

**Matthew 7:28-29** *When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.*

**This sermon comes at a time** when the scriptures were common, domesticated, condensed to a set of rules, ritual and regulations. They have been defined — i's dotted, t's crossed and discussed to the extinction of their purpose — their life — not much different to the message of this age really. He was not trying to convince people he just did what his own authority commanded.

**So Jesus begins with;** “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom Of Heaven.” and ends with the wise and foolish builders and the people were amazed because he's just shown how foolish the leaders of their day were.

**Jesus can see** that the law in its present state is incompatible with love so he has to advance it. **Law** holds us accountable to behaviour.

**Love** holds us accountable to each other.

**And in order for the rule of love** to act the rule of law must give way.

**Jesus is not dismissing the law,** although the teachers of the law would have perceived it that way. Jesus was replacing the old wineskin with a new wineskin for the new wine so that both are preserved revealing the reason for the law. Now law and love become complementary and we can freely move into the space where God becomes visible.

**Matthew 9:16-17** *“No one sews a patch of un-shrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse. Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.”*

| Matthew 5.  | Matthew 6.   | Matthew 7.   |
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| The beatitudes.<br>Salt and light.<br>Light of the world.<br>The law and the prophets.<br>Murder.<br>Adultery.<br>Divorce.<br>Oaths.<br>Eye for eye, tooth for tooth.<br>Love your enemies. | Giving to the needy.<br>How to pray.<br>The Lord's prayer.<br>How too fast.<br>Treasures in Heaven.<br>The eye of the body.<br>Serving God and money.<br>Do not worry. | Judging others.<br>Throwing pearls to pigs.<br><b>Asking, seeking and knocking.</b><br>Doing to others as you would have them do to you.<br>Narrow and broad gates.<br>Recognizing false prophets.<br>True and false disciples.<br>The foundations of faith. |

**The whole sermon instructs** us that the structure of discipleship is not without rule or law, it begins that way, and is quite necessary. But now he advances it so that it may lead us into a new and living way — it's just a container — both are preserved by making both new.

**By itself law causes people to live:**

**Proving** they are right. — **Protecting** their domain.

**Defending** their position — **Deflecting** opposition.

**Think what kind of religion** this breeds. Binary thinking, fundamentalism, judgments, right - wrong, in - out, good - bad, pure - impure and so on.

**So Jesus advances the law** to build a container so that it can accommodate wholehearted life — abundant life within God's grace, mercy and love whilst preserving both law and love. One lives inside the other - new wineskin becoming the vehicle for new wine.

***Ephesians 2:15-16** He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jew and Gentile by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death.*

**INCLUSION — Firstly we see inclusion**, where Christ is not making any distinction between nationality, colour, creed, social status or race. He casts his net wide and catches all kinds of fish. I can only imagine how the religious leaders were feeling as they heard his words.

**TRANSITION — Secondly we see transition beginning with structure**, a progression from what was said, the old wineskin, to "now I say", the new wineskin. Jesus teaches the reasons for the law, that he has not come to abolish the law but to present us with a law that is capable of containing this new way of life and living. The new law and the new covenant are preserved.

**FOUNDATION — Thirdly we see foundation**, We hear Jesus using words like, *"Those who hear my words and put them into practice..."* showing us there is a new legal code and a new living way to walk in — the two significant hallmarks of a follower of Christ.

**Jesus teaches that** prior to this time God's love was expressed through law, but now God's law is expressed through love. We no longer need constantly search *for* God's will and ways, now we can look *from* God's will and *from* God's ways in everyday life.

**Emanuel** — God is with us and we with Him.  
**Love** does its work in us daily.

## **COMMUNION...**

**Be confident in Christ** — have a resolute heart, a mind at rest with as much unknowing as knowing - that tension between certainty and faith. What you have learned in the sermon on the mount is God's inclusive heart transforming you into His nature and laying a foundation for life and living.

**You have become a citizen of God's Kingdom** — an irresistible presence of His humanity to those who are bereft of hope, to those who are too arrogant, too frightened or too lost to admit they need Him and to those who oppose Him.

**Let these symbols**, representing the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus, take a hold of your life for the sake of living, in doing so His life in you will spread to others.

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