

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LESSONS FOR FEBRUARY 8, 2026

Isaiah 58:1-12

- This week we deal with similar themes as Micah 6 from last week, but the historical context has changed. Whereas Micah was written during a period of relative peace, years away from the Babylonian Exile, this portion of Isaiah (often called Third Isaiah – chapters 56-66) comes from the period after the Israelites have returned from the Exile. The nation has gotten their “religious” house in order – at least in terms of ritual – but their ritual life does not correspond to a change in their social and political lives. Where do these verses challenge us today? How do these verses challenge you to transform your own behavior?
- You will notice that there is an option to omit the last 3 ½ verses. Why would one omit them? Why would one include them?

Psalm 112:1-10

- The psalm implies – if not directly states – that if we follow in God’s ways, we will be financially blessed, as will be our descendants. How do we justify this understanding – seemingly a “theology of glory” – with a “theology of the cross” as Paul has been writing about in 1 Corinthians?
- Consider the qualities the psalm calls for. How do you measure up?
 - Have great delight in God’s commandments.
 - Merciful and full of compassion.
 - Be generous in lending.
 - Manage their affairs in justice.
 - Give freely to the poor.
- You will notice that there is an option to omit the last verse. Why would one omit it? Why would one include it?

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

- Paul’s approach is not simply to center on Christ crucified, but to find Christ crucified among those whom he is with: “For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” What does it mean to know nothing except Christ crucified? How would that change your perceptions and your life if you sought to only know Christ crucified?
- How do you understand Paul’s words about “interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual,” as they imply that we should not be saying spiritual things to the unspiritual?
- You will notice there is an option to omit the last 4 verses. Why would one omit them? Why would one include them?

Matthew 5:13-20

- What does it mean to be the “salt of the earth”? Is Jesus talking about salt as a seasoning? Or as a preservative? Or both? What does it mean for salt to lose its taste?
- How are we doing being the salt of the earth? How are we doing being the light of the world or a city upon a hill? How are you doing with being these three?
- What does Jesus mean when he says that he has come not to abolish but to fulfill the law? Does this mean that we are to still follow the Jewish Law to the letter?