

Study Guide: Matthew Lesson 66-The Sermon on the Mount – Christ and the Law

May 10, 2026

This study guide examines the teachings presented in Lesson 66 of the "Christ and the Law" series. The document covers the importance of motherhood, the necessity of private prayer, and a deep analysis of Matthew 5:20. It explores the difference between the external, self-centered righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees and the internal, absolute holiness required by Jesus Christ for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Quiz: Short-Answer Questions

1. According to the scripture reading of Psalm 139:13-14, how does the Bible describe the way God created each individual in their mother's womb?
 2. Based on Matthew 6:6, what instructions are given regarding the location and manner of prayer, and what is the result of following these instructions?
 3. Describe the story of the construction worker from Clovis, New Mexico. What specific request did he make to God, and what was the long-term impact of his prayers?
 4. What does it mean for the scribes and Pharisees to "sit in Moses' seat," and how did Jesus Christ tell His followers to respond to their teachings?
 5. According to the sermon, why did Jesus Christ refer to the religious leaders of His day as "hypocrites"?
 6. The sermon mentions four specific characteristics of the righteousness of the Pharisees. Name at least two of these characteristics and briefly explain what they mean.
 7. Explain why Jesus Christ taught that the "weightier matters of the law" (such as justice, mercy, and faith) were more important than small rituals like tithing tiny amounts of herbs.
 8. According to Galatians 2:16, why is it impossible for any person to be justified by the works of the law or by their own flesh?
 9. What is the absolute standard of holiness and perfection required by God, and how does this standard compare to human efforts?
 10. If a person cannot earn their own righteousness, how does the sermon explain that they can obtain the righteousness needed to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?
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Answer Key

1. **Answer:** God is described as the one who formed a person's inward parts and "wove" them together in their mother's womb. Because of this divine craftsmanship, individuals are "fearfully and wonderfully made," and His works are considered wonderful.
2. **Answer:** Believers are told to enter into a "closet" or a private room and shut the door to pray to the Father in secret. The scripture promises that the Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward the believer openly.
3. **Answer:** The construction worker built a small prayer closet in his home covered in gold leaf where he asked God to use him for His Kingdom. As a result of his faithfulness, a Christian school was established in Clovis, New Mexico, which eventually led to the creation of another school and the education of thousands of children.
4. **Answer:** Sitting in "Moses' seat" refers to the Pharisees' position of authority in dispensing and preaching the Law of Moses. Jesus Christ told His disciples to observe and do whatever the Pharisees told them to do regarding the Law, but not to follow their personal examples or works.
5. **Answer:** He called them hypocrites because they focused entirely on their external appearance—shining up the outside to look good to men—while remaining "rotten" and sinful on the inside. They taught the Law but did not practice the heart of it themselves.
6. **Answer:** Their righteousness was external (focused on being seen by men), partial (doing small tasks while ignoring big ones), redefined (changing God's words to fit their own abilities), and self-centered (relying on their own actions rather than God).
7. **Answer:** Small rituals like tithing mint and cumin are insignificant compared to the character-driven requirements of the Law. Jesus Christ emphasized that inner virtues like justice and mercy are the true reflections of God's heart, whereas the Pharisees used small rituals to avoid the harder work of true obedience.
8. **Answer:** No flesh can be justified by the Law because human beings are incapable of keeping the commandments perfectly. Even a sinful thought, such as a lie or a lustful look, makes a person a lawbreaker in the eyes of God.
9. **Answer:** The standard is absolute perfection and holiness. Jesus Christ stated in Matthew 5:48 that followers must be perfect just as their Father in heaven is perfect, which is a standard humans cannot reach through their own strength.
10. **Answer:** Righteousness is obtained through faith in Jesus Christ rather than through works. It is described as a "gift of righteousness" from God that is accounted to those who believe in Him, similar to how Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness.

Essay Format Questions

1. **The Role and Influence of Motherhood:** Reflecting on the sermon's introduction, discuss the attributes of a mother described in the text (such as selflessness and sacrifice). How does a mother's guidance help shape a child into the person God has called them to be?
2. **The "Closet of Prayer" and Spiritual Growth:** Analyze the importance of private communication with God. How does spending time in a "private setting" affect a believer's desires, motivations, and the manifestation of the Fruit of the Spirit in their daily life?
3. **Internal vs. External Righteousness:** Compare the "external nature" of the Pharisees' righteousness with the "internal righteousness" Jesus Christ demands. Why is it dangerous for a believer to have a great religious reputation among men if their heart is not right before God?
4. **The Failure of Human Tradition:** The sermon mentions that the Pharisees substituted their own traditions for the commandments of God. Discuss how redefining God's standards to make them easier to follow leads to "ritual religion" and spiritual ignorance.
5. **The Gift of Justification:** Using the references to Romans and Galatians provided in the text, explain the theological concept that salvation is a gift of grace. Why must a true Christian remain "dissatisfied" with their walk until they reach heaven, and how does this drive a desire for obedience?

Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Beatitudes	The eight blessings pronounced by Jesus Christ at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount.
Consecrate	To set oneself apart or make oneself holy for God's service.
Hypocrite	A person who puts on a "good show" or pretends to be righteous on the outside while remaining sinful or "rotten" on the inside.
Justified	To be declared righteous in the sight of God; the state required to enter heaven.
Omniscience	The state of having total and infinite knowledge, an attribute of God.
Omnipresence	The state of always being present everywhere, an attribute of God.

Pharisees	A prominent religious sect during the time of Jesus Christ known for strict, often superficial, adherence to traditional and written law.
Regeneration	The spiritual rebirth or "new birth" that occurs when a person is saved, leading to a transformed life.
Scribes	Ancient scholars and writers who were responsible for copying the Law and were considered experts in religious legal matters.
Tithe	The practice of giving one-tenth of one's income or produce to God.
Woe	A biblical term used to express a curse or a state of deep distress and judgment.

Greek Terminology

The following Greek word was used by the Apostle Paul and cited in the sermon to describe the consequences of preaching a false gospel.

Greek Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
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Anathema ^[^1]	<i>uh-NATH-uh-muh</i>	Something dedicated to evil; a person or thing that is accursed or consigned to damnation.
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[^1]: This term appears in Galatians 1:8, where Paul states that if anyone preaches a gospel other than the one already preached, they should be "accursed."