



**Life Group Discussion Guide**  
**"Influence from the Inside Out" – Matthew 5:1-16**  
Scott Paulson – January 18, 2026

**Main thought:**

God changes the world not by religious performance, but by forming Christlike character in His people so they can live as salt and light.

**Ice-Breaker**

What's a job you're *very* glad you don't have?

**Questions**

1. What stood out to you from looking at Matthew 5:1–16?
2. Jesus begins with "*Blessed are the poor in spirit.*" in verse 3. Why do you think humility and recognizing our spiritual bankruptcy are the starting point for life with God?
3. Which Beatitude (vv. 3–10) do you feel God is currently developing in you?
4. Which one do you resist the most—and what might that reveal about your heart?
5. The message emphasized that *character comes before conduct* and *being precedes doing*. Why is this distinction so important for spiritual health?
6. Where have you seen damage done when faith focuses on doing without inner transformation?
7. Jesus says "*You are the salt of the earth*" and "*You are the light of the world.*" How is this different from saying "you should try to be" salt and light?
8. Which image resonates more with you right now—salt (restraining decay) or light (revealing God's goodness)? Why?
9. The message stressed that we don't park our faith at church—we live it where God has placed us. Where has God specifically placed you to be salt and light right now?
10. What fears or pressures tempt you to blend in rather than live differently?
11. What is a way you see God working in and through you, or in and through our church that you're thankful for right now?

**Prayer:** Take some time to pray for each other.