

# **YOU ARE THE ENCOURAGEMENT**

## **WEEK 6 LEADER GUIDE**

Jesus invites you to come  
and learn on the Mountain.

Now is the time to take the  
new path from the Mountain

**MATTHEW 5:13-16**

# INTRODUCTION

I want to invite you on a journey! Whatever path you feel that you are traveling on, take a short a detour with me up to a mountain and see where the path leads from there. As we approach this mountain, a NEW GUIDE is available for you! This guide will take your journey that you were on and introduce a new path that is far greater than your dreams.

This is what Matthew records in his account of Jesus, specifically starting in chapter 5. Jesus invited people who were suffering and dreamed of a coming kingdom! Jesus is revealing the path to this kingdom but it was different from what they had imagined.

## MATTHEW 5:13-16

**13** “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

**14** “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

**15** Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.

**16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

# WHAT DOES IT SAY?

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Read the verse slowly and carefully, paying close attention to the words on the page.

Break it into smaller parts and notice what is actually written – who is mentioned, what is happening, and how things are described.

Highlight or write down words or phrases that stand out to you, especially repeated words or strong action words.

Don't try to explain or figure out what it means yet – your goal here is simply to see and understand what the text says before moving on to the next step.

**Read Matthew 5:13–16 out loud together.**

## **Leader Notes:**

- Read the passage out loud together (maybe twice, in different translations).
- Have students point out what Jesus calls His followers – “salt” and “light.”
- Notice the commands: “let your light shine” and warnings: “if salt loses its taste...”
- Draw attention to the purpose: our actions should cause others to “glorify your Father in heaven.”

## **Prompt Questions:**

- What words or phrases stand out to you?
- What pictures or comparisons does Jesus use?
- What happens when salt or light isn't used the right way?
- Who benefits when we live this out?

# WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

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Now that you've broken down the words, look at how they connect to form the whole verse. Take those definitions and phrases and rebuild them into a clear restatement.

Think of it this way: If I had to sum up this verse in one simple, clear sentence, what would it say?

The goal here is to capture the main idea Jesus is teaching. This step moves from vocabulary to message—understanding the truth of the verse in your own words. Remember, this is not yet about how it applies to your life. It's about grasping the meaning of Jesus' teaching as He originally gave it.

## Leader Notes:

- Salt represents influence and impact. It preserves, adds flavor, and prevents decay.
  - → Jesus is saying His followers keep the world from losing its goodness and truth.
- Light represents truth and visibility. We reveal who God is through the way we live.
  - → Our good works don't earn salvation—they display it.
- The focus is not on trying harder but on being who you already are in Christ.
  - → Jesus says “you are” salt and light, not “you should be.”

## Prompt Questions:

- Why do you think Jesus used everyday things like salt and light to describe His followers?
- What does it teach us about how we should interact with the world?
- How does this passage connect to Jesus' mission and God's glory?

# WHAT DO YOU DO?

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Once you know the words (Q1) and the message of the verse (Q2), now focus on your personal response. Ask: What does this mean for me?

Consider how this verse speaks into your life, choices, and relationships. Where does it challenge you? Where does it encourage you? Where does it call you to change?

This step is about application—taking the truth of Jesus’ teaching and discovering what area of your life it moves.

## **Leader Notes:**

- Encourage specific examples, not general answers.
- Challenge students to identify one place where they can “be salt” (stand for truth, encourage, bring joy) and one place to “shine light” (show Christ’s love, serve, share faith).
- Remind them: even small actions make a big difference in dark or flavorless spaces.

## **Prompt Questions:**

- Where in your life is it hardest to stand out for Christ?
- What’s one way you can add “flavor” or bring “light” this week?
- How can our group encourage each other to live this out together?