

## The Uncommon Kingdom: Law

Jonathan Cleveland

Matthew 5:17-20

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### Discussion and Reflection Guide

#### **Jesus addresses an objection and an attack that he knows is going to come**

Read and discuss Matthew 5:17-18 (NIV)

*<sup>17</sup> “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. <sup>18</sup> 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.*

\*What were some of the attacks or criticism that Jesus faced about the way it looked like he was keeping the commands?

\*What does Jesus seem to be saying in this passage about the law? What does it mean that he ‘fulfilled’ the law?

#### **True obedience embodies the spirit and purpose of the law from the inside out**

Simple, external compliance with commands is not always obedience.

\*What do you think makes true obedience different than external compliance?

\*Can you think of a time you tried to keep God’s command(s) just to be a ‘good person’?

\*What are some motives behind external obedience?

#### **Jesus’ perfect fulfillment of the law was an inner reality that expressed itself in his behavior**

Read and discuss Matthew 5:19-20 (NIV)

*<sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

\*What are some ways that we commonly ‘set aside’ the law – missing the point like the Pharisees did?

\*How has a connection been made for you about the inner reality of understanding a command? Can you name a shift in understanding the heart behind your actions?

#### **Grace is the undeserved favor of God for you and me**

The grace of Jesus is the only thing that changes the human heart.

\*How have you seen grace empower obedience in your own life or someone you’ve observed?

\*Why do you think our security with God inspires change rather than encouraging more sin?

#### **A heart of flesh is not transactional, it is relational**

Read and discuss Ezekiel 36:27-37 (NIV)

*<sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. <sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.*

\*How are you letting your new heart lead you to new life?

\*What is the Holy Spirit saying to you about real obedience?

\*Because of your security with God, what is the Spirit leading you to change about yourself?