

FOR CLARKSVILLE

FOR CLARKSVILLE: KNOWN FOR

Why do you do good? Sometimes we do good just to *make ourselves look good or to impress somebody*. Sometimes we do good out of *guilt*. And sometimes we do good in hope that good would come back our way. But Jesus encourages us to do good for another reason. For us to be the light and do right. Are we living our lives in such a way it causes people to ask, “Why?” Are we living a questionable life?

BIG IDEA: **Be the light and do what is right.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Jesus used 2 word pictures to explain how His followers—living on the margins of Roman society—can change their world. His metaphors were a call to his followers to live world-changing lives. Though they had no standing in the culture in which they lived, their lives would be the last stand.

“You are the salt of the earth” (Matthew 5:13). *Salt enhances taste, preserves, and creates thirst*. Jesus was calling his followers to be the preservative of the entire earth. Though their world was falling down around them, first-century Christians lived out a kind of mercy, purity of heart, and righteousness that found worth in those that Roman society thought worthless. They demonstrated a powerful love that changed the way the world valued human life.

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden” (Matthew 5:14). *Light exposes darkness, and light serves as a guide*. Jesus meant for his followers to light up the world, showing the way to God’s grace. He called them to live in such a way that the people around them would connect the dots between how Christians live and the God they serve.

The little group of people Jesus spoke to during his Sermon on the Mount went out and within 300 years, they changed the world. *They were salt. They were light.*

1. What do you want to be known for? At the end of your life, what do you want people to remember about you?
2. If you’re a Christian, talk about the people who influenced your faith by being salt and light in your life. What did you learn from their example? If you’re not a Christian, talk about followers of Jesus who left you with a good impression of Christianity. What was it about them you liked? How were they different from other Christians you’d met?
3. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Matthew 5:13-16.*

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”
Matthew 5:13-16

4. Why does Jesus reference salt and Light?
5. Jesus says His followers are the salt of the earth. What all does salt do?
6. Jesus says His followers are the light of the world. What does light do?
7. What does Jesus tell His listeners to do and not to do as we live our light-filled lives?

Have you ever woken up at night and been in utter darkness? Can you remember moving slowly, cautiously, apprehensively forward as you reached out trying to find a light switch? Do you remember the blanket of darkness covering you? Do you remember when you finally found the switch, flipped it, and felt peace as the room was flooded with light?

Light illuminates dark places and helps us see where we need to go. It takes away fear and allows us to move ahead with confidence. Christians are called to be light in a world addicted to darkness. We are to let our good deeds reflect the goodness of a great God. When the radiance of Jesus fills our lives, we naturally reflect this light to those around us. As God's light bearers, we are called to make sure nothing keeps His light from continuing to shine in our lives.

8. There are many parallels between light and Christians. Take time as a group to list as many as you can think of. Reflect on the many properties and uses for light and see how many connections you can draw.
9. Why is it so rare for Christians to be salt and light in the world? Why is it difficult to live as Jesus describes in the Sermon on the Mount?
10. Who is one person for whom you can be salt and light? What is one thing you can do this week to help that person connect the dots between how you live and the God you serve?

MOVING FORWARD

If you're a Christian, it's because someone was salt and light in your life. You've had providential relationships. When you look back on your life, those people were "towns on a hill," showing you the way to God's grace. Their persistence may have been a little irritating, but their love changed your life. *Be salt. Be light. Salt always preserves. Light always shows the way.*

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Chris ended with 3 Questions:

- 1) *What are you currently known FOR?*
- 2) *What do you want to be known FOR?*
- 3) *What do you need to change?*

CHANGING YOUR MIND

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16