

## THE BIG IDEA: The point of the Law was to point to the King

### The Take-Off

This morning's text is all about the Law and it got me thinking about dumb laws

Here are just a few from the good 'ol US of A:

- In Juneau, Alaska, flamingo owners are prohibited from bringing their flamingos into a barber shop
- In Arkansas, it's illegal to honk your car horn at a sandwich shop after 9pm
- In Arizona, it's illegal to refuse someone a glass of water
- In Tennessee, it's illegal to share you Netflix password with others
- In Indiana, it's against the law to catch a fish with your bare hands
- In South Dakota, it's illegal to fall asleep in a cheese factory
- Bear wrestling matches are illegal in Alabama
- In Rhode Island, it's against the law to race horses on the highway
- In Florida, it's illegal to sell your children

Sometimes it can feel like laws are over the top, right?

I heard of one lady who was told that she couldn't take a 12 oz bottle of Gatorade on a flight, so she poured it into four 3 oz bottles and that was okay

That's crazy, right? If the liquid in the 12 oz bottle was dangerous, it's still dangerous in 3 oz bottles.

Sometimes the letter of the law and the spirit of the law don't mesh well, and that encourages people to look for loopholes and if there are enough loopholes then there might as well not even be a law and...

Well, you get my point, right?

This morning is all about the point, or more specifically, not missing the point.

I'd say this person missed the point **[IMAGE / Highlighter]**

So did this restaurant **[IMAGE / Veggie Burger]**

And this dog 100% missed the point of his crate **[IMAGE / Dog Crate]**

Turn with me to **Matt. 5:17-20** and let's read 4 verses in which Jesus is talking about the Law and is basically saying, "Don't miss the point."

It's important to know that when Jesus referred to the Law and the Prophets He was talking about the entire OT There's more to it than that, but for our purposes today, it's safe to think OT when we talk about the Law (specifically, the Law refers to the first 5 books of the Bible)

We know - because hindsight is 20/20 - that the OT pointed to Jesus, or as the Big Idea says it: **the point of the Law was to point to the King**

But the people Jesus was talking to didn't have that hindsight, so Jesus was helping them see that HE was the point and that He didn't want them to miss Him

So let's talk about 2 ways they would miss the point and 1 way they wouldn't. (These are also true of us today)

### 1. 2 ways we miss the point

- a. Jesus basically warns us not to fall for two extreme views of the Law: minimizing it or maximizing it
- b. These are the **2 ways that we can miss the point**
- c. Minimizing the Law leads to a relationship with no rules or expectations
- d. This sounds good, but it's totally unrealistic.
- e. It's what some would refer to as "greasy grace"
- f. Paul was addressing this in **Romans 6:1-2** when he hypothetically asked if we should keep on sinning because we'll get more grace. His answer? "By no means!"
- g. Jesus wanted His listeners to know that He took the Law seriously and wasn't lowering the standard
- h. He said in verse 18 that the smallest details of the Law would remain until heaven and earth disappear (this would be like the dot of an "i" or the part that makes a "P" a "R")
- i. Maximizing the Law does the opposite - leads to a bunch of rules and expectations with no relationship
- j. This is what the Pharisees were guilty of
- k. They were so focused on each minute part of the Law that they missed the whole point of the Law
- l. They "missed the forest for the trees" - sometimes we get so focused on one thing that we miss what's going on around us

- m. One of my high school math teachers who would get so into the lesson that she would forget that she had overhead marker on her fingers. (This made math fun because she'd rub her forehead as she taught.)
- n. Let's play a quick game to see how maximizing something can make it hard to see something
- o. [\[IMAGES / Zoomed In\]](#)
- p. The Pharisees were zoomed in on the Law
  - They knew the 248 commands and 365 prohibitions - 613 in total
  - They were so committed to the keeping of the Law that they created the Mishnah
  - Mishnah was basically oral interpretations of the Law that would build a fence around the Law as added protection from breaking the Law
  - Here's a page from the first completed written text of the Mishnah
  - [\[IMAGE / Mishnah page\]](#)
  - The scope of the Mishnah over everyday life and business was extensive: these pages for instance contain detailed rules on the permitted mixing of seeds in agricultural plots
  - In other words, there could have been one command in the Law about mixing seeds, but it turned into everything on these pages about how to do it
  - They were zoomed in on the Law and so when Jesus said that we needed righteousness that exceeded the Pharisees to enter the Kingdom, you can imagine the gasp from the crowd.
- q. [John 5:39](#) / But Jesus said this about the Pharisees: "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!"
- r. We miss the point of the Law when we minimize it or maximize it

## 2. 1 way we won't miss the point

- a. But there is **1 way that we won't miss the point**: instead of minimizing or maximizing the Law, we need to accept that Jesus finalized the Law
- b. In other words, do what Jesus said in [John 5:40](#) - "Come to Me to receive life"
- c. Jesus looked at the people on the mountain and said, "All of the 613 commands that you have been striving to do were making a temporary way for you to be with the Father. But now I'm here, and I'm the Way."
- d. This was revolutionary for them and for us.
- e. He didn't minimize the need for the Law or maximize the practice of the Law - He finalized the requirements of the Law
- f. The righteousness that exceeds the Pharisees is the righteousness that only comes through Jesus
- g. The Pharisees practiced a law that could make us look righteous
- h. Jesus promoted a law that could actually make us righteous
- i. Jesus isn't advocating more work; He's advocating a deeper work.
- j. A righteous heart that leads to righteous actions.
- k. The Pharisees were content with appearing righteous, but Jesus was intent on us being righteous.
- l. [Romans 10:1-4](#) / it can't be earned; only received

### The Landing

Let me give you 1 practical takeaway as we land this one:

Don't ignore the OT / [2 Tim 3:16](#) / ALL Scripture is inspired and useful

This means that all of the Old Testament remains normative and relevant for Jesus' followers, but none of it can rightly be interpreted until one understands how it has been fulfilled in Christ.

A resource that can help with that is the Jesus-Centered Bible

It helps highlight the person of the Bible more than just the principles - it reveals how the Law points to the King  
Let's pray.