

## **Study Guide: Matthew Lesson 64-Christ and the Law**

**April 26, 2026**

This study guide explores the teachings of Jesus Christ regarding the relationship between the Law and true righteousness. Based on the sermon "Christ and the Law: Lesson 64," it examines Matthew 5:20 and the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector to distinguish between human achievement and divine grace.

### **Short-Answer Quiz**

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions in two to three sentences based on the information provided in the source.

1. What is the main danger of being "self-righteous" according to the sermon?
  2. Explain the inspiration behind James Black writing the hymn "When the Roll is Called Up Yonder."
  3. In the parable from Luke 18, how does the Pharisee's prayer demonstrate his focus on himself rather than God?
  4. Why was the Tax Collector in the parable considered the "least esteemed man" in Jewish society?
  5. What was the specific "geographical and spiritual" difference between where the Pharisee and the Tax Collector stood in the temple?
  6. According to Matthew 5:20, what is the requirement regarding righteousness for those who wish to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?
  7. What does the sermon identify as the primary purpose of the Law given by God?
  8. How does the sermon use the metaphor of a "mirror" to explain the function of the Law?
  9. In what way did the Pharisees "change the law" to accommodate their own behavior?
  10. According to the sermon, what evidence should be present in the life of a person who has truly been saved by Jesus Christ?
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## Answer Key

1. The sermon states that self-righteousness is a "religion of human achievement." It is a dangerous position because relying on one's own achievements leads to trouble, as no one is truly righteous on their own merit.
  2. James Black was inspired after a young girl named Bessie failed to answer the roll call at a youth meeting. This led him to wonder if he would be able to respond when his own name was called "up yonder" in Heaven.
  3. The Pharisee prayed "with himself," focusing on his own actions like fasting twice a week and giving tithes. He used his prayer to list his accomplishments and compare himself favorably to "extortioners" and the Tax Collector.
  4. Tax Collectors were Jews who worked for the Roman government, often taking money from their own people. They were viewed as ultimate traitors who had forsaken their religion, nationalism, and loyalty for the sake of money.
  5. The Pharisee stood confidently near the entrance of the temple court, while the Tax Collector hid in a corner on his knees. Spiritually, the Pharisee was boastful and proud, whereas the Tax Collector was humbled and mourning over his sins.
  6. Jesus Christ stated that unless a person's righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, they will "by no means" enter the Kingdom of Heaven. This indicates that religious rules and outward goodness are not enough for salvation.
  7. The purpose of the Law was to show people that they could not achieve the necessary righteousness on their own. It acts as a "schoolmaster" or "tutor" to lead people to Jesus Christ so they can be justified by faith.
  8. The Law is described as a mirror that reflects a person's true spiritual condition and identifies their sin. If a person looks into it truthfully, they will see that they are inadequate and "rotten to the core" without the love of Jesus Christ.
  9. The Pharisees created their own set of "rabbinical traditions" that they felt they could keep. By following these man-made standards instead of God's divine standard, they convinced themselves they were righteous.
  10. The sermon teaches that when a person is saved, their life is transformed and they become a "new creature" in Jesus Christ. A true change in life and behavior should be visible, rather than just relying on self-righteousness or a religious system.
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## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Use the themes discussed in the sermon to write a detailed response to the following prompts.

1. **Human Achievement vs. Divine Grace:** Compare and contrast the Pharisee's "religion of human achievement" with the Tax Collector's plea for mercy. How does this distinction define the path to Heaven according to the sermon?
2. **The Role of the Law:** Analyze the statement that the Law was designed to "frustrate" people. Explain how this frustration is intended to lead a person to Jesus Christ.
3. **The Character of a Believer:** Review the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3–16) mentioned in the lesson. Contrast the qualities Jesus Christ praises (such as being poor in spirit or mourning) with the attitudes of the religious leaders of His day.
4. **The Standard of Righteousness:** Jesus Christ claims He did not come to abolish the Law but to "fulfill" it. Discuss what it means for a believer's righteousness to "exceed" that of the most religious people in society.
5. **Modern Applications:** The speaker compares the ancient religious system to the "present-day American church." Discuss the sermon's warnings against pride, boastfulness, and the lack of life transformation in modern religious contexts.

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## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Beatitudes:** The series of blessings or "blesseds" spoken by Jesus Christ at the start of the Sermon on the Mount, describing the characteristics of those in the Kingdom of Heaven.
- **Justified:** Being declared righteous or "just as if one had not sinned" before God.
- **NKJV:** The New King James Version of the Bible, which is the specific translation used for the scripture references in this study.
- **Parable:** A simple story used by Jesus Christ to illustrate a spiritual or moral lesson, such as the story of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector.
- **Pharisee:** A member of an ancient Jewish sect characterized by strict observance of the Law and man-made traditions, often associated with self-righteousness in the New Testament.
- **Righteousness:** The quality of being morally right or justifiable; in this context, it refers to the perfect standard required by God.
- **Scribe:** A professional scholar of the Law in ancient Israel who was responsible for transcribing and interpreting the scriptures.

- **Self-Righteousness:** The belief that one is morally superior to others based on one's own actions or religious adherence.
- **Tax Collector:** A person hired by Rome to collect taxes from Jews; they were often despised as traitors and sinners by their society.
- **Tutor/Schoolmaster:** A term used for the Law (Galatians 3:24), meaning a disciplinarian that guides or brings a person to Jesus Christ.

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Greek Word Study

The following terms were mentioned during the lesson to explain the nature of the path to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Term	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition from Source
<b>Legal</b> [ <sup>1</sup> ]	<i>LEE-gal</i>	Defined in the text as meaning "little"; refers to the narrowness of the pathway to Heaven.
<b>Poly Legal</b> [ <sup>2</sup> ]	<i>PAH-lee LEE-gal</i>	Defined in the text as meaning "even narrower"; refers to the gate of the Kingdom of Heaven.

[<sup>1</sup>]: Used by the speaker to describe the Greek understanding of the "pathway" to the Kingdom. [<sup>2</sup>]: Used by the speaker to describe the Greek understanding of the "gate" to the Kingdom.