

## **Becoming like Jesus in righteousness** (Based on Chapter 8 of *Costly Grace*)

### **The Big Idea**

To teach us that freedom from perfection does not mean freedom from righteous living.

### **Biblical Foundation**

*Do not think that I have come to do away with the Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. I have not come to do away with them, but to make their teachings come true. Remember that as long as heaven and earth last, not the least point nor the smallest detail of the Law will be done away with—not until the end of all things ....* Matthew 5:17-20 (TEV)

Jesus upholds the law, rather than abolishing it. But in doing this, he establishes that we “must be obedient to the whole Law or else be found disobedient to the whole of the Law.” There is no middle ground. To echo the apostles, “How can anyone possibly do this? This is humanly impossible!”

This is why Paul called the law *a school of Christ*, where we learn that we can’t meet God’s standards on our own and so we must rely on the grace of God.

How does this change the way you look at the law? Explain whether you believe legalism reflects great faith or little faith. Which do you think will press you into greater maturity: focusing on following the law or focusing on following Jesus?

### **Grace and obedience are inseparable**

Bonhoeffer says, “The law is not itself God, nor is God the law. It was the error of Israel to put the law in God’s place, to make the law their God and their God a law.” On the other hand, he says the temptation of the disciples was to imagine that the law could be separated from God. He says, in both cases, we become independent from God. What do you think about this perspective?

### **The Cost of Discipleship**

Our righteousness flows from the life of Jesus into us. We must obediently trust this is true and stop trying harder to be holy. By trusting more we become obedient to the commands of Jesus. Why does trusting Jesus lead to holy living more so than trying harder to live holy?

### **Kingdom Thinking:**

- I am wholly righteous because the holy righteous One lives in me.
- I live holy because I trust Jesus and obey his commands.
- I will keep myself from sin, but if I stumble, I trust Jesus will forgive me.
- I will never find peace or joy in unholy, unrighteous behaviors.
- Jesus Christ is my standard for holiness and righteousness; I do not compare contrast myself to others.