

SESSION 1: SALT AND LIGHT

Watch the video or read the script together as a group; then discuss the following questions. Keep in mind the questions are meant to prompt conversation, so don't feel the need to use or discuss every question.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matthew 5:13-16

QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important for believers to put Jesus on display through what they say and do?
2. What are various properties and uses of salt? How do these uses correlate to us as "the salt of the earth"?
3. The video/script mentions that as followers of Christ we are called to "*season our surroundings.*" What are some ways that we can fulfill this calling?
4. Do you find it hard to shine the light of Jesus (to both people in church and outside of church)? If yes, why? What advice and encouragement can you give each other to help overcome this?
5. Read all three verses of Hymn 126, Give Me Courage, Lord (on the back). How do the lyrics of this hymn help us to understand our calling as the "light of the world"?
6. Read Matthew 5:13-16. Dig deeper into what it means to be the "salt and light." What other teachings can you pull from the Bible verse?
7. What are the benefits of every believer being "salt and light" in our world?

[illegible]

Hymn Lyrics - Give me Courage Lord

1. Give me courage, Lord, to say Your name, Not to quiver when I'm laughed at, nor to hide my face in shame; When around me there are those who would my faith in You deride, Let me not Your name deny or cast aside.
2. Give me courage, Lord, to say Your name, Let my lips declare Your power and Your holiness acclaim. Many with their earthly influence Your majesty despise; Let me pray that You would open soon their eyes.
3. Give me courage, Lord, to say Your name, Let me share with pure conviction what through Christ we stand to gain, Telling others how the faithful have a bright new destiny. Let my walk of life the best example be.

Refrain: So let my praises and my thanks ascend to You
and Your love, O Lord, within my heart be true.
So let me joyfully Your wondrous works proclaim;
Give me courage, Lord, to say Your name.

SCRIPT & ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

SESSION 1: SALT AND LIGHT

As disciples of Jesus Christ, our conduct speaks volumes to the world around us about what we believe and whom we are following. We want to put Jesus on display through what we say and do, but that's only possible when our character is rooted in Him. In today's session, we will be studying a passage from the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus speaks to His disciples about being salt and light.

In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus outlines the uniqueness of the life of His disciples, and insists that their character is to have a penetrating, preserving, and transforming effect on those around them. In these verses, Jesus says, *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."*

What is meant by the two metaphors used in these verses? How are followers of Jesus to be both salt and light?

First, we recognize that both have a profound effect upon their environments.

Salt is very useful and beneficial in a number of ways. In the Old Testament, it was used primarily as a purifying agent. We also know salt to be helpful as a preservative and to provide seasoning for food. Just as salt is beneficial for a number of reasons, so should followers of Jesus Christ be. *"You are the salt of the earth"* means that as disciples, we are to be a purifying agent in this corrupt world by living in a righteous manner and being faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ. We can speak words that encourage, uplift, and edify in the midst of rotten conversation whose only aim is to destroy. Season your surroundings and the people you encounter by sharing the love of Jesus Christ and the peace that He set within your soul. Invite them to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. And, be the one who helps preserve hope in the midst of the most challenging times of life. How can you be a purifying agent in your workplace? In your neighborhood? In your family? Are you seasoning your world with the message of the gospel? Do you help preserve hope?

We don't want to slip into unrighteous living that steals away from the mission that Jesus called us to. Instead, it is important that we seek the Holy Spirit every day in order to have the strength and courage to have a profound effect upon our world.

Jesus is the light of the world. As His disciples, we shine His light. What does that mean? Wherever we go, we should illuminate that place with the light of Jesus! Just as we read in the book of Acts, the apostles and the first Christians changed the world with their testimony, so we should as well. Are we inclined to hide ourselves away? Are we shy to speak about our faith in Jesus Christ? Do we hold back from helping friends and strangers? Be encouraged by the words of Jesus, *"Let your light shine!"*

Why does Jesus call us to do this? So that those around us will recognize our good works and then they will glorify, not us, but our Father in heaven. That is our purpose. That is the will of our God – that all we do glorifies Him. So when we are the "salt of the earth" and "the light of the world," we aren't putting ourselves on display – we are putting Jesus, the One who glorified His Father, on display for all to see in hopes that our world will be changed for good.