



# MOUNTAIN STREAM NEWS

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## TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR



*Matthew 5:20  
"For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."*

We humans tend to vacillate between complete lawlessness or stifling legalism. We establish external standards that often look good to others, but have no true impact on the inside. In Jesus' day the religious experts were adept at interpreting God's law in the strictest ways possible and insisting that people follow them. Of course, nobody could live up to their standards – not even the Pharisees and scribes (Matthew 24:1-4) even though that

did not prevent them walking around sneeringly condemning everyone. People felt oppressed and harassed.

Enter Jesus with a glorious gospel of blessedness for the oppressed and pure in heart. People gravitated towards what some thought was an abrogation of the law. They could live as they pleased, they assumed. Jesus quickly corrected that error by pointing out that his purpose was not to abolish the law, but to fulfil it.

People needed a righteousness that was more than skin deep. True righteousness begins in a heart that is yielded to Christ and dependent upon him. As that heart overflows with the transforming, nurturing presence of God, the actions and behaviors begin to change on the outside. It is no slavish adherence to a code of conduct. It is a life lived

in the perpetual presence of God that inevitably radiates the glory of God just like Moses' face shone when he came down from his mountain rendezvous with God.

May God fill us with himself so that we can live lives suffused with the righteousness from heaven. May we spend time in God's presence till our hearts sing with celestial harmony. And then may our actions fall into sync with the harmony of our hearts. May all around us catch a hint of the sweet melody of heaven in the righteous standards that joyfully mark our lives.

God bless you,  
Pastor James

## BEHOLD, GOD IS DOING A NEW THING!



## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK

<p><b>CORPORATE PRAYER</b> TUE @ 7 PM</p> <p><b>December 29</b></p> <p>Join us via Zoom video Please contact Pastor James for log on information at rcantio@gmail.com</p>	<p><b>MONTHLY EVENING SERVICE</b> EVERY 3RD SUN @ 6 PM</p> <p><b>January 17</b></p> <p>Please contact us by phone (570 856 3310) or email (mountainstreamchurch@gmail.com or rcantio@gmail.com) for login information.</p>	<p><b>WORSHIP SERVICE</b> SUN @ 11 AM</p> <p><b>January 3</b></p> <p>In-person service and livestream. Livestreaming only on Facebook and our church's website.</p>
<p><b>QUICK TIPS</b></p> <p><b>Two ways to give your offering.</b> Traditional with a check by mail or through our secured website online giving is now possible. Please remember to hit "SAVE" after you give if you did not set up an account so the church can have a record of who gave for tax purposes. Thank you!</p>	<p><b>YOUTH GROUP</b> FRI @ 6:45 PM</p> <p>Meeting is <b>CANCELED</b> on Jan 1 due to New Year's holiday. Next meeting is on <b>January 8.</b></p> <p>Youth meetings are in-person at church.</p>	<p><b>VIRTUAL KIDZONE</b> SUN @ 4 PM</p> <p><b>January 3</b></p> <p>Kidzone is available every Sunday. Contact Candice at candicebrich@gmail.com for log on information.</p>

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Celebrate God's faithfulness to us at our **Virtual New Year's Eve service** Dec 31st @ 10:30 pm. Contact Pastor James for Zoom login info.
- No Youth Group Meeting this Friday.
- We are excited to have you at our in-person worship at 11 am on Sundays. Please call ahead to 570 856 3310 or email us at mountainstreamchurch@gmail.com to let us know you are coming.
- We pray 2021 will see you advancing in the Lord and experiencing His fullness in your life. God bless you.
- Church Annual Business Meeting will be on January 16.
- Please see our webpage for detailed information on in-person gatherings.