

# Fulfilling the Law

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Preacher: Andrew Price

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, the other day I asked my son, Timothy, to put his shoes away. That was the law. If you've left your shoes out in the lounge room, you need to put them away. And so he grabbed them from the lounge room and proceeded to throw them from one end of the hallway down to the other and landed in his room in the middle of the floor.

At that point, I said, Tim! And he replied with, what? They're in my room! To which I muttered, little Pharisee. Well, today, Jesus teaches his disciples that kingdom living means having a righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees.

That not only obeys the letter of the law, but the heart behind it as well. In fact, if you've got your Bibles there, in chapter 5, verse 17, he talks about the law and the prophets, which was a shorthand way of saying the Old Testament.

And he repeats that phrase all the way over in chapter 7, verse 12. And so that phrase begins and ends this long section about Jesus' teaching on kingdom righteousness.

From 5.17 to 7.12, the phrase, the law and the prophets kind of bookends that section. And then from 7, chapter 7, verse 13 onwards, Jesus then basically says there's two ways to live.

[ 1 : 1 6 ] Either through the narrow gate or the wide gate, bearing good fruit or bad fruit, obeying God's will or pretending to, being a wise builder who does what Jesus says as well as listening, or being a foolish builder who simply listens.

And so the whole point here is that Jesus is explaining to his disciples what it means to live kingdom righteousness, and that they must listen to him and put it into practice. So that's the whole sermon in the mount.

And kingdom righteousness involves fulfilling the law, which is exactly what Jesus came to do. So we're at point 1 on the outline, verse 17. Have a look there. It says, 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, he says. Jesus is quite clear. In fact, it goes on in verse 18. For truly I tell you, 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. As I said, the law and the prophets is another way of saying the Old Testament. And Jesus says here that he's come not to abolish it, not to get rid of even the smallest letter, but to fulfill it. Now this very quickly means three things.

[ 2 : 2 6 ] First, it means that the Old Testament is about Jesus. It pointed to Jesus. Remember on the road to Emmaus, Jesus is risen from the dead and he meets his disciples. And then on the slide, this is verse from Luke chapter 24.

He says to them, Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms. And then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures. Jesus himself says that he fulfills the whole Old Testament.

The whole Old Testament spoke about Jesus. For example, it spoke about prophets, priests, sacrifices, kings and so on. And Jesus says, they're all fulfilled in me. For Jesus is the ultimate prophet through whom God speaks to us in these last days.

Jesus is the ultimate high priest through whom we come to God. Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice by which we can come to God with sins forgiven.

And he is the promised king of David's line and so on. And there are more things to be accomplished, like Jesus' return and the full establishment of his kingdom on earth.

[ 3 : 3 3 ] And so the Old Testament will not cease to be relevant because it points to these things to come. In other words, the Old Testament is like a treasure map and Jesus is the treasure. Now, some Christians think that the New Testament is the Christian Bible because it's about Jesus.

And the Old Testament, well, that's the Jewish Bible because it's about the Jews. But no, no, the Old Testament is not the Jewish Bible. It's part of the Christian Bible because it points to Christ. The second thing that we learn from this is that the Old Testament also gives us background information which helps us to understand Jesus and the New Testament better.

It fleshes out New Testament concepts like the holiness of God and the seriousness of sin and our enormous need for forgiveness and so on. All this is in the New Testament, for sure, but it's on page after page after page of the Old Testament.

And it's there to help us understand Jesus better, to see how glorious the gospel really is. For example, the New Testament teaches us that we can come to God in prayer and call him Father. [ 4 : 41 ] And when we hear this, we think, yeah, I know that. So what? But when we look back to the Old Testament and see the Jews wouldn't even dare use God's own name, let alone call him Father.

When we look back to the Old Testament at Mount Sinai and see God's holiness, that the Jews could not even come to the mountain from which he spoke, otherwise they'd die. Such was his holiness and their sin.

When we see that the people were actually scared of God, such was his splendor and glory. When we see all that from the Old Testament, it helps us to realize what an extraordinary privilege it is that we sinful people can come before this holy God and call him Dad.

It's extraordinary. But we wouldn't see half of that without the Old Testament. The Old Testament gives us the necessary background to better understand the New Testament. Thirdly, Jesus fulfilling the law and the prophets means that we now relate to the law differently.

No longer do we have to obey the law directly. No, Jesus has fulfilled it. And so it changes the way we relate to the law. Hands up here if you've ever eaten pork before.

[ 5 : 53 ] Okay. Next slide. You've broken that Old Testament commandment. Okay. You'll have to go and get stoned or something. Hands up if you're wearing polyester and cotton or wool.

You've got a few people. You probably don't know. You probably are, actually. Well, we've all broken the next one. Do not wear more than two kinds of woven material. Now, I think we realize, don't we, that we don't have to obey those laws.

But look at verse 19. Verse 19. Therefore, anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly 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 saying here we must practice these commands. We must keep these commands.

And so are we to keep them or not? Can we eat pork or not? Well, we need to understand that when Jesus fulfilled the law, it means Jesus now becomes the one whom we are to obey.

[ 6 : 54 ] He is the lens through which we look at not just the Old Testament, but the law as well.

And Jesus went to the heart of the law. When he said later on in Matthew, which is on the slide, he said, love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments.

In fact, Paul writes in Romans 13 that love sums up the law. And so if the Old Testament law helps us to love our maker or love our neighbor, then we are to obey it.

Because that's what Jesus told us to do. But if it doesn't help us to love, then we don't have to obey it. And so eating pork or wearing two kinds of woven material in most cases, not all, but in most cases, has nothing to do with loving God more or loving our neighbor more.

And so we don't have to keep those laws. But not murdering and so on. Well, that has to do with loving others, doesn't it? And so we are to keep those laws. You see, because Jesus came to fulfill the law, we now relate to it differently.

[ 8 : 06 ] We relate to it through Jesus and through the two great commandments he reiterated. And in this way, we keep all the laws that still matter, even the least of them. But notice verse 20.

And Jesus turns up the heat here and says, we must not only try to keep the laws that help us love, but in fact, our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees. See, verse 20, point to verse 20.

He says, for I tell you that unless your righteousness, that is your right living, surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Now, this is an extraordinary statement, really. If you have heard stories about the Pharisees before, it usually involves Jesus telling them that they're wrong. They're the bad guys of the New

Testament.

And so when we read this verse 20, firstly, the first time we read it, and it says, our righteousness must exceed the Pharisees. We think, ah, easy, piece of cake. They're the bad guys.

[ 9 : 06 ] But for the disciples back then, listening to Jesus' sermon, this would have been a shocking statement. I mean, out of all the people, the Pharisees were the law keepers. They were the most righteous looking people around.

They were the teachers of the law and even created more than 300 extra laws to help them keep God's law. And so to say that your righteousness had to exceed that of the Pharisees, be greater than, would be like saying, well, if you want to enter Holy Trinity's soccer team, if we had one, you'd have to be better than Harry Kuehl or David Beckham.

If you don't know who they are, they're really good players. Or if you want to play basketball in our new hall, well, you have to be better than Michael Jordan was. It's ludicrous, isn't it?

To say that means that no one will ever play basketball in our hall. And that's what the disciples would have heard here. To say that we cannot enter the kingdom unless our righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees is an extraordinary statement.

So how, then, can we exceed them, their righteousness? What does Jesus mean here? Well, some people say that Jesus is simply pointing out that we cannot, we cannot surpass their righteousness.

[ 10 : 16 ] So just don't bother. Just go straight to Jesus. Yes. Some people think that's what it's saying. Now, while it's true we need to trust in Jesus, as we'll see later on, that's not quite what he's talking about here.

You see, Jesus is teaching his disciples what it means to live in the kingdom. He expects them to pursue righteousness. He expects them to try and be perfect as our heavenly father is perfect. He expects them to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. I mean, it's why he's giving this sermon, so they can live out this kingdom righteousness. So how will we exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees?

Well, Jesus doesn't tell us explicitly, but he gives us some examples which do tell us. So let's have a look at the first one. We'll come back to this one at point three, but just have a look at verse 21 to see what Jesus does.

Verse 21. He says, You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, you shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment. In verse 22.

[ 11 : 15 ] But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Here, Jesus is claiming extraordinary authority, really.

He's saying, you know, you've heard what God said in the Old Testament, but I'm telling you what it really means now. He's claiming great authority. But the thing I want you to notice is that what Jesus is doing, and he does the same thing, repeats the pattern all the way through.

He starts off by saying, this is what you understood it to mean back then, but this is what it means now. And every time he tells us what it means now, he actually broadens the application for us. So murder is not just physically killing someone, you see. Jesus broadens it to include mentally killing someone or being angry with them. And Jesus repeats this pattern, as I said, in all the other examples.

Adultery is not just the physical act, but also the mental act. Telling the truth is not just when you swear an oath, but it's meant to be all the time. We're not just to love our neighbor, but also our enemies as well.

[ 12 : 17 ] You see, Jesus broadens the law each time, which makes sense if the law is all about loving God and loving our neighbor. But the Pharisees, you see, thought that if everyone just kept the law, then God would end Israel's judgment, would kick out the Romans and restore the kingdom.

But they got so carried away with trying to keep the law that they forgot about pleasing the one who gave them the law, God. In other words, they got caught up with the letter of the law rather than the heart of the law.

And so later on, Jesus will say to them, it's on the slide, later on in Matthew chapter 15, he says, Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you Pharisees. He said, these people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

They worship me in vain. Their teachings are but rules taught by men. You see, the Pharisees got caught up with the letter of the law and forgot about the heart of it, which sought to love God and

love others.

They just wanted to obey the law so God would get rid of these Romans and restore his kingdom. And when you just want to obey a law to get something, then we always look for the minimum requirement, don't we?

[ 13 : 26 ] Rather than the maximum application. Let me illustrate. Some of you are studying here at university, I believe. Now, when you get a list of essay topics, imagine you get a list of five essay questions.

What do you do? Well, you look down the list and you choose the one you think will be the easiest to answer, don't you? And then you look at the list and think, well, maybe I've written something on one of these already, haven't I? Which one's got the shortest bibliography?

I'll do that one. You see, we look for the minimum requirement, don't we? So that we can do the minimum amount of work. You don't look at the five essay questions and think, I wonder if I could do all five of them and my lecturer would mark them all.

We don't think that, do we? No, we go for the minimum amount of work possible because we just want to get that degree. We want to get our qualification. And so we end up going to school or university to get the qualification rather than to learn.

If we actually wanted to learn, then we'd go for the maximum application. We do all five topics or as many as possible anyway. Or take my son from, I mentioned at the start. You know, when I asked him to put his shoes away, otherwise he'd get in trouble, and he just threw them into the middle of the floor in his room.

[ 14 : 32 ] But you see, he did the minimum requirement so as to avoid a punishment. I said, Tim, he said, what? They're away. I've obeyed. The minimum requirement to avoid punishment.

That's what the Pharisees were doing. Now, I need to say that my son is a great guy, you know. But at that point, if he was really wanting to love me with his whole heart, then he would do the maximum application of my command.

He would take his shoes from the lounge room, walk down the hallway, go into his room, open the cupboard door, and put them neatly next to the other pairs. And then I can wake up and it's all a dream.

But that's what Jesus is talking about here. You see, the Pharisees worked out the minimum requirement of the law so as to avoid being under judgment any longer. And Jesus is saying we're to exceed that kind of righteousness.

In fact, we'd have a righteousness that is different altogether. We'd have a righteousness that looks to please God with our whole heart, a righteousness that seeks to love God and love others, because that's what the law was always about.

[ 15 : 35 ] And without this kind of righteousness, righteousness, then we will not enter the kingdom of heaven. So how do you get this kind of righteousness? Well, it's by being poor in spirit, as we saw last week, by mourning over our sin, by meekly trusting God.

For then ours is the kingdom, verse 3 of chapter 5. You see, it's no accident that Jesus begins his sermon the way he does, with those beatitudes. For when we acknowledge our spiritual poverty before God, when we trust in Jesus to save us, God gives us a new heart.

And he writes his laws by his spirit on our heart, so that we might want to please him, so that we might look for the maximum application, so that our righteousness might exceed that of the Pharisees.

This is what God promised to give his people. We saw it from our first reading, from Ezekiel chapter 36. So stick your hand in Matthew, we'll come back to Matthew, and turn with me to page 865. Page 865.

Let's pick it up at verse number 25, down towards the bottom of your Bible. So Israel has been grossly sinful, and God says he's going to restore them, but he's going to do something else.

[ 17 : 01 ] Verse 25, I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you'll be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities, and from all your idols. Look at verse 26, I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you.

I will remove from you your heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit in you, and move you to follow my decrees, and be careful to keep my laws.

That's what Jesus is talking about in Matthew chapter 5. To enter the kingdom is to be given a new heart by God, through trusting in Jesus. It's to be given that new heart, where the spirit writes God's

law on our hearts, so that we want to please God.

We want to look for the maximum application. And in this way, our righteousness exceeds the Pharisees, you see. I was speaking with someone from one of our other congregations, just recently.

And he said, look, you know, I think I finally get it. And I want to actually take Jesus more seriously. Something, you see, had clicked for him, or rather God had worked in his heart, and giving him a new one.

[18:14] And he said to me, it's different now. I really want to please God. And he even said, look, you know, I know I'm married, and if I see a good looking girl walking the other way, I'll deliberately not try and look. I never used to do that.

He said, you know, I'm different now. I really want to please God. And I was excited because I could see the change in his face and hear it in his voice. That's what God promises all who trust in Jesus. And that's how we will exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, because God gives us this new heart that wants to do the maximum application, you see. Of course, for some of us who have been Christians for a while, then our hearts can grow cold, can't they?

We can fall into the trap of the Pharisees and look for the minimum requirement of the law. And I wonder, are you trying to please God at the moment out of duty or out of a grateful heart that loves him?

Because it means the world of difference in terms of righteousness. Well, what does it mean to please God then? What does our excessive righteousness look like? Well, we're given some examples, point three.

[19:23] Now, we don't have time to go through all of these, because I wanted to make sure that we understand the big picture, the principles that we are given. But let's have a go, let's have a look at murder anyway.

Never thought I'd say that. Let's have a look at murder. But anyway, verse number 21. You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, you shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.

But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. judgment. Jesus begins here by saying, well, broadening the law to what it really meant, to loving neighbors. You see, the Old Testament law was literally two words, no killing. But of course, the Pharisee would say, well, what about if you're in the army? What about if it's self-defense? What about if it's accidental? What if, what if, what if, what if they'd look for the minimum requirement? But Jesus says, no, no, it's about the maximum application. And so it's not just physically, really murdering.

[20:23] It's also being angry. You see, Jesus maximizes it to include the attitude behind murder, that of anger. And he says in verse 22, that if you are angry with your brother or sister, by which he means your fellow countrymen, your neighbor, then you will face judgment.

Now, of course, there will be times when it is right to be angry, but our right anger very quickly turns to wrong anger. As we think bad thoughts and say bad things and so on.

And Jesus says that it's, it's as sinful as murder. In other words, a person who is angry, who has murderous thoughts is as guilty as the one who physically kills. We see that in verses 21 and 22 by the fact that both murder and anger have the same result.

See there? What's the result of physical murder and anger? They both are subject to judgment. In other words, they're both as sinful as each other. But after broadening the law of murder to include the attitude, Jesus then broadens the judgment to include hell.

So have a look at the rest of verse 22. He says, Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, racker, is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, you fool, will be in danger of the fire of hell.

[21:35] Now, the word racker means blockhead, idiot. It means you fool, in other words. They're equivalent phrases. So, but the equivalent phrase is met with two different types of judgment, isn't it?

One lands you in a human court to face earthly judgment, and the other lands you in God's court to face eternal judgment. And so immediately we think, oh, well, I just will say racker and not you fool, and that way I'll escape hell.

No, that's what the Pharisee does. Tries to minimize the requirement. Rather, what Jesus is saying here is this attitude towards your neighbor means you're not only in danger of earthly judgment, but you're also in danger of eternal judgment.

You see, righteousness matters. And so the law is not to be minimized or trivialized. No, it is to be maximized to include attitudes and taken seriously because it has eternal consequences.

Now, at this point, we are all in trouble, aren't we? Because we have all lost our temper with others. You know, someone cuts you off on the road or pushes it ahead of you in a queue, or you're at a kid's party starving, and then some kid takes the last cupcake you were heading for, you know, the one with white chocolate icing, smarties around the edges, and then proceeds to lick off the icing, drop the cupcake in front of you while your stomach rumbles.

[ 22 : 54 ] Not that that's ever happened to me before. We get angry. Angry at all sorts of things. And so it's good to know that we do have forgiveness in Jesus, isn't it?

We need that. But Jesus teaching his disciples that kingdom living means not just refraining from murder, but unjust anger as well. In the end, do not murder really means be reconciled.

So verse 23. Therefore, if you have, if you are offering a gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar at the temple.

First go and be reconciled to them. Then come and offer your gift. Or next illustration, settle matters quickly with your adversary. In other words, be reconciled who is taking you to court.

Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you've paid the last penny.

[ 23 : 56 ] Here Jesus gives us two examples of reconciliation. The first one, the person is about to worship God at the temple, and remembers that he has offended someone. And because God is a God of reconciliation, then it is more important for that person to go and say sorry, to be reconciled.

That's more important to God, than offering him a gift of grain, or animal, or whatever it was. I remember at one of my old churches, there were two guys who had an argument with each other. And so for a little while, they just went to different services, and did different ministries, so they wouldn't have to cross paths. But in God's eyes, their church attendance, and their ministry counted for nothing, because they were not reconciled.

To worship the God of reconciliation, as I said, is to live out reconciliation. In fact, that's what worship is, by the way. It's all of life, live for God, not just on Sundays, at church.

And so Jesus is saying here, if you come to church, and go through the motions of Bible reading, and prayer, and Lord's Supper, and so on, and do so knowing that you are out of relationship with another person, then God is not pleased.

[ 25 : 06 ] Go and get reconciled first. Of course, someone may be thinking, but if I won't see them until Monday to apologize, then does that mean I can have a night off church tonight?

You Pharisee. No, Jesus is simply highlighting the importance of reconciliation. And then in verse 25 and 26, he emphasizes the urgency of reconciliation.

Go and do it now, while you're still on the way, be reconciled while there's still time, before judgment comes. Because when it comes, you won't escape. You see, kingdom righteousness that exceeds other Pharisees, means more than not killing.

It means being reconciled as far as possible, living at peace with one another. Paul says this in Romans 12 on the screen. He says, if it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Well, the next example has to do with sex, which I thought we'd leave, because no one would be interested in that one. But just in case you are, this example of kingdom righteousness is not about avoiding physical adultery only, but mental as well.

[ 26 : 13 ] In other words, it's about being pure and faithful. In your relationships, as God is pure and faithful. So verse 27, he says, you have heard that it was said, you shall not commit adultery.

But I tell you, that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully, has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Notice again, Jesus goes to the heart of the matter. It's not about the letter of the law, but the intention of the heart.

And it's true for females, just as much as males. He just addresses males here, because that's who his disciples are, that he's speaking to on the mountainside. The Pharisees of the day said, adultery

was only the physical act of the affair.

The classic modern day Pharisee is this guy on the screen. Do you remember him? He said, he did not commit adultery according to the letter of the law, because he did not have sexual relations with that woman.

That's what he said, even though he clearly cheated on his wife. But Jesus says adultery really starts with the heart, the eyes, the lust. It may or may not finish with the actual act of sex, but it is still all adultery.

[ 27 : 19 ] Now, please do not misunderstand Jesus at this point. Jesus is not saying that normal sexual attraction is wrong. We were created to be sexually attracted to the opposite gender.

If we weren't created like that, then our generation might not exist. You know, just the fact of the matter. I was talking with someone the other night who was sitting next to her husband and they were watching my kitchen rules.

I don't know if you're watching that show, but this guy came on. Colin is his name. And she goes, Oh, he's all right. Now, is that adultery? Of course not.

It was a normal feeling of attraction, though. I don't see it myself. We are built to be attracted to the opposite gender. Rather, what Jesus is getting at in verse 28 is literally this.

Literally, he says, when anyone looks at a woman in order to desire her, he commits adultery. It's about the intention. You see, it's about the second glance, the prolonged look.

[ 28 : 20 ] Perhaps for women, it's the daydreaming of a life with a person who is not your husband, or perhaps the flirtatious behavior, or whatever it is. It is all adultery.

Like anger, this too is also serious. See verse 29. He says, If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out, and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off, and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. You see, sin's pretty serious, isn't it? And hell is very bad. Sexual sin in particular unravels lives, and it can take people away from Jesus. I saw this even at Bible college when I was studying there.

There was a family in my year who the wife actually lusted after another man. It started off with conversations and chatting and flirting, and even at that point they were committing adultery.

[ 29 : 19 ] But then they actually physically committed it as well. And then she walked out on her husband, her two children, and also now Jesus, from what I've heard. And so now she's headed for hell.

That's what Jesus is saying here. Or I wonder how many people here know, of others who have chased after a non-Christian because they wanted them, and in the process have wandered away from Jesus, and are also now in danger of hell.

See, we need to realize how serious this is. Jesus says, you're better off gouging out your eye, cutting off your hand, than facing hell. That's how bad hell is. He's not literally saying we should cut off our hand, or gouge out our eye.

He's just trying to show how bad hell is. You know, it's better off living life maimed than going there. We need to flee from unrighteousness, and live out kingdom righteousness.

For one guy I knew, for him it meant, every time he came up towards a newsagent, I don't know if they do it much these days, they always have the magazines out the front of the newsagency, or on the windows, of barely clothed women, that sort of thing.

[ 30 : 20 ] For him, when he came up to the newsagent, he'd cross the road to the other side, walk past it, and then come back. Isn't that excessive? Isn't that a bit extreme? That's kingdom righteousness, that exceeds the Pharisees.

For another guy I know, he spoke to me as his pastor, this is from a different church, and he confessed to having an addiction to pornography. And that took guts to come and talk to me about that.

But you see, he knew the seriousness of sin, and that kingdom righteousness matters. And so he got professional counselling, and we also met up as well. And for guys in particular, can I say, we need to make sure we're careful with what we watch on TV, and what we see on the computer.

For lust is like an animal inside you. The more you feed it, the stronger it becomes. So don't feed it. Starve it. Otherwise, it will grow so strong, it will devour you.

But again, we must remember, there is forgiveness available for those who repent. And if you are struggling in this area, whether male or female, then can I encourage you to confide in someone to help you, knowing that there is forgiveness from God.

[ 31 : 31 ] For God not only gives us his spirit, but he also gives us one another to help each other live out this kingdom righteousness. And why is this important that we live this way? Well, because it means we'll be different.

It brings us to our final point, very briefly. Remember chapter 5, verse 13 and 16? Jesus gives the reason for this kingdom righteousness. He says, you disciples, you are to be salt, light, a city on a hill.

That is, you are to stand out as different. And we won't stand out if we have reasonable righteousness. We'll only stand out if we have excessive righteousness.

Righteousness that goes beyond the Pharisees, and even looks excessive to the world. Now, most of us, of course, would be quite happy with reasonable righteousness. We don't want to get excessive about too much these days.

But the problem is that we'll just blend in with other nice people. Rather, we are to stand out as different. And as we heard last week, we'll be persecuted for it. But, verse 16, we will also cause people to stop and wonder and question, and perhaps even come to glorify God, through our good works, through our excessive righteousness.

[ 32 : 44 ] Kathy Doisy is a Jew who lived through World War II as a young woman. She wrote this book on the screen called Forgiving Hitler through a guy called Kel Richards.

I mean, the title in itself is quite provocative, really. And as a Jew who lived through bomb blasts, escaped Nazi hunts, saw family members killed, and then came to Australia, became a Christian, and realized that following Jesus meant loving even her enemies, who were very real to her.

And so in light of that, she writes this book, saying that she has come to terms with those people who committed such atrocities to her family. She loves not just her neighbor, but her enemy as well. And that's excessive righteousness, isn't it? It's excessive. But you see, it has caused people to talk about it, to ask why, to hear of Jesus, and perhaps even come to know God and glorify him.

We are to live out our kingdom righteousness that people may glorify our God. So I guess the final question for us tonight is, are we living out that kingdom righteousness?

[ 33 : 59 ] Jesus is. I peeking out unto you, the mainuhan stu word in the world of the less we are serving on the right of the enami of those and segundos as save probabilities between times and so it shows theTEES to not until the space we remember