

**March 12th, 2023 Sermon: Continue, Cancel, Complete**

## MEDITATE

The next section of the Sermon on the Mount follows a structure of, “You have heard it said,” and “Truly, I say to you.” **Why did Jesus ask these questions?**

**Have you ever played the telephone game?** Just like the common folks during the medieval times, the Jews did not speak Hebrew language. They relied on the religious leaders to explain the Law and Prophets for them.

**Read Matthew 5:17-20.**

## EQUIP

The religious leaders wanted Jesus to affirm their own version of religiosity. But Jesus disrupted and questioned their traditions. That's why they didn't like him.

Everyone would love Jesus if he always agreed with them. And that's what everyone does: pretend that Jesus is just like them, and thinks just like them. It's why we pray to only fulfill our own desires, goals, or dreams. It's why we see other people as “less-than-righteous.” It's why many people are not changed by Jesus. They change Jesus to look like themselves.

Jesus does not continue the religious assumptions of people. He disrupts and questions them. He calls out how people just follow the mob mentality.

**Does Jesus ever disagree with you? Does the Holy Spirit ever convict you? Do you ever recognize how different the Father is from you?** If not, then you have to question if you really know God at all. You have to question whether or not you are just talking to yourself.

## CULTIVATE

So if the Pharisees only cared about their religiosity, did Jesus cancel religion altogether? No. You can't just say you are “spiritual but not religious,” because real spirituality takes religious discipline. Spirituality is very physical.

We often cancel rules just because they are inconvenient for us. We cancel people because they disagree with us. We cancel ideas because they make us uncomfortable. And we cancel responsibilities to live a life free of accountability or boundaries.

Yes, Jesus didn't continue the Law and Prophets. But Jesus didn't cancel the Law and Prophets either. Jesus completed the Law and Prophets through right relationship with God and others. This is what Paul describes as the "spirit of the Law."

**Read Galatians 5:13-14. Read John 5:39-40.**

Jesus doesn't only deconstruct. Jesus redeems. Jesus fights cynicism just as much as he fights injustice. Jesus questioned the religious traditions, but then he still called people to "sin no more."

**Why do you do the dishes? Is it because doing the dishes earns your right to be a father, mother, or child? If you are a father, mother, or child, does that mean you can just stop doing the dishes?**

God sets you free. **But what do you do with that freedom? What should you do with that freedom? What spiritual disciplines are you committed to? What relationships and commitments form your life today?**