

Living God's Way Today

Scripture Reading — Matthew 5:17-20

My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end. — Psalm 119:112

Very few drivers come to a complete stop at the stop sign near our house. Maybe they think the sign is only a suggestion.

Are God's laws merely suggestions? The psalmist treats God's law with the utmost seriousness. He declares, "My heart is set on keeping your decrees to the very end."

Jesus taught his listeners how serious God's law is. He explained that he did not come to abolish the law or any of God's commands; he came to *fulfill* them. And he said that not even the smallest letter (a reference to *yodh*, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet) or the least stroke of a pen would be eliminated from the law. Moreover, Jesus says there will be great rewards for keeping God's laws and great penalties for not keeping them.

The problem, though, is that none of us can keep God's law perfectly because—at heart—we are all in rebellion against God and his Word. What can we do?

We need the grace that only Jesus can provide through his death and resurrection. Once God has forgiven and redeemed us, we see his laws and words differently. The Spirit of God helps us to see them not as a source of condemnation but as a call to love both God and our neighbors. And by the Spirit's power we understand they are not a mere suggestion, and we follow them as a guide for thankful, obedient living.

Are we following God's way in the strength of the Spirit today?

Prayer

Give us understanding, Lord, so that in gratitude we may live for you. Amen.

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