

# Avoiding the law?

Psalm 119:1-8

Matthew 5:17-20

# Old Testament vs New?



# The Law

We often think of The Law as separate from God

- 'The Law & The Prophets' = the Old Testament
  - The old agreement with God – based on complying with rules ('earning our place in heaven')
- The New Testament
  - A new agreement with God founded on His grace and infinite love
  - It feels like this replaces the Law

But Jesus says this is the wrong way to think about The Law (Matt 5:17)

# Matthew 5:17-20

**17** “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.

**18** ...until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law...

**20** ...unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Why does Jesus say this?

It's about who He is... it's about God's character

# God's character

'The Law and The Prophets' (the Torah) gives us a picture of God's character and how humanity compares

- "I will proclaim the name [character] of the LORD ... He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he." (Moses, Deut 32:4)

# The problem: human nature

Humans consistently break the law and behave in ways that God would not

- Psalm 119:5 'Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying your decrees!'
- Romans 7:21 'although I want to do good, evil is right there with me.'

God wants us to be in union with Him – to be 'the body of Christ' / the 'bride of Christ'

But God can't be united with us if our characters are not the same (the result would not be God)

# The solution: Jesus

The solution is Jesus – fulfilling the Law

John 14:19-21 – Jesus said

- “Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.
- Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.’

# How do we apply this?

Jesus – the fulfilment of the Law – summarised the law as

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind
- Love your neighbour as yourself

Paul wrote ‘whoever loves others has fulfilled the law (Rom 13:8)

Go in peace – to love and serve the Lord