

**Matthew 5:13-16**

“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 underfoot.

<sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>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. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

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**MONDAY: I CORINTHIANS 10:1-11—PLACING OURSELVES IN THE BIG MOVIE**

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In this passage, Paul is telling the believers in Corinth not to commit idolatry. To make his point, Paul recounts the story of Israel in the wilderness in the book of Exodus.

- Why doesn't Paul just say, “the second commandment in the Ten Commandments says, “do not worship idols” (Ex. 20:4-6)? What does it say about how Paul sees the Old Testament?
- What does Paul assume about the *identity* of the Christian community from this passage? How do they relate to the Old Testament? To Israel?
- How do you read and apply the Old Testament? How do you see yourself as an individual in this story? What does it mean to be part of this people? How does it affect the way you read the Old Testament?

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**TUESDAY: GENESIS 12:1-3; EXODUS 9:13-16—THE STORY OF RESTORATION**

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Since the banishment from the Garden of Eden, God's kingdom has been invaded by sin. The image of God in which humanity was created has been damaged. Humans love imperfectly, and are prone to idolatry.

- In Genesis 12, what does God promise Abraham?
- What is God's promise *through* Abraham?
- How does Exodus 9 seem to relate to all this? What was God's purpose in delivering Israel from Pharaoh?
- From these passages, what stands out about the way God intends to go about the situation in the world? How does this shape your identity?

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**WEDNESDAY: LEVITICUS 19:11-19; 26-37—LAWS FOR HOLINESS**

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These verses are part of a section in Leviticus often called the “Holiness Code” (Lev.17-26). The laws contained in this section all pertain to Israel as God's people. They are intended to set them apart. There's more. The laws in this section have their basis in God and God's holiness. As Leviticus 19:2 states, “Y'all must be holy, because I, the Lord your God, am holy” (this is repeated a few times: Lev. 11:44-45; 20:7; 20:26).

- Identify which of these you think Christians should still obey? Why did you choose what you chose? If you are inclined to point out that some laws are “moral” ones and others are “ritual” law or some other category, explain how the passage actually makes this clear. If you are inclined to say that those laws were only for Israel, then try to explain this, and how these laws relate to us today as part of the Old Testament.
- How do you understand these laws in light of God's purposes and promises in Genesis 12 and Exodus 9?

## **THURSDAY: LEV. 22:31-32; DEUT. 28:9-10; EZ. 36:16-28—HONORING GOD’S NAME**

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These passages emphasize the name of the Lord. In Leviticus and Deuteronomy, the context is the giving of the law. In Ezekiel God is looking back on Israel’s exile and his salvation.

- According to these passages, what is Israel’s purpose?
- How do you relate these passages to the laws in Leviticus? To God’s promises in Genesis? What do you learn about the stories in the Old Testament?
- In Ezekiel, God emphasizes that *the people* as one big fleet are the vehicle by which God’s name is honored or dishonored. Similarly, Jesus says in Matthew, “y’all (*not* you, individual Christian) are the light of the world.” Does this change or bring fullness to the application of the Old Testament?

## **FRIDAY: ROMANS 15:4-6; 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17—WHAT’S THE OLD TESTAMENT FOR?**

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In Romans Paul refers to “everything that was written in the past.” In 2 Timothy he refers to “Scripture.” In both cases Paul is speaking of his Scriptures—our Old Testament. The New Testament did not yet exist as we know it.

- Identify what Paul says the Scriptures (the Old Testament) is for? Is there anything that stands out to you?
- In these passages, the “Scriptures” are the Old Testament. Our Scriptures today include the New Testament as well. What might it look like to read the Bible—both Old and New—in this way? What is the emphasis? What is not the emphasis?

## **SATURDAY: MATTHEW 5:17-20; ROMANS 13:8-10—FULFILLING THE LAW**

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Both Jesus (at least Jesus in Matthew) and Paul talk about “fulfilling” the law. But, they seem to talk about it differently. Both Jesus and Paul stress the importance of the law and its fulfillment.

- What is the emphasis in Jesus’ words in Matthew? Who fulfills the law? What might you need to know more about to better understand Jesus here?
- What is the emphasis in Paul’s statement in Romans? Who fulfills the law?
- What do you gather about fulfilling the law from these passages? How does it apply to you, especially in light of the readings from the rest of this week?