living the way of the cross—by laying down their life for others and living a life for the glory of God.

1. **How can we accomplish this? (**[**Jeremiah 31:33**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+31%3A33&version=ESV)**)**

* Let God write his commands, his beautiful Law on the tablet of our heart through the powerful work of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God!

**Extra: How does this passage relate to the previous passage about salt and light?**

* By fulfilling the Law and the Prophets (to love God and love our neighbor) we are being the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world”!