



LIFE Group Discussion Guide

August 30, 2026

Matthew 5:13-15

CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

OPENING

Who has been a positive influence in your life? What made their influence so impactful?

Jesus never intended for His followers to simply blend into the world around them. In the Sermon on the Mount, He describes believers as "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world". These two simple illustrations remind us that every follower of Christ has been called to make a difference wherever God has placed them.

Today we'll explore how followers of Jesus are called to influence the world by preserving what is good, pointing people to Christ, and living in a way that reflects God's glory.

SCRIPTURE READING

Read **Matthew 5:13–15** together.

Ask the group to listen for:

- What Jesus says believers are
- The purpose of salt
- The purpose of light
- How believers are to influence others

PASSAGE SUMMARY

These verses come near the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. After describing the character of His followers in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12), Jesus explains the influence they should have on the world.

Salt had several important purposes in the ancient world:

- It preserved food.
- It enhanced flavor.
- It represented purity and value.

Light makes things visible, provides direction, and removes darkness.

Jesus is teaching that His followers should stand out—not because they seek attention, but because their lives point others to God.

The emphasis is not on who we are by ourselves, but on who Christ has made us and how He works through us.

The main point is:

A growing disciple influences others by living faithfully and reflecting the character of Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What do you think Jesus meant when He called His followers "the salt of the earth"?

Believers should have a positive influence by preserving what is good, living with integrity, and reflecting God's truth in a world affected by sin.

Why do you think Jesus used the image of light?

Light reveals truth, provides direction, and pushes back darkness. Followers of Christ are called to help others see God's truth through both their words and actions.

What are some ways Christians can lose their influence in the world?

Through compromise, hypocrisy, fear of standing out, neglecting spiritual growth, or failing to live differently from the surrounding culture.

Where has God placed you to be "salt" and "light"?

At home, at work, in the neighborhood, in the community, at school, among friends, and within the church.

Why is it important that our actions match our message?

People are more likely to listen to the gospel when they see it lived out consistently. Our character gives credibility to our witness.

What are some practical ways believers can let their light shine without seeking attention for themselves?

By serving others, showing kindness, forgiving freely, speaking truth with love, acting with integrity, and giving God the credit for what He is doing.

How does living as salt and light point people toward Jesus instead of ourselves?

Our goal is not personal recognition but reflecting Christ so that others see His goodness, grace, and truth through our lives.

APPLICATION**Where do you have the greatest opportunity to be salt and light this week?**

Consider:

- Your workplace
- Your family
- Your neighborhood
- Your LIFE Group
- Your friendships

Is there an area where fear, compromise, or complacency has weakened your influence?

How can God help you grow in that area?

What is one specific action you can take this week to intentionally reflect Christ to someone else?

Examples:

- Encourage someone who is struggling.
- Share your testimony.
- Pray with a coworker or friend.
- Serve someone without expecting anything in return.

- Demonstrate integrity in a difficult situation.

DIG DEEPER

What does it look like to influence culture without becoming conformed to it?

Why is authentic Christian character essential to effective evangelism?

How do the Beatitudes prepare believers to become salt and light?

In what ways can a healthy LIFE Group collectively be salt and light within the church and community?

How does remembering God's glory—not our own—keep our motives pure?

CLOSING THOUGHT

Jesus did not say His followers should become salt and light. He said they are salt and light.

The question is not whether we have influence. The question is what kind of influence we are having.

Every conversation...

Every decision...

Every act of kindness...

Every opportunity to serve...

is a chance to reflect Christ.

Ask yourself:

- Does my life point people toward Jesus?
- Am I influencing others for His kingdom?
- Where is God calling me to shine His light this week?

Challenge your LIFE group members to intentionally look for one opportunity each day to be salt and light by showing Christ's love through your words, actions, or attitude.

God has placed you where you are so others can see His light through your life.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week we will discuss **Matthew 5:17-20** as we continue the new series, *The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached: The Sermon on the Mount*.

PRAYER FOCUS

- Thank God for calling us to represent Him in the world.
- Ask Him to help us live with integrity and compassion.
- Pray for boldness to share the hope of Christ with others.
- Pray that our lives would consistently point people to Jesus.
- Pray that our LIFE Group would be a visible light in our church and community.
- Pray specifically for the invitation portion of our worship services—that hearts will be open, the Spirit will move powerfully, and people will respond in obedience to Christ.

COMMENTARY

Matthew 5:13-15

v. 13. In the ancient world, salt was primarily used as a preservative to prevent corruption and decay. It was also used for flavoring. Jesus is stating that His disciples must function as a preservative against the moral decay of society. If a believer's life loses its distinct, godly character (losing its "saltiness"), it becomes utterly useless for God's kingdom and is viewed as worthless by the world.

v. 14. Just as a city on a hill naturally stands out and cannot be hidden, Christians are called to be conspicuous and distinct in a dark world.

v. 15. Nobody lights an oil lamp only to cover it up; instead, they place it on a lampstand so it illuminates the entire house. This highlights that faith is never meant to be private or concealed. Jesus' disciples must openly display their transformed lives and good works so that others can see them and, ultimately, praise God.

Together, these verses call for an active, public, and transformative faith where a believer's daily actions actively influence the culture around them.