

## **Food for Thought**

For the week of July 13, 2014

*(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)*

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1. Chris pointed out how the Pharisees, who were arguably the most religious people of their time, are an example of having faith but not necessarily a “saving faith.” How does Jesus’ response to the Pharisees in Matthew 23 further illustrate how we can have faith but miss the mark on having a saving faith?

2. In contrast to the seven woes we read in Matthew 23, Jesus gave us eight Beatitudes to show how we can live a life that demonstrates authentic faith. As you read through Matthew 5:1-11, jot down how the eight Beatitudes differ from the seven woes and then answer the following questions.

How would you explain each beatitude to someone who was brand new to Christianity?

Which beatitude is most challenging for you to live out in your own life?

How do the Beatitudes relate to being “salt and light” in Matthew 5:13-16?

3. What do the following verses teach us about the difference between knowledge and obedience according to God?

Luke 6:46-49

1 John 2:3-5

James 2:14-26

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### **Matthew 5:1-11**

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

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. [NIV]

How would you explain each beatitude to someone who was brand new to Christianity?

Which beatitude is most challenging for you to live out in your own life?

How do the Beatitudes relate to being “salt and light” in Matthew 5:13-16?

**Matthew 5:13-16**

## 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. [NIV]

3. What do the following verses teach us about the difference between knowledge and obedience according to God?

**Luke 6:46-49**

## The Wise and Foolish Builders

46 “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? 47 As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. 48 They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. 49 But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.” [NIV]

**1 John 2:3-5**

## Love and Hatred for Fellow Believers

3 We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: [NIV]

**James 2:14-26**

## Faith and Deeds

14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, 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 one of you says 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. [NIV]