

Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

Salt of the Earth, Light of the World

 In these next four verses, Jesus provides short parables (or allegories) to encourage people to exercise their faith. These parables used every day imagery known to all throughout history. Two millennia ago, refrigeration was unknown; the only way to preserve meat, for example, was to liberally coat it with salt or to immerse it in a salt-brine; if the salt goes bad (contaminated), it cannot be used as a preservative.

In John 8:12 “Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world’”. Jesus wants His gift of eternal life proclaimed widely; He does not want His “light” hidden. Faith is like a muscle that will only grow stronger when exercised. Exercise strengthens; no exercise weakens resulting in atrophy.

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

Q1. *You are the salt of the earth*: Before refrigeration, what was used to preserve meat?

 S T

Q2. *You are the salt of the earth*: Before refrigeration, what happened to unpreserved meat?

MEAT R T T D .

Q3. *You are the salt of the earth*: If we applied Jesus’ metaphor (or symbol or parable) to our spiritual lives, what might “rot” represent?

 E L OR
 I M M R L T OR
 G D L S S N S

Q4. *You are the salt of the earth*: Are we, who believe, to be ‘preservatives’ in our churches, in our world, to influence Godly, faithful behavior in others? Thoughts?

Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

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Q8. **You are the light of the world:** ① Why would Jesus declare that Believers “are the light of the world”? ② How are you a “light”?

①

②

Q9. **You are the light of the world:** If a Believer confesses to you, “I believe, but I am such an imperfect sinner. How can I ever be a ‘light’?” What might be a good encouraging response?

Hebrews 10:14 [The Message (MSG)]

It was a perfect sacrifice by a perfect person to perfect some very imperfect people.

John 1:4-5 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

⁴ In him [Jesus] was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Q10. **You are the light of the world:** ① Does Jesus want us to be a ‘spotlight’? Or a ‘nightlight’? Or a ‘light’ on a dimmer switch with Jesus’ finger on the control? ② If you answered ‘dimmer switch controlled by Jesus’, how do you know when to start an action?

① Spotlight? Nightlight? Dimmer-controlled light? (Why did you circle that answer?)

②



Split Rock Lighthouse, Minnesota, Lake Superior

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Lesson 6: Matthew 5:13-20

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

Q11. ***Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl:*** What happens to a candle flame when the candle is placed under a bowl?

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Q12. ***Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl:*** What happens to a person's musculature (muscles) if they lay in a bed day-after-day, week-after-week?

Strengthened? Weakened? Built-up? Atrophies? Doesn't change? Thoughts?

.....

Q13. ***Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl:*** What happens to a Believer's faith if his or her faith is not exercised daily?

Strengthened? Weakened? Built-up? Atrophies? Doesn't change? Thoughts?

.....

James 2:17-19 [NIV-1984]

¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. ¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." ¹⁹ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder.

¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Q14. ***Let your light shine before men:*** In what ways do you "let your light shine"? (If you are in a discussion group, other students might profit from your examples. If you are in an independent study (by yourself), then in what ways do others see your faith?)

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 In the next chapter (Matthew 6:1) Jesus teaches that we are to "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before [people]". So, does 6:1 contradict 5:16? No. In verses 5:14-16 (↑), Jesus teaches that our example – our light – in this world entices others to Him as they see our faith and then seek for themselves the assurance we have in the gift of salvation through Christ Jesus. In verse 5:16 "good deeds" are inextricably linked to "praise [of our] Father in Heaven". Jesus is asking us to check our motives at the door: ① are our "good deeds" serving our self-indulgent desire to be praised, or ② are our motives pure – to ourselves and others – as we obediently serve our Lord Jesus?

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Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus Fulfills Scripture

¹⁷ "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Q15. *The Law or the Prophets*: When Jesus references “the Law or the Prophets”, what exactly is he citing?

<u>O</u> <u> </u> <u>D</u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u>T</u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u>T</u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u>M</u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u>T</u> which includes the	
<u>T</u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u>H</u> or	The first 5 books of the O...T include Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. T...H is the Hebrew word for these 5 books, and can also refer to the entire body of traditional oral and written Jewish teaching. P...H is Greek for these same 5 books.
<u>P</u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u>T</u> <u> </u> <u>T</u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u>H</u>	

Matthew 7:12 [NIV-1984]

So, in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

John 1:45 [NIV-1984]

Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Romans 3:21 [NIV-1984]

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

 While the Jewish people would use the word Torah to reference either the first 5 books of the Holy Bible or the body of traditional written and oral Jewish teachings, the Lord Jesus specified “the Law or the Prophets”.

Since Scripture declares that Jesus is “the Word” ([John 1:1-2, 14, 17](#)) and “Scripture is God-breathed” ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)), it is this commentator’s belief that the pre-incarnate Jesus through various human writers caused the entirety of the Old Testament to be written, as well as that of the New Testament. Jesus is the author of life.

While Jesus did not dictate the books of the Bible word-for-word; He ‘dictated’ concepts/visions/dreams and allowed real-life events to unfold, which His human authors then transcribed and committed to parchment using their personal writing patterns and word choices. The Holy Spirit, when needed, helped to augment the authors’ memories as they wrote. Some authors were historians in that they recorded events (e.g., 1st and 2nd Kings); some were granted dreams that they then described the best they could using words and concepts they and their contemporaries understood; examples include the ‘dreams’ the prophet Daniel recorded in his book, the ‘dream’ about the ‘Valley of the Bones’ ([Ezekiel 37:1 & 2-14](#)), as well as the ‘dream’ the Apostle John recorded in Revelation.

Jesus did not consider Jewish traditions or man-made rules to be part of Scripture. This was implied when Jesus excoriated the “teachers of the law and the Pharisees” in [Matthew 23](#) (the seven ‘woes’). And then the Apostle Paul clearly emphasized this principle, when in his letter (epistle) to the Colossians he wrote, “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.” ([Colossians 2:8](#)). ([Hebrews 4:12](#) references the power of the ‘Word of God’: “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and

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spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”)

When Jesus refuted Satan’s temptations ([Matthew 4](#)), Jesus did not rely on human traditions or understanding; He rebuked Satan with direct quotations from Deuteronomy. Jesus is Lord! Jesus is the Word! Jesus is the author of life!



“As He gained fame through healing miracles and compelling teaching, some of Jesus' critics claimed He was teaching people to ignore the law of Moses ([Matthew 12:2](#)). Hostile religious leaders began to falsely say He was teaching a new or different law from what God gave to the nation of Israel ([Matthew 12:2](#)). Jesus was eventually accused by the Jewish religious leaders of blasphemy, primarily for His claim to be the Son of God ([Matthew 26:63–65](#); [John 8:58–59](#)).

“Jesus counters the lie that He is calling for the law of Moses to be "abolished." He tells all those who are listening His intent is not to discard the law or the Prophets. The Jewish law of Moses consisted of the first five books of the Bible, known as the Pentateuch. ‘The Prophets’ include most of the rest of what Christians now call the Old Testament, especially books by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets sent by God to deliver His messages to Israel.

“The book of Hebrews explains how God always intended the old covenant to lead to a new covenant ([Hebrews 8:6–8](#)). That transition is not to eradicate what God has spoken, but to complete its intended purpose. As the Son of God, the God who gave the law to Moses and gave the prophecies to the prophets, Jesus would have no desire to wipe out those messages. Instead, Jesus declares that He has come "to fulfill" the law and the Prophets.” [© Copyright 2002-2025 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/5/Matthew-5-17.html>, last-accessed: 01/20/2026.]

Q16. ***The Law or the Prophets***: If you answered the previous question that “the Law or the Prophets” refers to the Old Testament (including the Ten Commandments, Levitical laws, the books of the major and minor prophets, etc.), are there any Old Testament passages that prophesy to the coming Messiah?

Isaiah 7:14 [NIV-1984]

Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6-7 [NIV-1984]

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Daniel 7:13-14 [NIV-1984]

¹³ "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Daniel 9:25-26 [NIV-1984]

²⁵ "Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One [Messiah], the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. ²⁶ After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed

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Day 5

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¹⁹ Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Q21. *Whoever practices . . . these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven:* Are we, who believe, to earn our way into Heaven by our obedience and goodness?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

James 3:26 [NIV-1984]

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

 Scripture points to people accepting Christ Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Once God examines their motive and desire for seeking the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit is given to indwell a Believer as a guarantee of eternal life to come ([Ephesians 1:13-14](#)). This is a promise from God that God will not cancel, unless the person later repudiates his or her profession of faith by blaspheming the Holy Spirit ([Matthew 12:31-32](#); also see commentary following verse 11 ↑ in the previous StudySheet/lesson).

Over time, the new Believer will grow in his or her faith by performing acts of obedience, by praying, by studying God's Word. The Believer's faith is demonstrated by his or her actions. To paraphrase [James 2:17, 26](#): 'faith is proved over-and-over by the deeds that we do'. We are not to rest on our laurels. Each and every day we are to be God's hands, feet, and voice to preach, teach, and outreach in this fallen world.

Q22. *Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same:* Did Jesus provide any other warning about teaching others that the Commandments were irrelevant?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Matthew 18:6 [NIV-1984]

But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

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Q23. *Teaches these commands:* Are there any Biblical warnings for those who teach a perverted Gospel?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

James 3:1 [NIV-1984]

Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

Q24. *Teaches these commands:* Does this mean that we should never teach the Gospel for fear of perverting Scripture?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Proverbs 22:6 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Q25. *Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments:* All of us are human. All of us are sinners, which means that everyone of us have broken at least one commandment.

① Does seeking forgiveness and repentance apply to us? ② Or are we hopelessly condemned?

① Forgiveness/Repentance? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

② Hopelessly condemned? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q26. *Teaches these commands:* Why did Jesus allow Himself to be killed in such a horrendous manner — on a cross?

Romans 8:1 [New American Standard Bible (NASB)]

Therefore, there is now no condemnation at all for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1-14 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty. ²I am not judged guilty because in Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made me free. It made me free from the law that brings sin and death. ³The law was without power, because the law was made weak by our sinful selves. But God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son to earth with the same human life that others use for sin. He sent his Son to be an offering to pay for sin. So, God used a human life to destroy sin. ⁴He did this so that we could be right as the law said we must be. Now we do not live following our sinful selves, but we live following the Spirit.

⁵Those who live following their sinful selves think only about things that their sinful selves want.

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But those who live following the Spirit are thinking about the things that the Spirit wants them to do. ⁶ If a person's thinking is controlled by his sinful self, then there is death. But if his thinking is controlled by the Spirit, then there is life and peace. ⁷ This is true because if a person's thinking is controlled by his sinful self, then he is against God. He refuses to obey God's law. And really, he is not able to obey God's law. ⁸ Those people who are ruled by their sinful selves cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not ruled by your sinful selves. You are ruled by the Spirit, if that Spirit of God really lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, then he does not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ Your body will always be dead because of sin. But if Christ is in you, then the Spirit gives you life, because Christ made you right with God. ¹¹ God raised Jesus from death. And if God's Spirit is living in you, then he will also give life to your bodies that die. God is the One who raised Christ from death. And he will give life through his Spirit that lives in you.

¹² So, my brothers, we must not be ruled by our sinful selves. We must not live the way our sinful selves want. ¹³ If you use your lives to do the wrong things your sinful selves want, then you will die spiritually. But if you use the Spirit's help to stop doing the wrong things you do with your body, then you will have true life.

¹⁴ The true children of God are those who let God's Spirit lead them.

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²⁰ For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses [surpass: be greater than] that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Q27. How would you restate verse 20 in simpler language?

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Q28. ***Righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law:*** Do you think Jewish society ① held “the Pharisees and the teachers of the law” in high esteem? ② Were “the Pharisees and the teachers of the law” considered role models for Jewish society?

① Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

.....

② Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

.....

 “Scribes [*teachers of the law*] were professional experts on the Scriptures. The Pharisees were a sect famous for their extremely careful keeping of the law of Moses. They were so careful, in fact, that they added layers of detail, rules, and regulations on top of the law so they'd never come close to breaking it. Pharisees were extraordinarily strict

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with their students and with the common synagogue-goers about what it took to follow the law in order to be righteous.

“Jesus is making two distinct points here. Matthew has already shown that the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees is false. John the Baptist called them out as a ‘[brood of vipers](#)’ in need of a repentance that will actually “bear fruit” instead of just looking good to other people ([Matthew 3:7–8](#)). Jesus, too, will clash with the Pharisees over the way they work so hard on outward appearances while sin decays their hearts. As Jesus will emphasize in the rest of this sermon, God cares far more about what is in a person's heart than how other people perceive them. God values true purity motivated by true love more than technical rule-keeping motivated by spiritual pride. So true ‘righteousness’ is something better than the rotten version paraded by religious hypocrites.” [© Copyright 2002-2025 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/5/Matthew-5-20.html>, last-accessed: 01/28/2026.]

Q29. ***Your righteousness [must surpass] that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law:*** Based on Jesus’ declaration, are “the Pharisees and the teachers of the law . . . enter[ing] the kingdom of heaven”?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q30. ***Righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law:*** In the general opinion of the “Pharisees and the teachers of the law”, what made them righteous?

Romans 3:22-24 [NIV-1984]

²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Q31. ***Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees . . . you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven:*** If the righteous “Pharisees and the teachers of the law” had trouble “[entering] the Kingdom of Heaven” and sinner that I am, how can I ever hope to “enter the Kingdom of Heaven”? How do you answer this – a seeker’s question?

John 14:6 [NIV-1984]

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Mark 16:16 [The Message (MSG)]

[Jesus said,] Whoever believes and is baptized is saved; whoever refuses to believe is damned.

Romans 10:8-10 [NIV-1984]

⁸ But what does it say? 'The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart', that is, the word

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of faith we are proclaiming: ⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

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