

## **Briefing Document: Matthew Lesson 59-Christ and the Law**

**March 1, 2026**

### Executive Summary

This document synthesizes the theological and practical insights from the March 1, 2026, teaching on Matthew 5:18-20. The central theme focuses on the absolute authority of Scripture and the requirement for "Kingdom citizens" to possess internal righteousness that exceeds external legalism. The teaching posits that because Jesus viewed Scripture as binding and infallible, believers must respond with five specific actions: receiving, honoring, studying, defending, and proclaiming the Word of God. The session also highlights the historical influence of Martin Luther and Charles Spurgeon on church doctrine and worship, concluding with the commissioning of members for apostolic missionary work.

### Foundations of Worship and Music

The service establishes music as a primary vehicle for spiritual alignment. Quoting Martin Luther, the 16th-century reformer and musician, the teaching emphasizes that:

"Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. It controls our thoughts, minds, hearts, and spirits."

This perspective underscores the use of hymns like Luther's "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (written approximately 500 years ago) to fill the spirit and thoughts of the congregation.

### Christ and the Absolute Authority of the Law

The core of the teaching is a deep examination of Matthew 5:18-20, where Jesus defines His relationship with the Law.

### The Permanence of Scripture

Jesus provides an authoritative declaration regarding the endurance of divine law:

- *"For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."* (Matthew 5:18)

The "jot" and "tittle" represent the smallest marks in the Hebrew script, signifying that every minute detail of God's Word is binding.

### The Standard for Kingdom Citizens

The teaching distinguishes between the "phony" external righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees and the genuine internal righteousness required for the Kingdom of Heaven.

- **Pharisaic Righteousness:** Based on external systems, the traditions of men, and visible attendance or adherence to rules.

- **Kingdom Righteousness:** Based on the unchallengeable, unchanging law of God applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus warns that: *“unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”* (Matthew 5:20)

### The Trilemma of Scriptural Error

A central argument is presented regarding the reliability of the Bible. If one claims the Bible contains errors, they must logically categorize Jesus in one of three ways, as He proclaimed the Word was perfect:

#### **Possibility Description**

**Ignorant** Jesus did not know there were errors, which would disqualify His divinity.

**Dishonest** Jesus knew there were errors but lied by claiming the Word was perfect.

**Hypocrite** Jesus knew of the errors but actively hid them from His followers.

The teaching rejects these possibilities, asserting that because Jesus is God in human flesh, His view of Scripture as literally true must be the absolute authority for the believer.

### The Believer's Fivefold Response to the Word

Given the authority of Scripture, the teaching outlines five requisite responses for the Christian life:

1. **Receive the Word:** Based on James 1:21 (*“Receive with meekness the implanted word”*), believers must accept Scripture because of the majesty of its Author and the price paid to deliver it.
2. **Honor the Word:** Following the example of Psalm 138:2, where God exalts His Word above His name, believers should view Scripture with love rather than as a burden or an irritation.
3. **Study the Word:** Believers are commanded in 2 Timothy 2:15 to be *“a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* This involves “cutting a straight line” and making the Word one's own.
4. **Defend the Word:** Based on Jude 3, believers must *“contend earnestly for the faith.”* This requires “agonizing” [^1] to protect the integrity and purity of the Word against cultural shifts.
5. **Proclaim the Word:** As instructed in 2 Timothy 4:2, believers must *“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.”*

### Historical and Theological Influences

The teaching draws heavily from Charles Spurgeon, the influential 19th-century pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

- **The Responsibility of the Watchman:** Spurgeon emphasized that preachers and representatives of Christ are responsible for the souls of those they fail to warn. He noted that the heart of a man speaking for God knows no ease because of this grave responsibility.
- **Opposition to Modernization:** Spurgeon was a staunch opponent of liberal theology, arguing that the "infallible revelation of the infallible Jehovah" should never be moderated or toned down to fit the fashions of the day.

Ministry Developments and Commissioning

The briefing concludes with community-specific events and transitions:

- **Turning Point Event:** Scheduled for Saturday, March 28, featuring four speakers regarding different programs.
- **Communion:** Conducted as a sensory remembrance of Christ’s body and blood, emphasizing that the "new covenant" is a final sacrifice sufficient for all eternity.
- **Apostolic Commissioning:** Roger and Anita were formally commissioned as "apostolic missionaries." This recognition authorizes them to go forth in the tradition of the apostles to spread the gospel and join with like-minded believers.

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Greek Vocabulary and Phonetic Guide

Greek Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
<b>Eragonizomai</b> [ <sup>1</sup> ]	eh-pah-goh-nee-zoh-my	To contend earnestly; to struggle or "agonize" in defense of something.

[<sup>1</sup>]: Referred to in the transcript as "apagonomi," emphasizing the intense struggle or agony involved in defending the faith as described in Jude 3.