



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 is someone you know whose actions make others want to be around them?
What makes them stand out?**

Every day, students influence the people around them—whether they realize it or not. At school, on a team, online, or with friends, others notice how we speak, act, and respond.

In Matthew 5:13–15, Jesus tells His followers that they are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world”. He wants us to make a difference by living in a way that points others to Him.

Today we'll learn that followers of Jesus are called to influence others by living differently and reflecting the light of Christ wherever they go.

SCRIPTURE

Read **Matthew 5:13–15** together.

Ask students to listen for:

- What Jesus calls His followers
- What salt does
- What light does
- How believers should influence others

PASSAGE SUMMARY

These verses are part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

After describing the character of His followers in the Beatitudes, Jesus explains how they should influence the world around them.

Salt was valuable because it:

- Preserved food.
- Added flavor.
- Represented purity.

Light helps people:

- See clearly.
- Find the right path.
- Avoid danger.
- Feel safe in the darkness.

Jesus uses these pictures to teach that Christians should make a positive difference wherever they are.

Students don't have to wait until they're adults to influence others. You can be salt and light:

- At school
- On your sports team
- In your family
- With your friends
- Online
- In your neighborhood

The main point is:

Jesus calls every believer to shine His light through the way they live every day.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "You are the salt of the earth"?

Christians should make a positive difference by living according to God's truth and encouraging what is good.

Why do you think Jesus compared His followers to light?

Light helps people see, gives direction, and removes darkness. Christians should help others see Jesus through the way they live.

Where do students have opportunities to be salt and light?

At school, on sports teams, in clubs, at work, online, at home, and among friends.

What are some ways students can lose their influence for Christ?

Giving in to peer pressure, compromising their beliefs, acting differently around certain friends, using hurtful words, or living inconsistently.

Why is it important that our actions match what we say we believe?

People are more likely to listen when they see our faith lived out consistently.

What are some practical ways students can let their light shine?

Showing kindness, including others, standing up for what's right, encouraging classmates, serving others, forgiving people, and sharing their faith.

How does pointing people to Jesus differ from trying to get attention for yourself?

The goal is not to make ourselves look good but to help others see God's love, truth, and grace through our lives.

APPLICATION

Where do you think God has given you the greatest opportunity to be salt and light right now?

Think about:

- School
- Sports or extracurricular activities
- Friends
- Family
- Social media

Is there an area where you've been afraid to let others know you're a follower of Jesus?

What makes that difficult?

What is one specific way you can intentionally reflect Jesus this week?

Examples:

- Encourage someone who is struggling.
- Invite a friend to church or LIFE Group.
- Pray for a classmate.
- Include someone who feels left out.
- Respond with kindness instead of anger.
- Stand up for someone who is being treated unfairly.

DIG DEEPER

Why is it sometimes difficult to stand out for Christ?

How can social media be used to shine Christ's light instead of seeking attention?

What influence do your closest friends have on your walk with Jesus?

**How can an entire student LIFE Group be salt and light in your school?
What would change if every Christian student intentionally lived out these verses?**

CLOSING THOUGHT

Jesus didn't tell His followers to hide their faith. He told them to let it shine. Every day you have opportunities to influence people—not because you're perfect, but because Jesus is working in your life.

You may never know how one act of kindness, one encouraging word, or one conversation about Jesus could impact someone's life.

Ask yourself:

- **Does my life point people toward Jesus?**
- **Am I different because I follow Christ?**
- **Who needs to see God's love through me this week?**

This week, intentionally look for one opportunity each day to be salt and light by showing Christ's love through your words, actions, and attitude.

Remember:

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

LOOKING AHEAD

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

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray together:

- Thank God for calling students to make a difference for His kingdom.
- Ask Him to help students live boldly and faithfully for Christ.
- Pray for courage to stand for what is right, even when it is difficult.
- Pray that students would be a positive influence in their schools, homes, teams, and friendships.
- Pray that God would use the student LIFE Group to shine the light of Christ throughout the school 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.