**IS THE BIBLE REALLY THAT IMPORTANT?**

**Matthew 5:17-20**

**THE BIG IDEA: Jesus believed all of the Bible was authoritative and perfect and to be applied properly in the lives of all of His followers.**

**Question: What is meant by Jesus “fulfilling” the law and the prophets?**

**JESUS BELIEVED THE SCRIPTURES POINT TO HIM**

* *“Don’t think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.”* (Matthew 5:17)
* **When Jesus says He came to “fulfill”, it carries the connotation that Jesus is that fulfillment of what the Law and the Prophets pointed towards.**
* *“For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.”* (Matthew 11:13)
* **Jesus is saying that His teachings are authoritative as the fulfillment of the Scriptures, in that what He teaches helps His followers understand *HOW* to apply the Law.**
* Jesus - *“’These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”* (Luke 24:44-45)

**JESUS BELIEVED THE SCRIPTURES ARE PERFECT**

* *“For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all things are accomplished.”* (Matthew 5:18)
* **Jesus so believed in the authority of the Bible that He frequently quoted from the Old Testament scriptures.**
* **The Bible is inerrant and authoritative for all we need to know of God and our redemption through Jesus.**

**JESUS BELIEVED THE SCRIPTURES ARE TO BE OBEYED AND TAUGHT**

* *“Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matthew 5:19)
* **“To teach others that portions of God’s word are no big deal is a very big deal.” - Akin**
* **As Christ followers we need to teach and embrace all of the Bible as the word of God and apply it accordingly.**
* *“If you love me, you will keep my commands.”* (John 14:15)

**JESUS BELIEVED THE SCRIPTURES FOCUS ON THE HEART AND SPIRIT OF THE LAW**

* *“For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matthew 5:20)
* **Jesus set up the new righteousness that only comes through Him and is evidenced by surrendering your complete will to the will of the Heavenly Father.**
* *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness…”* Matthew 6:33a)
* **Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law in that through Him is the only way anyone can become righteous before God.**

**Connect Group Discussion**

**Understanding:**

* What do we learn about God/Jesus from Matthew 5:17-20?
* What does it mean that Jesus “came to fulfill” the law in vs. 17?
* In what ways does Jesus fulfill the Old Testament?
* How do we know Jesus believed the Bible was perfect and authoritative?

**Digging Deeper:**

* Does the fact that the entire Old Testament points to Jesus affect how you will read it going forward? If so, how?
* How does this study help you see the validity and importance of trusting the Bible as God’s infallible and authoritative word?
* How does it affect you in how you should apply the Bible?
* What parts of the Bible are hardest for you to obey? What can you do to grow in those areas?
* How can you ensure you are pursuing an internal righteousness that leads to external righteousness, as opposed to only outward “righteousness”?
* What is your big takeaway from this study?

**Loving Outward:**

* Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
* Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
* Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?

If you are not in a Connect Group and would like to get connected to grow in your relationship with God and others, contact the church office at 225-272-3740, and we can help find a group that fits your schedule.