

## ***Being Salt and Light...and the Fulfillment of the Law and Prophets (Matthew 5:13-19)***

<sup>13</sup> “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. <sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. <sup>17</sup> “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. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> 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.

(Matthew 5:13-19)

### **I. REVIEW**

- A. The Beatitudes: Eight aspects of the Lord’s bridegroom heart that He longs to impart to us in order that we would enter in to the fullness of love and life that He has predestined us to experience (***John 10:10; Romans 8:28-30; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 3:17-19***)
- B. Jesus does not call us to be transformed or take on any attributes apart from Him. If He calls us to be “poor in spirit,” then it is because He is “poor in spirit.” Therefore, the Beatitudes are not simply commands for us to try and follow. They are more than just qualities that we are striving to attain. The Beatitudes are more than just an indication of our own identities in Jesus. The Beatitudes ARE the revelation of the character of Jesus, in which we are being transformed into from glory to glory. The Beatitudes are the full disclosure that Jesus is the epitome of One who is poor in spirit (***Matthew 5:3***), One who mourns (***Matthew 5:4***), One who is meek (***Matthew 5:5***), One who hungers and thirsts for righteousness (***Matthew 5:6***), One who is merciful (***Matthew 5:7***), One who is pure in heart (***Matthew 5:8***), One who is a peacemaker (***Matthew 5:9***) and One who is persecuted for righteousness sake (***Matthew 5:10***).
- C. The honor of the Beatitudes is not just to be blessed with good attributes and promises...but to be transformed into the likeness of Jesus and dwell with Him throughout eternity.

### **II. THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS**

<sup>17</sup> “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***)

- A. The simplest way to define “The Law and the Prophets” is to understand that it refers to the entirety of the Old Testament.
    - 1. The Law: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy
    - 2. The Prophets: The Last 17 books of the Old Testament
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- a. It is up for debate what books are actually considered to be “The Prophets”. There are many references that Jesus makes to scripture outside of these last seventeen books including many references from the Psalms.

***<sup>44</sup> Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”<sup>45</sup> And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. (Luke 24:44-45)***

- b. Any scripture that prophesies of things to come regarding either the first or second coming of Jesus can be referred to as “The Prophets”.

- B. Jesus came to honor...to glorify...and to magnify the law that had been declared by His Father.

***<sup>21</sup> The Lord was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious. (Isaiah 42:21)***

- C. Not only did Jesus desire to magnify the law, but He also came to fulfill it, not abolish it. It is essential that we look at the word “fulfill” if we are going to understand what Jesus was saying when He was teaching on the mountain that day. Jesus used the Greek word “*pleroo*” for “fulfill” in order to describe His intentions for the Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament.

1. Fulfill means to to render full and to complete. In order for something to be fulfilled, then it must be completed. For Jesus to say that He came to fulfill the Law and the Prophets indicates that something that was once started is now finished.
2. Blue Letter Bible also defines “*pleroo*” as to fulfill, to cause God's will (as made known in the law) to be obeyed as it should be, and God's promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfilment. When Jesus “fulfilled” the Law and the Prophets, He was carrying into full effect and “bringing to realization” the intentions of the Lord in giving His commands.

- a. Murder and Adultery in the Heart: (***Matthew 5:21-30***)

- b. Spiritual Circumcision: (***Romans 2:28-29***)

- c. One Sacrifice for All: (***Hebrews 10:14-16***)

- D. The redefining of obedience

1. In our culture, obedience is something that we look at as simply being compliant in action and in deed. Children are expected to be obedient to parents. Dogs are expected to be obedient to their owners. Many of our expectations of obedience come from the desire that someone or something would “do as I say to do.”
  2. Under the Old Covenant, God’s people were required to obey the law. The obedience that was expected of them was a physical obedience...not a spiritual obedience of the heart. Jesus fulfilled the Law by teaching and walking out obedience perfectly in every action.
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*<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)*

3. When Jesus started introducing the New Covenant, He taught the full expression of the law by revealing its complete spiritual meaning and intent. While the Old Covenant required obedience only to the letter of the Law, the New Covenant required obedience to the spiritual intent of the Law. Such obedience was based not only on outward action, but the intent of the heart through the inner man.

*<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (John 14:15)*

*<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. (John 14:23)*

4. Under the New Covenant, the motivation and intent of the heart behind obedience will always have a foundation of love. **It is impossible to be obedient to the Lord without that obedience being founded upon loving Him.** And it is impossible to love the Lord if you are not first loved BY Him. Therefore, the first step that is essential to take if our desire is to walk in obedience...is believing and receiving that we are loved by Him.

*<sup>19</sup> We love Him because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19)*

E. The First and Second Commandment

*<sup>34</sup> But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, <sup>35</sup> Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, <sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, ““You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ <sup>40</sup> **On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.**” (Matthew 22:34-40)*

*<sup>12</sup> Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. (Matthew 7:12)*

1. In order for the Law and the Prophets to come into the fullness of completion, **BOTH the first and the second commandment must be present and foundational in the hearts of God’s people.**

*<sup>34</sup> A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (John 13:34)*

2. Even within the gospels, Jesus gives greater explanation to the second commandment. Rather than commanding us to live out “the golden rule”, all love given to the Lord and to one another must foundational be based on being loved by the Lord first. All of His commandments are followed by overflowing in the love He has first poured out on us.
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***<sup>5</sup> Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Romans 5:5)***

3. The difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is the fact that today, every believer who has repented and declared Jesus as their Lord and Savior has the Holy Spirit dwelling on the inside. We have supernaturally been given the ability and the honor to receive love from the Lord...and then love Him and one another in return. The Holy Spirit is the One who is transforming us from the inside through the love of Jesus, whose love is founded upon the love He has been given from our Father.
4. The **INWARD TRANSFORMATION** of our hearts by the Holy Spirit into the likeness of Jesus through the Beatitudes leads us to the **OUTWARD DEMONSTRATION** of following His commands to love one another through good works causing the world to praise our Father in heaven. Thus, we set the first and second commandment as foundational for everything we do, resulting in the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. It is the Beatitudes then that lead us to be salt to the earth and light to the world.

### **III. YOU ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH**

***<sup>13</sup> “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. (Matthew 5:13)***

- A. There were many uses for salt in the ancient world. It was as important to society as water or air because it was necessary for life. It was used as a disinfectant for wounds, as a bartering tool, as a seasoning for food and was present in sacrifices. Perhaps the most important use of salt was as a preservative. Because there was no refrigeration at that times, salt was used to keep meat from spoiling and decaying.

***<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. (1 John 2:15-17)***

- B. Jesus calls us to be the salt of the earth as a means of preserving that which would spoil or decay without salt. This world is passing away, but that doesn't mean that there are not things that the Lord desires to be preserved. God loves all people and desires that none may perish (***John 3:16***).
- C. God's divine plan is that men would be transformed into His likeness and manifest His love towards one another to provoke unbelievers to the revelation of Jesus unto the conversion of souls. The way that Christians love one another and are loyal to one another IS what it means to be salt to the earth.

***<sup>49</sup> “For everyone will be seasoned with fire, and every sacrifice will be seasoned with salt.***

***<sup>50</sup> Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another.” (Mark 9:49-50)***

- D. Those who lose their “saltiness” are the ones who love the world...who live by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Such ones are given to fulfilling their own desires. They care not about loving God or loving others, but rather live out life driven by anger and envy.
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***<sup>6</sup> Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. (Colossians 4:6)***

E. Being the salt of the earth is a direct manifestation of having words that are filled with grace. The way that we love one another will be displayed by the words that we say TO one another and ABOUT one another. You can immediately tell whether you are being salt to the earth and to those around you...by simply recording what you have said over the past 24 hours. What have you spoken about yourself? Your spouse? Your children? Your friends? Your leaders? Your pastors? Are your words seasoned with salt and grace?

F. The Salt Covenant

***<sup>13</sup> And every offering of your grain offering you shall season with salt; you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering. With all your offerings you shall offer salt. (Leviticus 2:13)***

***<sup>19</sup> “All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer to the Lord, I have given to you and your sons and daughters with you as an ordinance forever; it is a covenant of salt forever before the Lord with you and your descendants with you.” (Numbers 18:19)***

***<sup>5</sup> Should you not know that the Lord God of Israel gave the dominion over Israel to David forever, to him and his sons, by a covenant of salt? (2 Chronicles 13:5)***

1. Covenants were generally confirmed by sacrificial meals to celebrate the covenant to which salt was always present. Being a preservative, salt became symbolic of an enduring covenant. Not only did these covenants represent enduring relationships between God and man, but they also represented long lasting relationships made with the alliances of friends.
2. Being the salt of the earth is representative of preserving enduring relationships in the midst of a broken and fallen world.

#### **IV. YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

***<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)***

A. We live in a world that is passing away. We also live in a world that is full of darkness where people are lost and without direction. In order for people to come out of that darkness, there must be light that leads them and guides them to the truth. Once again, the Lord’s divine plan in this day and in this hour is that we would be that light!

***<sup>12</sup> Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” (John 8:12)***

B. We are able to be the light of the world because HE was and is the Light of the world. And He dwells on the inside of us through the Holy Spirit.

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*<sup>5</sup> And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (Revelation 4:5)*

- C. Jesus came to the earth as the light of the world. In taking on flesh, while He was still fully God, He chose also to be fully man and take on the limitations of the human form. No longer could He be omnipresent in the form of a man. It was good that He came and died on the cross, and yet He chose not to be able to fully accomplish in that moment the salvation of all men. He chose a different path for that to occur. It was better that He went so that He could send the Holy Spirit, the seven lamps of fire that burn before the throne of God, and have them dwell within the hearts of men. We are the light of the world because that bright and burning Spirit dwells on the inside of us!
- D. Just as there was a warning to those who are the salt of the earth not to lose their “saltiness”, so too is there a warning to those who are to be the light of the world. **DO NOT HIDE!!!** Once again, the purpose of light is to lead by giving guidance and direction. Jesus, the Light of the world, was “full of grace and truth” (*John 1:14*). This was how He leads us out of darkness and this is how we lead others out of darkness. But, a light that is hidden cannot be expected to have any impact or the ability to lead anyone.
- E. We are called to be “lampstands”, those who will stand and let our light shine. Too often we shrink and hide in fear of what people might think or do if we actually walked out the grace and truth of Jesus. What are the things that we fear so much that we are unable to stand up and shine?
- F. Jesus does not expect us to stand alone and shine in our own strength. It was better that He left so that He could send the Spirit...and **THROUGH HIS SPIRIT**, He could walk amongst all of us.

*<sup>1</sup> “To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. (Revelation 2:1)*

- <sup>1</sup>. And yet, there is another warning to those who have voluntarily chosen to receive Jesus and His Holy Spirit dwelling and shining on the inside.

*<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. (Revelation 2:4-5)*

- <sup>2</sup>. While letting our light shine, it is imperative that we do not forget the foundations of the first and second commandments. Our works must be an overflow of the love that we have received from the Lord. In order to love God and love others, we must return to our first love. **OUR FIRST LOVE IS THE ONE WHO LOVED US FIRST.**
  - <sup>3</sup>. If we do not shine forth from a foundation of love, then Jesus says that He will remove our lampstand. He will not remove the light, but He will remove our ability to lead and guide. In other words, He will remove our ability to have impact. Does anyone have a desire to lose their ability to impact people for the sake of the kingdom and the Lord being glorified across the earth?
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- G. We must understand that everything we do in order to shine MUST be done for the glory of God. There must not be any question of what a “good work” or a “good deed” is.

***<sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:14-16)***

1. Jesus says that we should shine in a way that when others see our good deeds that they glorify the Father in heaven. Therefore, the definition of a good deed is anything that causes someone to praise the Father.

***<sup>1</sup> Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, <sup>2</sup> of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. (Hebrews 6:1-2)***

2. The opposite of a “good work” would be a “dead work”. Not only the world, but the church needs clarity of these truths today. The writer of Hebrews declares “repentance of dead works” to be one of the “elementary principles of Christ”. Any intention or motivation of a man’s heart OTHER THAN a desire to glorify the Lord or to partner in doing so...will result in a dead work before the Lord. It is the expectation of the Lord that we repent for every dead work...regardless of what fruit came forth from that work.

3. **WE MUST NEVER BE CONFUSED AND ASSUME THAT JUST BECAUSE THERE WAS FRUIT THAT IT WAS BROUGHT FORTH FROM OUR PERFECT ACTIONS AND NOT GOD’S GOODNESS.**

***<sup>2</sup> O my soul, you have said to the Lord,  
“You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You.” (Psalm 16:2)***

4. **GOD CAN SHOW FORTH HIS GOODNESS APART FROM US...BUT WE CANNOT DO GOOD THINGS OR BE GOOD APART FROM HIM**

5. There is confusion and deceit that is sweeping through the church that says that we can do good works apart from the Lord. Even in the place of prayer, there is a thought that says that our prayers are good enough to change the will of God. Anything that is good...is already the will of God. He desires our partnership in shining together. Anyone who has something in our hearts, our words or our actions that dismiss that partnership as if we can shine apart from Him...will be called into account and expected to repent for such things.

6. Not only will there be people offended that their selfish and dead works will receive no reward even when there seemingly was fruit...but imagine what people will say when the Lord calls us to REPENT for the very works that we thought we earn us rewards?

7. It will be very easy to tell those who love the light and those who love the darkness. Our deeds will either clearly be exposed to reveal our hearts intention to be praised ourselves, especially when we receive no commendation at all...or our deeds will evidently point to the truth and clearly seen to have been done for the sake of the glory of God.
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*<sup>19</sup> And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.” (John 3:19-21)*

**V. DO NOT DESPISE THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS**

*<sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> 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. (Matthew 5:18-19)*

- A. Everything that Jesus said and did was and is important. And everything that Jesus has yet to fulfill is important and will come to pass. And I believe that every time we obey His commandments, regardless of how big or small in our minds, He is pleased by the love that we have to offer Him. I believe that the ones that He calls “great” are the ones who simply choose to love Him and love His people at all times.

*<sup>10</sup> For who has despised the day of small things? (Zechariah 4:10a)*

- B. Everyone is doing their best to impact the world. And yet there are so many times that we try to think of our own creative ways to come up with good works and good ideas. No one is more creative than the Lord and He has given us the means to be salt and light... and to partner with Him in fulfilling all the things that were spoken through the Law and by the Prophets. And I feel like He is saying today, “Do not despise the small ways that you chose to be pure in heart! Do not think it is insignificant that you showed mercy to someone! Do not think that it is unimportant that you are hungry for truth and righteousness in your life!” We must understand that our only means of impact to be salt and light to this world... IS to have our hearts, our minds and our souls transformed into the likeness of Jesus in the Beatitudes. THIS alone is the means for impact. And the foundation of these things will be the first and second commandment.
- C. We do not need to be more relevant to people by trying to be like them for the sake of fitting in. Our impact comes not from trying to be like other people and it doesn't even come from being counter cultural and NOT being like them. The honor of being salt and light will come from simply being like Jesus.
- D. And though we know He is coming soon, our hope in Jesus's return must not make us lazy in hope for what He is doing today. By embracing our call to be salt and light, we are embracing the fact that we are able to partner with Him in preserving people and leading them out of darkness today!
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