

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, TARENTUM BIBLE CLASS

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Discipleship—Dietrich Bonhoeffer Lesson #22—The Sermon on the Mount-The Righteousness of Christ

Matthew 5: On the “Extraordinary” of Christian Life

A. What about the law? (Matthew 5:17-20)

- It is not surprising that the disciples supposed that the end of the law was coming with such promises they received from their Lord. (Romans 10:4)
- They were, indeed, addressed and set apart as people to whom simply everything had been given by God’s free grace, as the certain heirs of the kingdom of heaven, as those who now possessed everything. (Matthew 5:3, 10)
- They had full and personal communion with Christ, who made everything new.
- They were the salt, the light, the city on the hill. Thus everything old had passed away and been replaced. (2 Corinthians 5:17; Hebrews 8:13)
- No law was allowed to hinder the communion between Jesus and his disciples.
- Discipleship is allegiance to Jesus Christ alone and is unmediated.
- Nevertheless, now an entirely unexpected step follows: the disciples are bound to the Old Testament law.

- In doing so, Jesus says two things to his disciples: allegiance to the law by itself is not yet discipleship; nor may allegiance to this person of Jesus Christ without the law be called discipleship.
- The question must then arise, What is valid, Christ or the law? To which do I owe allegiance? To him alone, or back to the law?
- Christ had said that no law must come between him and his disciples.
- Now he says that abolishing the law would mean separation from him. What does that mean?
- The law becomes a new commandment only because Christ binds his disciples to the law.
- His concern is for a “better law” than that of the Pharisees.
- His concern really is for a “better righteousness.”
- Those who do not have this better righteousness will not enter the kingdom of heaven.
- This will be because they have dispensed themselves from following Jesus, who referred them back to the law.
- But no one is able to achieve this better righteousness except those addressed here, those called by Christ.
- Christ’s call, Christ himself, is required for that better righteousness.