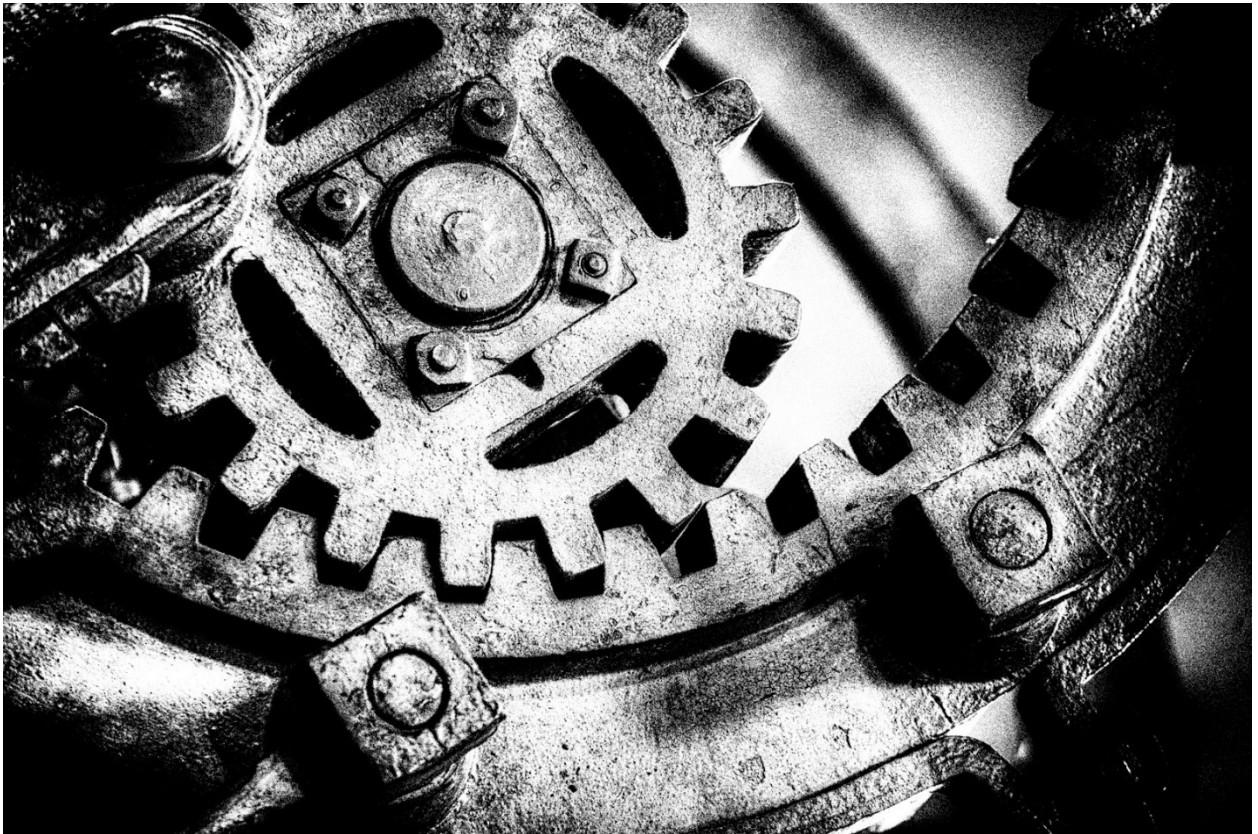


# Faith Works

A Study in the Book of James



Belle View Church  
[www.BelleView.Church](http://www.BelleView.Church)  
Summer 2021



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Greetings Saints

We are pleased to provide this study guide for our Summer series on *The Epistle of James*. As we come out of a Spring Series on the *Parables of Jesus*, the Holy Spirit is inspiring us to study the writings of the 'plain-talking' James.

In our study we will try to exegete all 108 verses in this 5-chapter book. I hope you have already started reading James devotionally, and that you will read it at least once a week during the series.

This guide contains questions, comments plus Bible text. We hope it delivers all that you need to get the most out of this series. In addition, since there is a strong affinity between James and the Sermon on the Mount, we have included that text in the appendix.

Finally, these guides are not designed to be overly specific. Rather, we intend them to be a generic guide to support all church-wide activities, plus help your daily devotions and small group pursuits. Use them however you need, and if you discover areas where we can improve, let us know.

On a personal note, I've been refreshed and challenged in my initial studies for this series. If you will allow, I'd like to suggest you consider doing something as you begin your own study of James...

...pray!

Be sure to include time before, during and after your personal study to pray. Satan attacks Christians trying to improve their daily faith-walk; so your best protection is prayer. This is not to say it is more necessary in James than other studies, but my experience lately is that I need more.

In any case, we are glad you are with us for this study, and we pray God speaks to you personally and that you have the courage to do what He says.

In Christ, Pastor Dave

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## James Chapter 1

***1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.***

Who wrote this letter we call the book of James? \_\_\_\_\_ brother of \_\_\_\_\_

To whom did he write? \_\_\_\_\_

When did he write it and why do you select that date? \_\_\_\_\_  
(hint: see Acts 12)

How would you describe the circumstances of the recipients? \_\_\_\_\_

***2 Consider it pure joy, brethren, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.***

How is one supposed to do this? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the benefit or reward for facing trials? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever faced trials that you now realize brought you great value? \_\_\_\_\_

***5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. 6 But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.***

What are the conditions under which wisdom is given? \_\_\_\_\_

**9 Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. 10 But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wildflower. 11 For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom fall and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.**

vv. 9 & 10 present quite a paradox. How do you explain its meaning? \_\_\_\_\_

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**12 Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.**

**13 When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. 16 Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. 17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.**

Another reward is mentioned in v.12 for overcoming trials. What is it? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the crown of life mentioned elsewhere in Scripture? Where, and what does it mean? \_\_\_\_\_

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**19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. 21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.**

What to you think of James’ advice? Did your mother or grandmother give similar advice?

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What does it mean to “*humbly accept the word planted in you*”? \_\_\_\_\_

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**22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.**

How does ‘*merely listening*’ cause one to deceive themselves? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does the illustration in vv.23 & 24 mean to you? \_\_\_\_\_

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***26 Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.***

How do you interpret the command to ‘*keep a tight rein on their tongues*’? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What does James give as an example of ‘true religion’? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What can one do to ‘*keep oneself from being polluted...*’? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Is there a Theme Statement or Subtitle you might use to summarize the meaning in Chapter 1?

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Questions or Notes on Chapter 1:

## James Chapter 2

*1 Brethren, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. 2 Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?*

*5 Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?*

*8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. 11 For he who said, "You shall not commit adultery," also said, "Don't murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker. 12 Speak & act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 13 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

James provides an example of how favoritism might have been shown in his time. Is favoritism still a problem today, and how might it be avoided by the Christian community?

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Is James 'hating on all rich people' or is he making generalizations for the reader's benefit?

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Can you recall something Jesus said about the rich? \_\_\_\_\_

v.8 talks of the *Royal Law*, what do we call it today? \_\_\_\_\_

What does James mean by the term 'lawbreakers' in v. 9? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you summarize James' advice in vv.11-13? \_\_\_\_\_

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*14 What good is it, brethren, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If you say to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 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." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. 19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.*

*20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? 21 Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. 24 You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.*

*25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? 26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.*

This is one of the hardest teachings in James, and the one that caused Martin Luther to suggest it didn't belong in the Bible. How would you summarize the relationship between faith and deeds?

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Is James saying your deeds save you? \_\_\_\_\_

Who are the Old Testament examples James uses to make his point? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is there a Theme Statement or Subtitle you might use to summarize the meaning in Chapter 2?

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Questions or Notes on Chapter 2:

### James Chapter 3

*1 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. 2 We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.*

How do teachers avoid harsh judgment? \_\_\_\_\_

Do they have to be perfect? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

*3 When we put bits in the mouths of horses to make them obey, we can turn the whole animal. 4 Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. 5 Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. 6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

How would you summarize James' point in this paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_

*7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. 11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? 12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.*

How does James' view the relationship of our speech with our spiritual condition?

*13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.*

*17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.*

What does James say is proof of one's understanding and wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_

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Can you think of a modern situation like what James describes in v.14? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

James distinguishes between two sources of wisdom. Can you summarize what he said?

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James continues to describe wisdom from heaven. What do you think of his list?

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Are any of the items on his list exceptionally difficult for you?

Is there a Theme Statement or Subtitle you might use to summarize the meaning in Chapter 3?

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Questions or Notes on Chapter 3:

## James Chapter 4

***1 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. 3 When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.***

What is James saying is the source of quarrels? \_\_\_\_\_

What other words might describe what James is talking about? \_\_\_\_\_

Does vv.2b – 3 mean that God wants to give everyone everything their quarreling heart desires?

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the 'wrong motives' James talks about in v.3 \_\_\_\_\_

***4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? 6 But he gives us more grace.***

What does James mean by 'friendship with the world'? \_\_\_\_\_

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Friendship with the world means we become an \_\_\_\_\_ of God's.

What does v.5 mean? \_\_\_\_\_

***That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."***

What does this mean? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you locate this Scripture reference? \_\_\_\_\_

***7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.***

Who is doing the fleeing in v.7 and why? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you heard the first part of v.8 before? Where? \_\_\_\_\_

How can we ‘wash’ and ‘purify’ as James tells us in v.8? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the cause of grief and mourning James calls for in v.9? \_\_\_\_\_

***11 Brethren, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?***

What does James say is the problem with judging others? \_\_\_\_\_

***13 Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” 14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15 Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. 17 If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.***

What is James’ message to us in this paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_

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Explain v.17 \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a Theme Statement or Subtitle you might use to summarize the meaning in Chapter 4?

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Questions or Notes on Chapter 4:

## James Chapter 5

***1 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. 2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. 4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. 5 You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.***

Why do you think James sounds so harsh on rich people? \_\_\_\_\_

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What was his brother's view? \_\_\_\_\_

Look up Deuteronomy 24:15. How does it relate to this paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_

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***7 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. 8 You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. 9 Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!***

What does James say should be our motive for patience? \_\_\_\_\_

Is that an effective motivation? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

***10 Brethren, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.***

What do you think about this paragraph? \_\_\_\_\_

***12 Above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear—not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. All you need to say is a simple "Yes" or "No." Otherwise you will be condemned.***

Where else have you studied in Scripture God warning us against making vows? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it mean? \_\_\_\_\_

***13 Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.***

What does this section say about prayer? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you doubt or question any of it? \_\_\_\_\_

How does this compare to Jesus' teaching on prayer? \_\_\_\_\_

***17 Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.***

Look at 1 Kings 17 and 18. Does James tell us anything we didn't already know? \_\_\_\_\_

What, and why is it important? \_\_\_\_\_

***19 My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, 20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.***

How is this an excellent conclusion to the book of James? \_\_\_\_\_

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Is there a Theme Statement or Subtitle you might use to summarize the meaning in Chapter 5?

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Notes or Questions about Chapter 5 or any other part of the book:

**Additional Notes:**

# Appendix

The book of James is regarded as being very similar to The Sermon on the Mount. Both from a literary style and content standpoint, the two works seem linked.

Many do not find this unusual since James was the half-brother of Jesus, raised in the same household. It makes sense that he and Jesus would share similar traits and mannerisms.

For that reason, we have reproduced the Sermon on the Mount in this appendix so it will be handy in the event you need to refer to it.

## **Sermon on the Mount Matthew 5 through 7**

### **Matthew 5**

**1** Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, **2** and he began to teach them.

#### **The Beatitudes**

He said:

**3** “Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**4** Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

**5** Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

**6** Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

**7** Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.

**8** Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

**9** Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.

**10** Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**11** “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. **12** Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## **Salt and Light**

**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 underfoot.

**14** “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. **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. **16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

## **The Fulfillment of the Law**

**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. **18** For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. **19** Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly 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. **20** For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

## **Murder**

**21** “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ **22** But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

**23** “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, **24** leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

**25** “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. **26** Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

## **Adultery**

**27** “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ **28** But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. **29** If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. **30** And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

## **Divorce**

**31** “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ **32** But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

## **Oaths**

**33** “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ **34** But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; **35** or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. **36** And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. **37** All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

## **Eye for Eye**

**38** “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ **39** But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. **40** And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. **41** If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. **42** Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

## **Love for Enemies**

**43** “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor<sup>[1]</sup> and hate your enemy.’ **44** But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. **46** If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? **47** And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? **48** Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

## Matthew 6

### Giving to the Needy

**6** “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

**2** “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **3** But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, **4** so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

### Prayer

**5** “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **6** But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. **7** And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

**9** “This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

**10** your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

**11** Give us today our daily bread.

**12** And forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

**13** And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.’

**14** For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. **15** But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

### Fasting

**16** “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. **17** But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, **18** so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

## **Treasures in Heaven**

**19** “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. **20** But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

**22** “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. **23** But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

**24** “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

## **Do Not Worry**

**25** “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? **26** Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? **27** Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

**28** “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. **29** Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. **30** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? **31** So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **32** For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **34** Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

## **Matthew 7**

### **Judging Others**

**1** “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. **2** For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

**3** “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? **4** How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? **5** You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

**6** “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

### **Ask, Seek, Knock**

**7** “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

**9** “Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? **11** If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! **12** So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

### **The Narrow and Wide Gates**

**13** “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. **14** But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

### **True and False Prophets**

**15** “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. **16** By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? **17** Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. **18** A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

## **True and False Disciples**

**21** “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22** Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ **23** Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

## **The Wise and Foolish Builders**

**24** “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. **26** But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. **27** The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

**28** When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, **29** because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.



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