

Blessed are They that Do His Commandments

The Lord Jesus Christ said that He will decide who enters the Kingdom, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, **shall enter into the kingdom of heaven** ... And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity [458 *anomia*]**” (Mat 7:21, 23). The Greek noun *anomia* is a compound of the negative participle *alpha* and noun *nomos* for “law.” One day He will deny before the Father knowing any that practiced lawlessness or didn’t keep God’s law.

He said at the beginning of His Sermon on the Mount that His teaching doesn’t overturn what was stated in the law and the prophets but fulfills it, “Think not that I am come to destroy **the law [3551 *nomos*], or the prophets**: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from **the law [3551 *nomos*]**, till all be fulfilled.” (Mat 5:17-18). He later encapsulated His teaching on the law in one commandment, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: **for this is the law [3551 *nomos*] and the prophets**” (Mat 7:12).

Again, back toward the beginning of His Sermon He said, “That except **your righteousness** shall exceed *the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees*, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Mat 5:20). He then stated what the scribes and Pharisees had been teaching about the law, “Ye have heard that **it was said by them** of old time” (v. 21), followed by what He was now teaching, “But I say unto you” (v. 22). And this is the repeated pattern throughout the rest of the chapter—what they said and what He was now saying (vs. 27-28, 31-32, 33-34, 38-39, 43-44). Christ’s law isn’t a new code of ethics superseding the law, it’s the proper interpretation—as opposed to what the scribes and Pharisees taught—of its moral righteous requirements. We must live to the moral standard of God’s law.

Finally, He concluded His Sermon with the injunction to not only hear but also do what He said about the law, “Therefore whosoever **heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them**, I will liken him unto **a wise man**, which built his house upon a rock And every one that **heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not**, shall be likened unto **a foolish man**, which built his house upon the sand” (Mat 7:24, 26). The only difference between the wise man and the foolish man is doing or not doing what He taught and commanded about the law.

Jesus Christ’s directive for newly baptized converts is “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Mat 28:20). We aren’t to be teaching them to memorize verses, stick to a daily Bible reading plan, keep a journal, read “Christian” books, or join small group discussions. These things are certainly good but what we’re to be teaching them is His commandments and obedience to Him.

It’s Jesus Christ’s prerogative to grant access to the tree of life, “To him that overcometh **will I give to eat of the tree of life**, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Rev 2:7). And He will grant it to those that do His commandments, “Blessed *are* they that **do his commandments**, that they may have **right to the tree of life**, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev 22:14).

We can say that we love Jesus with all our hearts but if we’re not obeying Him, we really don’t: “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (Jhn 14:15); “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me” (Jhn 14:21); “If a man love me, he will keep my words” (Jhn 14:23); “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (Jhn 15:14); “But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected” (1Jo 2:5); “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1Jo 5:3).

“Think not that I am come to destroy **the law, or the prophets**: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Mat 5:17), Jesus Christ didn’t invalidate or nullify the law but even restated and reinforced its two greatest commandments, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. **On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**” (Mat 22:37-40).

The very last statements of Scripture declare, “**Blessed *are* they that do his commandments**, that they may have right to **the tree of life**, and may enter in through the gates into the city. **For without *are* dogs**, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” (Rev 22:14-15). Notice that it’s not “believers” that are blessed and gain access to the tree of life, and it’s not “unbelievers” that are left without. The difference between the two is either doing or not doing His commandments, “Blessed *are* they that do his commandments.”