



“The Saline Solution”

Matthew 5 Small Group Plan

In her book, *Out of the Salt-Shaker and Into the World*, Rebecca Manley Pippert, writes: “Christians and non-Christians have something in common. We’re both uptight about evangelism.” She goes on to explain the Christians are afraid of offending, while non-Christians are afraid of being assaulted.

Jesus speaks to this tension with two powerful metaphors. Both function as positive influences in our world. Both help, serve, guide, and warn of danger. Both are desperately needed in today’s culture. And both describe you.

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- What are the dominate forces influencing contemporary life today?
- For the most part, are these influences helpful or harmful? Explain.

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

— SALT —

Matthew 5:13

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.

- How have you observed Christians having a spiritual influence on society?
- What would cause a Christian to lose their saltiness?
- Does the salt analogy speak to the Christian’s political or social role in society? Explain.
- How can the Beatitudes make a follower of Jesus salty?

— **LIGHT** —

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴ *You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.* ¹⁵ *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.* ¹⁶ *In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

- How is our light a reflection of the steady light of Jesus?
- Why can't the true light of faith be hidden?
- What is the difference between letting our life shine and blinding people with our light?
- How can your light, "your good deeds" bring praise to God?
- How can a distortion of our deeds distract people from seeing God's light?
- What is the measure of a light that is shining for the glory of God?
- Read John 1:4-5
- How is the LIFE of Jesus the LIGHT of the world?
- Think of how light works: How does Jesus illuminate or provide direction? How does He expose or confront our selfishness?
- Why isn't Jesus "understood" by the darkness?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- Which moral issue most needs to be exposed by God's light?
- Which disoriented viewpoint most needs the illumination of God's light?
- Which Beatitude would most help you to regain your saltiness? Explain.
- Who could you call, write, or visit this week to bring light into their world?
- Close by committing to God your willingness to be salt and light to your city.