

# The Gospel of Matthew

***“A Surpassing Righteousness”***

**Matthew 5:20**

## Matthew 5:17-19

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.

Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

## Matthew 5:20

“For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

## Surpassing Righteousness

### “Scribes & Pharisees”

- staunch defenders and eager exponents of the Law – very respected by the people
- careful and meticulous observers of the details of the Law

*How can we surpass their righteousness?*

## Surpassing Righteousness

### What He does not mean:

- not referring to our need for the imputation of His righteousness to us by faith
- not referring to the gift of righteousness for our justification

## Surpassing Righteousness

### 1. Pharisaic Righteousness

➤ *an outward, legal observance of the Law*

- not from a heart of love or compassion or treasuring God (Matt. 15:1-9)
- hypocrisy – inwardly full of greed, deceit, self-indulgence (Matt. 23:25-28)

## Surpassing Righteousness

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### 2. Kingdom Righteousness

- *an inward righteousness of the heart*
  - the righteousness of our minds, motives and desires
  - the heart that trusts and treasures God above money, praise, power, pleasure

## Surpassing Righteousness

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### Conclusion

1. This demand for a surpassing righteousness is a call most deeply for the new birth
  - we cannot produce this righteousness ourselves
  - a new heart is the promise of the New Covenant

## Surpassing Righteousness

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### Conclusion

2. The new birth will be demonstrated in this inward, heart-righteousness
  - without this righteousness, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven