

## Matthew 5:20-26a

In **Matthew 5:17** Jesus states He did not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets but to fulfill. There is a significant detail to this statement in **Matthew 17** regarding Christ's transfiguration. Moses who represents the Law and Elijah who represents the prophets appear on the mountain with Jesus signifying that Jesus was the fulfilment of the Law and the Prophets.

In verse 20 Jesus states "*For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of Heaven.*" The righteousness of the Pharisees was based on the external actions while their hearts were evil, wicked, unclean, and unregenerate. Jesus is going to teach that the heart and the motives behind the external actions are what matters as God sees the heart.

### You have heard, but I say

**Matthew 5:21-22** **Matthew 5:27-28** **Matthew 5:31-32** **Matthew 5:33-35** **Matthew 5:38-39** **Matthew 5:43-44**

Jesus is not adding to the Law, but rather exegeting the true meaning as it has always been intended. By Jesus declaring "I say" He is demonstrating His deity and authority concerning the Law of God. He is not changing the Law but is correcting the errors that they heard from the rabbinic traditions that had been passed down orally. We see reference to this in Mark 7 when Jesus discusses the "traditions of the elders" which is not the same as the Word of God They were holding to the external actions of either doing or withholding from doing something as their obedience and righteousness before God, but God has always and continues to look at the inner man and the heart.

### Old Testament verses regarding God looking at the heart (not just a New Testament thing)

- **1 Samuel 16:7** But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for <sup>[a]</sup>God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
- **1 Chronicles 28:9** "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with <sup>[a]</sup>a whole heart and a willing <sup>[b]</sup>mind; for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.
- **Jeremiah 17:9-10** "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? <sup>10</sup> "I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the <sup>[a]</sup>mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the <sup>[b]</sup>results of his deeds.
- **Psalm 19:14** Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.
- **Psalm 44:21** Would not God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart.
- **Psalm 51:10** Create <sup>[a]</sup>in me a clean heart, O God, And renew <sup>[b]</sup>a steadfast spirit within me.
- **Proverbs 16:2** All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the Lord weighs the <sup>[a]</sup>motives.
- **Proverbs 21:2** Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts.
- **Proverbs 27:19** As in water face *reflects* face, So the heart of man *reflects* man.
- **1 Kings 8:39** then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know, for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men,
- **Isaiah 29:13** then the Lord said, "Because this people draw near with their <sup>[a]</sup>words And honor Me with their <sup>[b]</sup>lip service, But they remove their hearts far from Me, And their <sup>[c]</sup>reverence for Me <sup>[d]</sup>consists of <sup>[e]</sup>tradition learned *by rote*,

\*External actions can fool others, but not God.

\*The Pharisees were justifying themselves by the external actions.

\*We can also try to justify ourselves by our external actions while overlooking the heart and motives

\*The Pharisees were justifying themselves by things they did not do (despite the thoughts or intent of the heart)

\*The pharisees were hypocrites as their actions did not come from a pure heart

- (Matthew 23:25-28) (Matthew 6:1-18)

\*God's standard of righteousness is higher than that of the Pharisees as He looks at the motives of the heart (Ex: murder, adultery).

### New Testament verses regarding God looking at the heart

- **Ephesians 6:6** not [a]by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the [b]heart.
- **Matthew 9:4** And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, "Why are you thinking evil in your hearts?"
- **Matthew 15:8** 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.
- **Matthew 15:18-20** But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. <sup>19</sup>For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, [a]fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders. <sup>20</sup>These are the things which defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile the man."
- **Matthew 22:37** 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.'
- **Luke 6:45** The good man out of the good [a]treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil *man* out of the evil *treasure* brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from [b]that which fills his heart.
- **Revelation 2:23** And I will kill her children with [a]pestilence, and all the churches will know that I am He who searches the [b]minds and hearts; and I will give to each one of you according to your deeds.
- **1 Corinthians 4:5** Therefore do not go on [a]passing judgment before [b]the time, *but wait* until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of *men's* hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God
- **Luke 16:15** And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves [a]in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable [b]in the sight of God.

### Jesus knows the heart and therefore judgment will be perfect

- **Hebrews 4:12-13** For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup>And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

God is concerned about who you really are as opposed to what you appear to be. God knows what is in man as He looks at the heart. Those whose righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees are those whose heart have been born again.