

# WEEK 4 - APRIL 28

## The Beatitudes - Matthew 5:6, 9-12

Notes from today's class:

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# Week 4 - Personal Study

## Salt and Light - Matthew 5:13-16

### Day 1:

Start your time in the Word with prayer. Praise God for His creation, for the beauty of seasons, and the new life sprouting all around us. Thank Him for this day, for His great love for us, and that His mercies are new every morning. Be still and bask in His presence for a bit. Invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as we study a new section of the Sermon on the Mount.

Read or listen to Matthew 5:13-16. Read verse 13 two more times.

Salt is all around us; in our food, our water, our medicine, beauty products, cleaners, on our roads, and more. It comes in different sizes, shapes, and even colors. What do you think about Jesus comparing His disciples to salt?

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Look up "salt" in Matthew 5:13 in the original Greek to get a better understanding of what it means in this verse.

*In Bible Hub, the English phrase "you are the salt" will be highlighted.*

What definitions did you find?

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The definition in Bible Hub referenced Mark 12:30-31. Read Mark 12:28-31. According to this passage, what is the purpose of God preserving and seasoning a believer as we walk with Him?

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Looking at the Englishman's Concordance, we see six other instances of this same Greek word in the New Testament. Review the three passages below and write what you notice about the characteristics of a follower of Christ in each one. Read the passages in context.

Luke 14:34 (context: Lk 14:25-35)

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Mark 9:50 (context: Mk 9:33-50)

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Colossians 4:6 (context: Col 3:1-Col 4:6)

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Take a few minutes to digest this information. What does this communicate to you? What does this bring up in your heart?

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## Day 2:

Before settling into today's study, go to the kitchen counter or spice cabinet, grab a grain of salt and taste it. (if not hazardous to your health)

Describe its taste \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank Jesus for this time He is making available for you to sit at His feet and learn from Him (and for taste buds). Rejoice in Him. Bring any anxious thoughts to God and let His peace, which surpasses all understanding, guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

Read or listen to Matthew 5:13-16 twice. The first time let it wash over you. The second time, ask the Lord to show you where to focus.

On Day 1, we focused on the figurative meaning of "salt" but its literal meaning is frequently mentioned in God's Word. It was a sought after commodity in Bible times used for seasoning and preserving food, purifying water, and for sprinkling on burnt offerings to make them acceptable to God, as in Ezekiel 43:24. In Israel, some salt was mixed with other ingredients and when it was exposed to the elements, the salt would be leached out. Such leached out salt was used for coating pathways.

Now look up "of the earth" in Matthew 5:13 to see its meaning. Let this sink in for a minute or two. Write what you learn.

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List some "arenas" where you can exert influence to bring glory to God:

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Let's keep digging. What definitions do you find when looking up "lost its taste/becomes tasteless" in Matthew 5:13?

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How does this and the other words/phrases you looked up so far affect your understanding of this verse? Share/journal your thoughts and feelings with the Lord.

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Let's look at two of the other three instances where this Greek word for "lost its taste/becomes tasteless" is used. It's the same Greek word, but the English translation is different. What do these passages communicate to you?

Romans 1:22 (context Rom 1:18-32)

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1 Corinthians 1:20 (context 1 Cor 1:18-25)

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Are there things in your life affecting your saltiness right now? Is there "foolishness" you need to get rid of? Pause and ask the Lord. If anything comes to mind, confess it to God who is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And receive His forgiveness!

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Let's look up one more phrase today. Find the Greek meaning of "good" and "for anything/nothing" in Matthew 5:13 and write your findings. (they have separate definitions)

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In light of these definitions, what do we lose when we lose our saltiness?

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How does Jesus' statement of His disciples being the salt of the earth apply to you today? Ask the Holy Spirit's guidance as you meditate on this. Journal your thoughts to the Lord here.

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Now that we have dug into God's Word and took what we found to the Lord, let's look up Bible commentaries on what scholars interpreted Jesus meant in this passage and list some of your findings. Do they agree /disagree / complement your findings?

*If you are new to looking up commentaries, you can do a Google search listing the specific verse, "Matthew 5:13" and the word "commentary". If you would like suggestions on reputable commentary writers, ask one of the members of the Lady's Ministry team for recommendations.*

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Here's the rendition of Matthew 5:13 in The Message (MSG) translation:

Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.

That's a great way to summarize this verse in a simple way!

## Day 3:

*This lesson can be broken up into two days, if you want more time to reflect on your findings with the Lord.*

Find a comfortable spot, take deep breaths to calm your heart and mind. Praise God for the many gifts and blessings you enjoy everyday. Name a few of them, be specific. Is there something on your mind; a person, a longing, a worry, a project? Release them all to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine. Invite the Holy Spirit into your study as we look into Matthew 5:14-16.

Read Matthew 5:14-16

What is the Greek word for "light" in these verses? \_\_\_\_\_

*In Bible Hub, the English phrase "you are the light" will be highlighted.*

What definitions did you find? What/Who is the source of this light?  
How does this definition affect your understanding of the two verses?

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The author of these verses says there are two reasons for letting this light shine. First, is to show others your "good" works. At first glance this could appear self focused and prideful, until you read this in the definition of "good" in the Greek translation:

*kalós* – attractively good; good that inspires (motivates) others to embrace what is lovely (beautiful, praiseworthy); i.e. well done so as to be winsome (appealing).

What strikes you about this?

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The second reason to let this "light" shine is to "glorify" God (verse 16). Write what you learn about "glorify" from Bible Hub. How does this affect your understanding of these verses?

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Now that we have a clearer understanding of "phos", light, and the purpose of it shining from a lightstand, let's check out two other passages that use this same Greek word to see what they say about "light".

Read Matthew 4:16 (context Mat 4:12-17) and write what you learn.

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Read Matthew 6:22-23 (context Mat 6:19-24). What does it say about "the eye" in this passage, figuratively meaning your mind's eye in the Greek translation?

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Now look up the word "healthy" (or "is clear" in some translations) in Matthew 6:22 and write your findings.

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What is this verse saying about "the light"?

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Look up the meaning of "is bad/evil"? Write what you find here.

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There is a consequence for each of us for a "bad eye" and that is to be full of darkness. Let's look up "is the darkness" in verse 23 and understand the gravity of this. The Greek word is "skotos". *(the phrase "will be full of darkness", also in verse 23, is from a different Greek word and has a different meaning; pointing this out to avoid confusion)*

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In verse 24, we are told that we can't serve two masters; we can't serve God and mammon. The Greek translation says money equals mammon. This is not necessarily cash but the treasure a person trusts in, such as riches, money, possessions, or property.

Let's bring all we've learned together. Reread Matthew 6:19-24. How does this understanding of "light" and its absence affect your understanding of Matthew 5:14-16? What strikes you?

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Journal what comes up as you pray through the questions below.

Where is my focus? Is my eye healthy? Are there folds in my eye's focus? Is it unfolded, single without folds? Pray and seek the Lord, and do a personal search of your heart.

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Write a prayer to the Lord with confession (if need be) and praise. If comfortable, take it a step further by welcoming the One who can "iron out our folds" into your heart and life and give Him permission to do it.

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We learned such great things on Day 3! Let's be looking forward to seeing how the Lord directs for laying it all out.

## Going Deeper:

- Memorize Matthew 5:13-16
- Look up the meaning of "can it be made salty again"
- Find passages relating to the following topics or meditate on how God wants you to relate to them in light of Christians being like salt.

Salt as:

- Covenant
  - Symbol of friendship / loyalty
  - Adding flavor
  - Valuable
- Read Matthew 10:27 (context: Mat 10:24-33). What do you learn about "light" in this verse? How does this passage relate to Matthew 5:14?
  - Read John 1:4-5 and note the references to "light". What is this "light" referring to? Look up "overcome" and write what you learn. How does this relate to Christ and what we're studying in Matthew 5:14-16?
  - Spend time with the Lord and journal on what being salt and light mean and how it relates to your life.