



## Week 1 - The Next Level

**Series Passage:** Matthew 5:13-48

**Focus for the Week:** Matthew 5:13-16, 1 Peter 2:4-12

### **Discussion Guide:**

**Q:** Have you ever gone through this process with a catchy new song: You hear it, you like it, you replay it, you replay it again, and again, and then one day much later down the road you find out you've been singing the wrong lyrics?

**Q:** Did the proper lyrics seem right to you?

**Q:** Did this revelation change how you heard and understood the song?

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, amongst many other things, is clearing up the lyrical misunderstanding of the laws from the Old Testament. Therefore, we have a responsibility to be paying close attention to what Jesus is teaching so that we don't end up repeating the wrong "lyrics" over and over.

With this understanding of needing to truly listen, take time to read the following passage:

**Read:** Matthew 5:1-16\*, pause, and then reread verses 13-16.

**Q:** What do you think of when you hear Jesus call his disciples the salt of the earth and the light of the world?

**Q:** How are the Beatitudes related to being salt and light?

In using the terms salt and light, Jesus is teaching us what our roles as disciples of Christ are. A calling, and a responsibility, to serve God well. We must be vigilant in being salt and light to the world.

**Q:** What would cause us to lose our saltiness?

**Q:** Why might we be tempted to put our light under a bowl?

When we accept the call to follow Christ and be salt and light, it is not just about adhering to a higher moral standard; it is a call to action. Peter, in his letter, describes the call to follow Christ as such:

**Read:** 1 Peter 2:4-12

To be a follower of Christ is to be a part of a royal priesthood, to serve and worship God with our entire lives. It is through this service and worship of God that we enrich the world like salt and bring light to our world that is lost in darkness.

**Q:** What response or feelings do you have to hearing that we are to be a royal priesthood?

## **Finishing Well**

Jesus is more than just a good moral teacher. The Sermon on the Mount is more than just good moral ethics for living. Jesus is the Son of God, and he is teaching us what it means to follow him and that being a Christian is not something that we can selfishly hang on to but something that must change everything.

We are to share the good news! The news is that even though we are dead in our sins, we have life and hope because Jesus took our place. He died on the cross for us and conquered death through his resurrection three days later. Through this act alone we have hope for the future, which comes about by having a relationship with God.

Our world desperately needs to hear this news, for it is a world that is flavorless and dark, and so we must daily be the salt and light, a royal priesthood, giving glory to God Most High.

## **Close in Prayer**

\* If you are interested in studying the Beatitudes, I recommend you check out our Pursuit of Happiness Discussion Guide Series