

All That Jesus Taught Bible Study - Part 45

by Zac Poonen

Jesus' commandments are not a burden, but a source of rest and freedom, and we should strive to obey them and live a life of compassion and love.

Duration: 26:01

Scripture: Luke 21:25

Topics: "Following Jesus", "Christian Freedom"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and following what Jesus taught, especially in times of turmoil and fear. It discusses the rest and compassion that Jesus offers, contrasting it with legalism and false interpretations of God's commandments. The message highlights the need to obey God's commandments without burden, seek total freedom from sin, and avoid judgmental legalism, focusing on compassion and righteousness.

Transcript

Today we continue our study in all that Jesus taught. And we've been looking through the Gospels. It's very important to know what Jesus taught because that's what he commanded us to do from his example and from his teaching and then to teach others what we have done ourselves first.

So we were looking at Matthew 11 verse 29 and 30 in our last study about the rest that we can have in our life. It's a great word that we need for the time in which we live. We're living in a time of tremendous turmoil in the world.

The things that are happening in the world can bring a lot of fear into our hearts. Jesus described it like this. In Luke chapter 21 he said there will be a lot of perplexity on earth, Luke 21 verse 25.

And men, verse 26, Luke 21, 26, fainting from fear in the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world. What a prophetic word of the times in which we live. The expectation of what is going to happen in the world.

A depression, financial recession, and calamity. And people are in perplexity and people are in fear. In such a time, what is the word we need? The Lord says come to me, I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me and you will find rest for your souls. And he goes on to say my yoke is not heavy like the yoke under the law. My yoke is easy, my burden is light.

It's one of the great things we have to demonstrate by our life. The Apostle John lived up to the age of 95 or beyond that. But around that age he wrote the first letter of John.

And one of the things he says in that first letter, which is remember a 95 year old man was probably filled with the spirit on the day of Pentecost when he was 30 years old. And now after 65 years of a spirit-filled life and of obeying God for so many years, he says his commandments are not a burden. 1 John 5 verse 3. He says I want to tell you fellas something.

I've been keeping God's commandments for 65 years and his yoke is easy, his burden is light. They are not a burden. Do you find any commandment of God a burden? Have you ever gone through Matthew 5, 6 and 7, the Sermon on the Mount? Do you feel some of them are so difficult, it's so difficult to live by God's standards? Many Christians say that.

I've had people come to my church in Bangalore and say, Brother Zak, your standards are too high. I say we're just preaching God's word. We never go beyond God's word.

If we go beyond God's word, we'd be legalists. We preach exactly the level of God's word. But we're not going to lower it to please anybody.

Because if we lower it, we will not be anymore the church that Jesus wants to build. It's total freedom from sin that we speak of. When people say this church has got too high a standard, it's like going to a hospital and saying, Well, I'm not going to get my family member admitted to this hospital because the standard of hygiene here is too high.

I'd like to go to a hospital which is a little dirtier. Does anybody say anything crazy like that? If the treatment is free, why would you go to a dirtier hospital? Are you against a hospital because the standard is too high? Or when you're admitting a child in school, you go to the principal and say, Your standard of education is too high in the school, so I better not admit my child here. Don't you want your children to get a good education? Or do you say, Your standard of discipline is too high.

I like my child to be a little undisciplined. Is that how you select a school? In the matters of health, hospitals, and education, schools, we always want the best. But in matters of the Christian faith, we're willing to take lower levels of spiritual hygiene, lower levels of spiritual education.

Why is that? Because we value health, we value education, but we don't value our spiritual life. That is the plain truth. And that's why they say, when it comes to spiritual things, I like to attend the same church my grandfather and great-grandfather always belonged to.

Really? Would you like to go to the same school that your great-grandfather attended? Would you put your child in the same hospital that your great-grandmother was admitted to when she was sick? Why do you go to a better hospital today? Why do you go to a better school today? It's because you value health, you value education, but you don't look for a better church. No. Because you don't care for spirituality.

You don't care for God. I mean, that's the plain truth. Somebody has probably not told you the plain truth to your face, but you're going to hear it today.

And we seek to specialize in speaking the whole truth, which is in God's Word. God's commands are not a burden. Every single command of Jesus Christ we're supposed to obey.

One of the prayers I prayed in my own life is, Lord, before I end my life and leave this earth, I want to obey every single commandment that you have given for Christians to obey. Not the ones you gave Israel, like killing lambs and paying tithes and all that, but everything you gave Christians to obey, to give cheerfully and to make inner sacrifices and to hide our sacrifices from men, etc. Every command that you gave to Christians, I want to obey.

Never to lust with my eyes and never to tell lies and never to be angry. I want to obey everything before I leave this earth. I don't want to leave this earth with all those commands unfulfilled in my life.

I want to encourage you to pray that little prayer. And I've also prayed, Lord, I want to claim every promise you've given for Christians on earth. Like if you get ten checks in the mail one day, you don't go and cash five of them in the bank.

You deposit all ten of them in the bank. Why do you deposit all ten? There are many promises in Scripture. They are like checks.

I want to encash all of them before I leave this earth. They are meant for me. Two prayers I would recommend that you pray.

Lord, help me to obey every commandment in the Bible before I leave this earth. Help me to claim every promise for Christians before I leave this earth. His commandments are not a burden.

His yoke is easy. His burden is light. And following on from there, you read in Matthew chapter 12, Jesus contrasting the rest that he had spoken of here in 11, 28, and 29 with the false rest that the Pharisees were trying to keep in their understanding of the Sabbath.

They didn't understand the real meaning of the Sabbath. And that's what you read of in the next 12 verses of chapter 12. Matthew chapter 12 and verse 1. At that time, Jesus went on the Sabbath.

There are two incidents spoken of here. One in verses 1 to 7 and the other in verses 8 onwards. Both are incidents that took place on a Sabbath day.

And this follows immediately after his saying, Come to me and I'll give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and you will find rest for your souls. In other words, you will find the fulfillment of the Old Testament Sabbath if you come to me.

You'll be able to stand on a sea of glass where you don't have a panic. You don't live in fear or anxiety or tension or bitterness or jealousy. There's no turmoil inside your heart but rest.

And then the Holy Spirit speaks about the false understanding of the Sabbath the Pharisees had. At that time, Jesus went on the Sabbath through the grain fields. And his disciples became hungry and began to pick the heads of grain and eat.

Now, you know, there was a law in the Old Testament that you were permitted to pick these things from another person's field. You couldn't take a basket and collect food from another person's field, but you could pick something to eat. That was a law.

God himself has said that so that if somebody is hungry and he's walking through somebody else's field, he can pluck fruit from there and whatever he wants and eat it, but he shouldn't come and pick baskets of it to go and sell it or take it home. But if he's hungry, right there he can eat it. God was trying to teach

people to be generous.

So that was perfectly lawful, permitted under the law. But the problem was they were doing it on the Sabbath day. And the Pharisees, they said, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath day.

You can't pick the heads of grain on a Sabbath day if you're hungry. And Jesus defended his disciples. He always defended his disciples and even sinners whenever legalists tried to attack them.

When the legalists wanted to stone a woman caught in adultery, Jesus quickly came to the side of the woman and said, well, he who is without sin, throw the first stone, go right ahead. And they all went away, beginning with the eldest, it says. They wouldn't dare to pick up a stone because if they had, Jesus would have revealed all their sins.

They knew that. So they got scared and they went away. So here we see the Pharisees, you know, trying to pick on Jesus and saying your disciples are doing something unlawful and Jesus strongly defends them.

Jesus always defends his people. His disciples were not perfect. And Jesus will defend us imperfect people against legalists.

He's always against legalists. Remember that. He would rather take the side of a sinner and try to save that sinner and be against the legalist who wants to condemn the sinner.

He said to them, well, he says, take your Bible. You read in your Bible how David, when he was hungry, you read that in 1 Samuel. He and his companions entered the house of God and they ate the consecrated bread.

You read that in 1 Samuel chapter 21 and verse 6. How David was hungry. This is before he became king. He was going around being chased by Saul.

And he came to, you know, whatever was the tabernacle those days. There was no temple. And the priest was there.

And he asked them, do you have any food here? And the priest said, well, the only food we have is what we keep inside the holy place, the consecrated bread, which is not lawful for non-Levite priests to eat. That was a law. God himself had given that law.

Only the Levites were permitted to eat what they called that consecrated bread put in the table in the most holy place, in the holy place. And only the priests were allowed to do that. And he ate it.

And God didn't kill him. And then he takes another example. He says, you know on the Sabbath, the priests go into the temple and do their service there? And they don't break the law? Don't they do any service there on the Sabbath day? So he takes these examples from the Old Testament and he says, listen, you fellas.

Something greater than the temple is here. It's me, the son of God. So if they could do that in an Old Testament temple without violating the Sabbath, then there's nothing wrong with my disciples doing that.

God did not make man after he made the Sabbath. It's not that he made the Sabbath on the sixth day, man on the seventh day, hey, we made a law. Now we've got to make man, somebody to obey that law.

It wasn't like that. It was man who was made on the sixth day and the Sabbath was made subsequently to bless man. It was a day of rest for him to fellowship with God.

And the Pharisees had made that into a rigid commandment that brought bondage to people. And so Jesus speaks to them. He says, if you had known the meaning of this commandment, that I desire compassion and not sacrifice, I desire compassion and not sacrifice, a quotation from Hosea chapter 6 verse 6, you would not have condemned the innocent.

See, this desire to condemn innocent people is there among a lot of Christians today. They look at someone, judge him, and condemn him. One of the most disobeyed commandments that Christians disobey today is this commandment in John chapter 7 and verse 24.

Jesus said, do not judge according to the appearance or the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment. He didn't say you can't judge. He said judge righteously, but not by just what you see on the outside.

So often Christians just look at someone and they've already passed a judgment. Hey, that person doesn't dress like me. That person wears ornaments, I don't wear it.

It's some external thing. He's wearing a dress. He's wearing a t-shirt when he comes to church.

He should be a long-sleeved shirt when he comes to church Sunday morning. You know, some stupid rule like that, which is not found anywhere in Scripture, but which they've made themselves. I mean, the only rule about dressing that you find in Scripture, which is not only for church on Sunday morning, but all the time, is for women to dress modestly 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

They must be modestly dressed, particularly when they're in public. They're modestly dressed. But other than that, there's no law of dressing.

But Christians make all types of rules. Religious legalists. And they judge others.

And those other people whom they judge may be ten times more spiritual than them in their private life. Exactly like here. And to such Christians, I would say what Jesus said.

Go and learn the meaning of I desire compassion. And not all these sacrifices. So, I believe there's a great need for this.

And stop condemning innocent people. For things which you have made a law. Which God has not made a law.

You know, you can take a law of God and make it much bigger than God made it. That's what these people were doing. The Sabbath was a law of God.

You should not work on the Sabbath. Why? Because God wanted man to have at least one day in seven in fellowship with him. That was the purpose of it.

But the Pharisees expanded that. They didn't bother about fellowship with God. If they had fellowship with God, they wouldn't be condemning the disciples.

It's obvious they didn't have that. They didn't understand the Sabbath. But they expanded it to all these silly rules about you can't do this and you can't do that.

You know, they had rules like there was a commandment in the law which said you shall not lift a burden on the Sabbath day. That means you should not go around carrying weights and transferring suitcases from here to there. They began to analyze that and began nitpicking and said, well, your sandals must be of so much weight, not more than this.

Your shoes must be of so much weight because if it's more than that weight, every time you walk, you're lifting a burden. Can you imagine a more stupid rule than that? And they would sit down and analyze, okay, we can't work on the Sabbath day and we can't even allow a Gentile to come and work for us on the Sabbath day. That's right.

You know, take the advantage of somebody else working for us and then they would sit and decide what if a hen laid an egg on the Sabbath day? Can we eat it or not? You see how stupid these people were and it's exactly like that you find so many Christian legalists today in some churches examining others with all types of silly rules when they themselves are committing much bigger crimes. Lack of compassion. They think sacrifice is what God's looking for primarily.

Compassion. I desire compassion and not sacrifice. This is what Jesus taught and we need to understand all that Jesus taught.

And then another example of what the Sabbath day, another instance of what happened on the Sabbath day. Jesus said because the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath, that's why I'm saying all this. I am the Lord of the Sabbath.

I'm the Lord of all the commandments. The person who gives the commandments is far greater than the commandments themselves. And departing from there, he went into a synagogue and then something else happened there.

There was a man there with a withered hand. To me this is a picture of Christians sitting today in many churches whose lives are withered by sin. Their sins are forgiven.

Born again Christians but perpetually defeated by sin. Perpetually lusting with their eyes, slaves to internet pornography, slaves to anger, slaves to an unforgiving spirit. Withered.

Exactly like this person. This person, only his hand was withered. These people, their whole soul and spirit is withered.

Which is much worse. It's much better to have a withered hand than a withered soul and spirit. And so this is a picture to me of many many born again Christians sitting in many churches.

Withered. And Jesus wants to come and heal them. And the religious leaders don't want that.

The religious leaders will not permit someone who preaches the message of total deliverance from sin to come and preach there. Because first of all it exposes those religious leaders themselves who are defeated. Imagine if a preacher gets up in a church and says, what can you teach other people if you still

shout at your wife? The pastor sitting there will feel condemned.

Because he shouts at his wife. He doesn't preach victory over that. So he doesn't want such a preacher to come to his church.

Let everybody in this church remain with their withered lives so long as they pay their tithes and I get my salary and I can live comfortably, it's okay. The rest is not important. We just keep on preaching forgiveness of sins.

That's the condition of many churches today. And so there was this man with a withered hand and they knew that Jesus would heal him and so they questioned him. Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath? They wanted him to say something so that they'd accuse him.

There are people sometimes who are sub-sharp minded Pharisees who want to find some fault in servants of God even today. Look for some fault so that they can accuse. The whole purpose is to accuse because such people, such Christians are in fellowship with Satan, the accuser of the brethren who accuses Christians day and night.

So he said to them, okay, let me ask you fellows a question. If one of your sheep falls into a pit on the Sabbath day, will you leave him there for 24 hours and say today is the Sabbath, I'm not supposed to do any work, I won't pull him out today, I'll wait till tomorrow, pull him out on Sunday? You know very well that you'd pull out that sheep immediately without bothering about whether it's breaking the Sabbath or not. Well, don't you think a man who's fallen into a pit like this is of more value than a sheep? Is it wrong to pull this man who's down in the pit with a withered hand to pull him up and make him healthy? It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day.

So, you see, we may not have a problem with the Sabbath because most of us have got nothing to do with it, but we can be nitpicking about other laws which we have made stricter than God made them. And we condemn people when they don't obey them. It's very easy to do that.

I'm not encouraging disobedience to small laws because Jesus said there are small laws. He said if you keep the least of these commandments you will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. That is in Matthew chapter 5 and verse 19.

But if you cancel even the least of these commandments you'll be called least, you won't go to hell, but you'll be called least in the kingdom. So there are commandments which are least and there are commandments which are great. Jesus himself makes it clear.

But if you ignore even the least you lose your position in heaven. So I'm not encouraging disobedience to a small commandment. I'm saying don't make that commandment broader and stricter than God's made it.

Leave it there, leave it where it is. I'll give you an example. There is a commandment in 1 Corinthians 11 that when a woman prays or prophesies she should veil her head.

That's a very clear commandment and the meaning for it and the explanation for it is also given there. It's a symbol of her submission to her husband or to man's authority in the church, etc. But people can expand that and say hey, she should wear it all the time even when they're not praying or prophesying.

That's ridiculous. Those are the Pharisees of today. I've met people like that.

And they ask me, does your wife veil her head 24 hours? I say no. She does it when she prays or prophesies. She does it in a church service.

When she sings praise to God she veils her head. They say but the Bible says we should pray always. You see how you can take another verse and I say what do you do? Do you veil your head when you're asleep or in bed? One person said yes, my wife does even then.

I said amazing. I said let me ask another question. Does she veil her head when she's having a shower or bathing? Shouldn't she be praying then if you're to pray always? No reply to that question.

See, this is how like Jesus silenced people. I've had the opportunity to silence these legalists as well. So we have to be very careful that we don't stretch God's commandment beyond what God says.

That's what we can learn from this passage. What Jesus said we must teach and preach completely. The important commandments, what we think are the least commandments but we're not to make them bigger and stricter than God made it.

And so he told the man stretch out your hand and the man stretched it out and he was restored. And imagine if you saw a man with a withered hand healed. You should be excited.

You should be shouting hallelujah. And everybody there should have been excited but the Pharisees went out and they counseled together against him how they might destroy him. What a word.

Because he had helped a man with a withered hand they want to destroy him. Don't you think they were inspired by the devil himself? Great Bible scholars can be inspired by the devil when they want to hurt others. Today they wanted to kill him physically.

Today a lot of great Bible scholars kill other servants of God with their tongue. The tongue is the weapon they use not daggers and spears. With the tongue, with their articles they hit out against people who are proclaiming total freedom from sin healing from the withered hand healing from a withered life.

And Jesus aware of all this went away from there. Jesus didn't hang around trying to prove that he was a brave person. The Bible says, Jesus said that when they persecute you in one city go to another.

Don't try to show your bravery there. If somebody wants to kill you, don't go there. He withdrew from there and went somewhere else because he knew what their intentions were.

There's a great verse in John chapter 7 which says that when Jesus knew that the people in Judea wanted to kill him, he did not go there. Why should he go there? He didn't walk in Judea because John 7 verse 1. But later on in the same chapter when his father told him to go he went. So we don't take unnecessary risks that's what we learned from Christ's life but we are willing to go if the Lord tells us to go to any place on earth.

He will protect us. But we don't take unnecessary risks to show how brave we are or to show our faith. We'll continue our study in the next episode.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/MLagbRKgwsY.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/all-that-jesus-taught-bible-study-part-45/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net