

Reading Questions: Christian Scripture

1. According to Matthew, what does Jesus say about those who pray and give alms publicly? What does he call them?
2. Does Jesus focus on what people should believe, on how they should act, or both in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)?
3. Who does Jesus leave the “keys to the kingdom of heaven” with? What are the consequences of this action? What might it mean for political authority?
4. What does Jesus reply when he is asked whether Jews should pay Roman taxes? Given the context of the question, how seriously should we take his answer? Does it make a difference if we take it seriously or not?
5. Does Paul think Jews and Gentiles should be able to eat together?
6. Did circumcision make Abraham righteous according to Paul? Why or why not? Is Paul’s answer likely to make it easier or harder for non-Jews to become ‘Christians?’
7. What does it mean to be “justified by faith” according to Paul?
8. What is the difference between Adam and Jesus pointed out by Paul? What symmetry emerges from this difference?
9. How does the law lead to sin? Is the law to be blamed?
10. What is the “free gift” discussed by Paul? What is its connection to death? Is it really free?
11. Specifically what kind of life is Paul urging his readers to lead? Think concretely here in terms we’ve discussed before: what is the role of reason, passions, appetites, etc.; are we at peace or war with ourselves; etc.