

SERMON-BASED STUDY GUIDE

SERMON ON THE MOUNT – Week 4 – *Salt & Light*

October 1, 2023

DIGGING IN:

1. Read Matthew 5:13-16.
2. What are the effects of salt and light? Make a list of the effects of each one. You might want to search on Google to get additional ideas and information.
3. What are some of the ways that these effects are metaphor for the potential effects of believers in Jesus on the world around them?

MAKING IT REAL:

4. Alex pointed out that both salt and light are also representative of God's covenant with his people in the Old Testament. Read Num 18:19, Isa 42:6-7, Lev 2:13, and 2 Chr 13:5.
5. Read Hebrews 8:6 and Matt 26:27-28. Jesus brings a *new* covenant, a covenant of forgiveness of sins through the blood of Jesus. The salt and light that symbolize this new covenant are the *people* who enter into it!
6. "When people see you, they'll see what life with God is meant to look like." Respond to this statement. Is this true in our community? In the world? In your own life and relationships? Why or why not
7. Alex talked about how Jesus moved from third person to second person plural (v.11) – "Y'all." He concluded that Jesus leads his followers on a journey "from *me*, to *we*, to everybody," that "I bring *me* to *we*, for the sake of the *world*." To bring "me" to "we," it is important that we understand the "me" that we are bringing! We can always find out what empty volunteer slots need to be filled and step up to help. But what might church look like if we each took time to discover our true identity, to and embrace things that make us come alive, to understand the way God wired us to live and serve in His Kingdom, and then stepped out to live *that* way? St. Ireneaus said, "The glory of God is man fully alive." Are you fully alive? Grab a pen and write down responses to the following questions as a way to start thinking about this. For a much deeper dive on this topic, consider reading/working through one of the two books in the resource list at the end of this guide.
 - a. List a few things you do or experience that make you "come alive" – that give you great joy and make you feel like you are "in the zone" or right where you belong.
 - b. List a few issues, groups of people, or ideas that you care deeply about.
 - c. Describe your personality – How do you interact with the world around you?
 - d. What resources do you have? (Abilities, material resources, time, etc.)

- e. Take a minute for *listening prayer*. Ask God, "What do you want me to know about myself?" Note what comes to mind. (It is a good idea to begin this prayer by asking God to silence your *own* thoughts and to silence the voice of the enemy so that you can hear His voice clearly).
 - f. Pause to consider how your answers to the above questions might help you discern where God is calling you to bring your "me" to "we" for the sake of the world. (For some, this could be a great "aha!" moment. For others, this will be just the beginning of a process).
8. If you are comfortable doing so, share with the group one thing that came up as you answered the questions in #7. (This could include insights, questions, hearing something from God, whatever stood out to you).

PRAYER IDEAS

Pray for each person, that God will increase their understanding of who He has created them to be in this world, and that they will have the courage to step into that space, whatever it is.

If you have time, take prayer requests from group members. As each person shares their request, stop and have someone pray for them.

WANT TO DIG A LITTLE DEEPER?

(Extra Bible study ideas)

Using blueletterbible.org or biblegateway.com, search on the word "covenant" in the New Testament. Read each verse that comes up in context and note what you learn about the new covenant in Christ. Then consider what it means that *you* are an illustration of His covenant in the world. Ask God to help you become more fully who He created you to be so that you can more fully display to the world what life with God is meant to look like.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Living Fearless by Jamie Winship (A deep dive into your true, God-given identity and how to live it out in the world)

Waking the Dead by John Eldridge (A deep dive into what it means to be truly alive and to live authentically from a transformed heart)

Red Couch Theology Podcast

If you have questions around parts of the sermon that are not included in the discussion guide, it's always helpful to listen to Red Couch Theology, where Alex and Aaron talk about the sermon and answer questions that come in from people in the congregation. <https://guysdrinkingtea.podbean.com/>