



Discussion Guide

The Village On A Hill

Matthew 5:13-16 / Pastor Dave Bennett / August 9, 2026

Session Overview

Our sermon this week reflects on Matthew 5:13-16, telling us exactly what our identity is and how we should be in the world. We are the salt of the earth - something that not only adds flavor, but is also used for preservation. We are to be a people who are to preach the gospel to others and help in the preservation of souls. We are also the light of the world - we are to show God's light to all and it should not be hidden. When we cover a lamp, we are keeping the light to ourselves and risk putting it out completely. A city on a hill *can't* be hidden - it i Our discussion this week will walk us through embodying salt and light and what that means for our identity in Christ.

Session Flow (60-75 minutes)

Welcome and Icebreaker (10 minutes)

What is something you think you're known for? If someone were to describe you using a few words or phrases, what do you think they would be?

Purpose: We will be talking about the identity we are given in Christ that is both a gift and a commissioning.

Scripture Reading

Read Matthew 5:13-16 aloud together.

Leader Coaching Sidebar

- We will be reflecting on how we are doing in being salt and light. Remind the group that analyzing what we're doing is a great way to improve.
- Don't worry about skipping a question or adjusting the conversation away from the discussion guide. If one question has prompted a good conversation, don't move on too quick.
- As always, be sure to create an atmosphere where everyone feels heard and try to correct anyone who may talk over others.

Discussion (40-50 minutes)

- 1. What is the difference between a “community of redeemed people” and a “redemptive community”?**

Leader Note: Notice the subtle differences in the phrasing and how it changes the meaning of the two statements.

- 2. Pastor Dave said “we spend our spiritual lives trying to earn an identity Jesus already handed us.” How might that change how you view your relationship with God?**

Leader Note: Some of us might have learned to have a mindset that we need to earn everything but Jesus tells us who we are - salt of the earth and light of the world!

- 3. Throughout history, the people of Israel got distracted and strayed away from God. Have there been any distractions for you lately that keep you from God?**

Leader Note: Israel was so busy fighting about the kingdom that they forgot to BE the kingdom. Have things kept you from being the kingdom?

- 4. With the new knowledge of how salt was used for preservation of food in Jesus’ time, how does that change the meaning of Matthew 5:13 for you?**

Leader Note: We learned that salt adds flavor, but there was no way to keep food from going bad except for salt. That makes salt much more important than just seasoning.

- 5. Have you experienced a group of Christians that have “no saltiness” or is “too salty”? What do you think is a good balance between the two?**

Leader Note: This question will connect with the next. The goal is to get them reflecting on the things around them and if they could improve in this calling to be salt.

- 6. Do you think The Village is walking the balance well? What is something you might change to reach that perfect level of saltiness?**

Leader Note: Encourage everyone to think critically about our church. It’s okay to point out the negative as long as we’re willing to do something about it.

- 7. Being a light doesn’t mean that someone sees you, but God *through* you. How do you think God shines through you in your daily life?**

Leader Note: Think about the talents, personality traits, or habits that reflect God. These may be natural abilities or things that you’ve had to intentionally work on.

- 8. What does it mean for us to collectively, as a connect group and as a church, to be The Village on a Hill?**

Leader Note: Brainstorm ways you can work together and show others the light of Christ. We are a city on a hill, we cannot be hidden!

- 9. Is There someone in your life to whom you can show salt and light to this week? How can the group support you in doing this?**

Leader Note:

- After Reflecting on the sermon, do you think you struggle in being the salt or the light?**
- 10. How can you work towards growth in either area?**

Leader Note: Notice the subtle differences in the phrasing and how it changes the meaning of the two statements.

Application and Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Are you salty? Are you visible? Do you think your group embodies salt and light well? What about our church? How do you think we can all improve on being salt and light, whether it be as a church, connect group, or an individual?

Closing Prayer Suggestion

Lord, you give us an identity and a task that is incredibly important to your kingdom on earth. As we walk through life, help us to become salt of the earth and the light of the world. Show us how to preserve us and others from the corruption of the world and direct us so we do not lose our saltiness. God, show us how to be the light of the world and a city on a hill, showing the world your Goodness. Bring us together so our church can be The Village on a Hill, emanating all that you are to our community. We ask these things in your name, amen.