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GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Weightier Matters

Use with the full teaching and a Bible. Watch or read first, complete the questions, then discuss and apply. For family or homeschool use, an adult may choose a shorter section and accept spoken answers.

The summary is a reading aid. Test the teaching's explanations against the cited passages. Keep the answer key and facilitator notes separate when distributing learner pages.

[Open the teaching](#)

Teaching summary

This teaching examines “weightier matters” and applies the concept to cases where two commands of YHWH appear to be at odds. Matthew 23:23 names justice, mercy, and faithfulness as weightier matters of the law. The Greek *barutera* conveys greater importance in this context. Yeshua did not dismiss tithing; he said the weightier matters should be practiced without neglecting the others. The teaching also notes that the temple and Levitical service existed in his day. It distinguishes that prescribed tithing from what can be carried out today without those conditions.

The teaching explains justice, from the Greek *krisin*, as making a right judgment, with Torah supplying the standard. Psalm 119 and 1 John 5:3 connect walking in YHWH's ways, keeping his commandments, and loving him. Mercy is expressed through love for one's neighbor, including refusing vengeance and grudges, loving as Messiah loved, and being kind, forgiving, sympathetic, and humble. Faithfulness, from *pistis*, is connected with faith, belief, and conviction. The teaching describes faith as believing, committing, and trusting in YHWH and his word.

These ideas are then connected with the greatest commandments in Matthew 22:36-40. The greatest commandment is to love God, and the second is to love one's neighbor as oneself. The teaching summarizes the weightier matters as making right decisions according to the Torah, which is connected with loving God; loving our neighbors; and having faith in the Word. These principles become especially important in passages where one command seems to conflict with another.

The teaching uses examples from Matthew 12 and Luke 14 to explain its application of weightier matters. It understands David's eating the bread of the Presence as a case in which preserving human life takes priority over reserving the bread for priests. It understands the priests' required Sabbath service as obedience to their temple responsibilities, for which Yeshua calls them guiltless. Yeshua also describes rescuing an animal and healing on the Sabbath, affirming that it is lawful to do good. These examples show mercy and faithful obedience working together; they do not portray Yeshua as authorizing sin.

The teaching describes the “spirit of the law” as the intent or reason behind a commandment. In the apparent-conflict cases it considers, the purposes of the commands are examined through love for YHWH, love for one's neighbor, and faith. This is not permission to ignore Torah or redefine sin by personal preference. The teaching limits this conflict-resolution application to situations in which two actual commands of YHWH appear to be at odds. Matthew 23:23 also warns more broadly against neglecting justice, mercy, and faithfulness.

Finally, the teaching asks whether all sins have identical consequences. It contrasts different Torah penalties and cites Mark 3:28-29 concerning blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Its restitution example needs a qualification: returning property plus one-fifth belongs to the circumstances in Leviticus 6:1-5; Exodus 22 gives other restitution amounts for other theft cases. The point is that consequences differ, not that private individuals may administer biblical civil penalties. The teaching closes with Psalm 1's call to meditate on YHWH's law day and night and emphasizes that loving YHWH and loving one's neighbor work together.

Summary points

- In Matthew 23:23, "weightier" refers to matters of greater importance rather than literal weight.
- Yeshua identified justice, mercy, and faithfulness as weightier than the tithing of mint, dill, and cumin, while still saying the tithe should not be neglected.
- The Torah provides the standard for making right judgments about what is right and wrong.
- Loving YHWH is connected with walking in his ways and keeping his commandments.
- Mercy is expressed through compassion and love for our neighbors, including forgiveness, kindness, and refusing vengeance or grudges.
- Faith involves believing, committing, and trusting in YHWH and his word.
- The weightier matters are summarized as loving God, loving our neighbors, and having faith in the Word.
- Yeshua's examples involving David, the priests, healing, and rescuing an animal show how a more important command can govern when two Torah commands appear to conflict.
- The spirit of the law is the intent or reason behind a commandment and helps reveal the weightier matter when commands appear to oppose one another.
- Weightier matters do not redefine sin. The teaching applies them to apparent conflicts between commands, while Torah supplies the standard and mercy remains part of faithful obedience.

Fill in the blank

Use the teaching and the cited Bible passages. Equivalent wording is welcome when it expresses the same meaning.

Basic

1. In Matthew 23:23, Yeshua identifies justice, mercy, and _____ as weightier matters of the law.
2. The teaching says the _____ tells us what is right and what is wrong.
3. According to Matthew 22, the greatest commandment is to love _____.
4. The second greatest commandment is to love your _____ as yourself.
5. The teaching defines the spirit of the law as the _____ behind the law, or the reason the law is given.
6. The teaching's conflict-resolution application concerns two _____ of YHWH that appear to be at odds.

Challenging

1. The Greek word used for "weightier" in Matthew 23:23 is _____.
2. The Greek word used for "justice" in Matthew 23:23 is _____.
3. The Greek word pistis can mean faith or belief, a _____ in something.
4. Mark 3:28-29 identifies blasphemy against the _____ as an eternal sin that never has forgiveness.
5. In the restitution case described in Leviticus 6:1-5, the offender returns the property and adds _____ percent of its value.
6. Psalm 1 says the man who delights in YHWH's law meditates on it day and _____.

Group discussion

Discuss with respect, support answers from the passages, and allow time to think. Use the lines for brief notes or a notebook for longer responses.

1. How does Matthew 23:23 show that one command can be more important without making the other command unimportant?

2. How do justice, mercy, and faithfulness connect with loving God, loving our neighbors, and having faith in the Word?

3. Why must the Torah, rather than personal preference, determine what is right, wrong, and sinful?

4. What common pattern appears in the examples of David, the priests, healing, and rescuing an animal on the Sabbath?

5. What does the teaching mean by the "spirit of the law," and why does it matter when two commands appear to conflict?

6. Why does the teaching limit its conflict-resolution application to apparent conflicts between actual commands? How does Matthew 23:23 also call believers to practice justice, mercy, and faithfulness in ordinary obedience?

Answer key

For the leader or parent. Answers follow the teaching; references help you check the wording and context. Accept equivalent wording where appropriate.

Basic

1. faithfulness

Matthew 23:23

2. Torah

Psalms 119:1-4

3. God

Matthew 22:36-40

4. neighbor

Matthew 22:39

5. intent

Teaching section “Applying the Weightier Matters”

6. commands

Teaching closing qualification following Psalm 1

Challenging

1. barutera

Matthew 23:23

2. krisin

Matthew 23:23

3. conviction

Matthew 23:23

4. Holy Spirit

Mark 3:28-29

5. 20

Leviticus 6:1-5; contrast Exodus 22:1-9

6. night

Psalms 1:1-2

Facilitator notes

These are suggested directions for discussion, not a required script or a test of identical wording. Invite participants to explain the passage and consider a faithful practical response.

1. Yeshua calls justice, mercy, and faithfulness weightier while still saying not to neglect the other duties. Greater importance therefore does not mean the lesser duty is worthless. The source also preserves the temple and priesthood conditions attached to its tithing example.

Matthew 23:23

2. Justice seeks right judgment according to YHWH's instruction; mercy expresses love for one's neighbor; faithfulness includes trust and commitment to YHWH. The teaching connects these with the greatest commandments and warns that loving YHWH and neighbor must work together.

Matthew 22:36-40; 1 John 5:3; Leviticus 19:18

3. YHWH's instruction provides the standard, so personal convenience cannot redefine sin or invent a competing command. A genuine apparent conflict must be examined from Scripture, with attention to who the command addresses and its actual conditions.

Psalms 119:1-4; Matthew 23:23

4. The teaching sees duties of mercy, life, and temple service guiding faithful action in apparent conflicts. Yeshua calls the priests guiltless and doing good lawful. The pattern supports rightly applying Torah, including compassion, rather than permission to sin.

Matthew 12:1-12; Luke 14:2-5

5. The spirit of a command is its purpose or intent. The teaching considers that purpose through love for YHWH, love for the neighbor, and faith when duties seem to conflict. That inquiry must remain grounded in actual commands, not convenient exceptions.

Matthew 12:7,12; Matthew 22:36-40

6. The teaching's limit prevents personal preferences from being promoted into exceptions to Torah. Yet Matthew 23:23 also condemns neglecting justice, mercy, and faithfulness in ordinary practice. These priorities belong throughout obedient life, not only when two duties appear to conflict.

Matthew 23:23

Put it into practice

Choose one response to the passages you studied. What will you do, and when will you revisit it? Share only what you are comfortable sharing.
