

Members' Handout - Matthew 5:13-20

Series: Matthew



These CG Resources are meant to help our CGs facilitate a study of the Bible passage with a focus on applying God's truth to our lives together. Refer to the Summary, Fallen Condition and Good News sections at the beginning of the guide to keep the discussion focused. For a deeper dive into the passage, refer to the text notes on the passage.

[Text Notes](#)

Big Idea

Those who belong to the kingdom of heaven are those who have had their lives and hearts transformed by Christ. Their lives and character now bear witness to Jesus' gospel like light in a dark world, and their hearts seek to obey God and conform to an internal standard of righteousness that is not just behavioural.

Fallen Condition Focus

Merely focusing on the behaviour and neglecting a need for a true transformation of our hearts and internal righteousness, therefore living a life that is not consistent with the message of the gospel.

Response

Recognizing that our problem of sin is not merely external, but internal, therefore asking Jesus to change and transform our hearts, so that we may bear witness to Him from the depths of our beings.

Connecting to the Gospel

How Jesus' death and resurrection compels and enables our response

Jesus' death and resurrection have overcome the bondage of sin and acquired for us a righteousness that justifies us before God. Through His Spirit, He transforms us to be like Him, and become salt and light in this world.

Interpretation

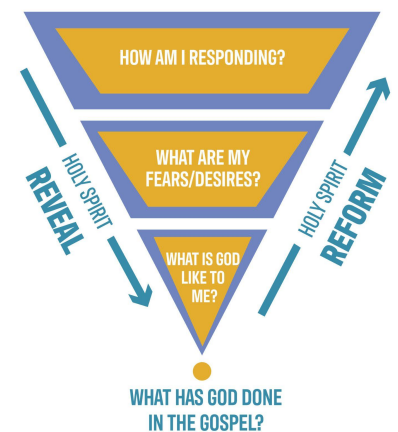
1. Read Matthew 5:1-12 and [watch the short video on it](#). How would you summarise the main message of the sermon on the Mount?
2. What does it mean to be “salt and light” to the world?
3. How does living in the way that Jesus describes in Matt 5:1-12 enable us to be “salt and light” to the world?
4. The scribes and the Pharisees were religious leaders of the day who strictly followed and encouraged others to follow the moral requirements of the law. What does it mean to have the kind of “righteousness that exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees”?

Behaviour

How am I responding?

Leaders' Note: For the rest of the study on the Sermon on the Mount, including the DIY resources, we encourage your CG to use the GE4 tool to structure the application questions, as Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is intensely practical. Therefore, using the GE4 will help us not just to focus on the “response” or behavioural change, but also identify what are the exact heart issues to which we can apply the work of Jesus.

5. It's easy to think that being “salt and light” is solely about our outward behaviour or actions. However, in this passage, Jesus criticises the Pharisees for being outwardly religious or righteous, but their hearts were in fact far from Him. What are some outward “Christian” or “righteous” tasks that we do that do not proceed from a heart that loves and worships Jesus above all?



Fears/Desires

What are my fears/desires?

6. What do these behaviours reveal about our fears and desires? Why is it sometimes easier to conform to an external religious pattern than to obey and delight in Jesus from the innermost depths of our hearts?

Beliefs about God
What is God like to me?

7. What does this reveal about what we wrongly believe God is like to us?

INCARNATION
DEATH
RESURRECTION
INTERCESSION
2ND COMING

Gospel
But what has God done in the gospel?

Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. Consider how God has not counted our sins or behaviour against us, but deals with the sinfulness of our hearts by sending Jesus to die for our sins, and by His resurrection and His Spirit change our hearts.

Beliefs about God (Reformed)
In light of the gospel, what is God like to me?

8. What does the above reveal about God's heart for us and what is important to Him?

Fears/Desires (Reformed)
How does the gospel speak to my fears/desires?

9. How might what Jesus has done transform our fears and desires above?

Behaviour (Reformed)
How am I responding?

10. Consider the outward "religious" tasks or behaviours that we mentioned in Q5. Take time to pray for one another, and ask Jesus to transform us and work in our hearts in a way that will make us faithful witnesses of His gospel.