

By Being Law Abiding

**Matthew
5:17-20**



**Appropriating The Happiness
That Is In You**

Series Overview

The beatitudes is a list of attitudes prescribed by Jesus during the Sermon on the Mount that are designed to build on one another to lead a Christian to true joy in Christ.

The attitudes are:

Being poor in spirit, mourning over sin, meekness, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemaking, and willingness to be persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Only Christians that “climb” this superstructure are in a place spiritually to “appropriate the happiness that is in you,” a process that Jesus describes directly after The Beatitudes.

This process of “appropriating the happiness that is in you” similarly builds on itself with the following steps:

By Being Salt, By Being Light, By Being Law Abiding, By Controlling Anger, By Keeping Sex In Marriage, By Shunning Narcissism, By Choosing Wisely, and By Judging Carefully.

Part Three: By Being Law Abiding

*“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.*

*I tell you the truth, 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.*

*Anyone who breaks 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 practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the
kingdom of heaven.*

*For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and
the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Matthew 5:17-20

Immorality is not the most dangerous problem facing the world: amorality, or the rejection of moral absolutes, is.

In contemporary Christianity there is a movement to unhitch from the Old Testament and Ten Commandments—claiming that they are “outmoded and irrelevant,” a contribution to the amorality of culture.

The answer to amorality in our current culture is Jesus Christ, and for Bible-believing Christians to pray for our country and world, and to focus on Biblical truth, including the Old Testament.

1.) God the Father is the Author of the Old Testament

God is the author of the Law that was given to Moses.

The Jews of Jesus’s day saw “the Law” as:

The Ten Commandments

The Pentateuch (The first five books of the Old Testament)

The Law and the Prophets (The entire Old Testament)

Some, not all, falsely viewed “The Mishnah” (The Rabbi’s interpretation of the Old Testament) as equal to the Word of God. “The Mishnah” redefined many of God’s commandments to include unreasonable restrictions that God did not impose.

When Jesus refers to “The Law,” He is referring to the Ten Commandments, not the Mishnah.

2.) God the Son Authenticated the Old Testament

Jesus stated that He had come to fulfill or complete “The Law.” He was the only man who could keep each of the commandments perfectly.

Every book of the Old Testament points towards Jesus, and Jesus’s life is the completion and clarification of its original meaning.

Jesus alone became the high priest, the sacrifice, and ultimate feast of celebration—fulfilling the full ceremonies and sacrifices of the Old Testament.

3.) No One Should Abrogate the Old Testament

It is impossible to accept Christ’s authority without accepting the authority of Scripture, and vice-versa: they stand together.

He says Himself in verse 19 that:

Anyone who breaks 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 practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus is not saying that we are saved by the keeping of the law. The law is a mirror that shows us that we are sinners, bound for hell, and in desperate need of a savior who has kept the law perfectly.

4.) God Will Only Accept Those Whose Righteousness Exceeds The Righteousness of the Pharisees

On the face of it, this seems like an impossible task as the Pharisees were meticulous in following the commandments. However, in light of the the Beatitudes, it is clear that exceeding the righteousness of the Pharisees is as simple as taking the first step on the ladder that is the Beatitudes:

Declaring your spiritual bankruptcy, recognizing that you have no righteousness of your own, nor any way to earn righteousness through your works. Only Jesus can give you righteousness, and make you acceptable to God the Father.