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Hey leaders! We are in week 3 of our series, “*Sermon on the Mount*”! In Matthew 5–7, Jesus flips the script on what it means to be blessed, how to treat others, and where true security is found. This series will walk our church family through Jesus’ words with clarity and relevance, challenging us to build our lives on something unshakable—His Kingdom.

As we prepare for Coram Deo in 2026, consider using the prayer below as you get ready to lead your gathering each week or together at the beginning of each gathering!
“*Holy Spirit, be the decisive and dominant presence in my life and that of our church!*”

NEED A RESOURCE, HAVE A QUESTION, OR WANT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?
Let us know how we can help! Contact your groups director or discipleship@rockbridge.cc

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“*All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of a single candle.*”
[Francis of Assisi]

LEADER RESOURCES || **Leader Note** We do our best to equip, empower, and encourage you to shepherd your group well. Access a resource by clicking on the underlined title and share them with your group!

- **Passage Summary**
 - Jesus uses two metaphors to explain how citizens of His inbreaking kingdom should affect the greater society—salt and light. Key to this impact is the recognition that the impact and influence of Christians should point people to God our Father because it is His grace and love (the plan He ordained) that fuels our good works. The blessedness of being part of His Kingdom brings the result of serving as salt and light. The Kingdom is made visible or tasty by its community of salty and radiant people.
- **The Salt of the Land & The Light of the City**
 - Use these two resources for background and encouragement. These would be good resources to share before and/or after you gather.

ENGAGE & CONNECT || **Leader Note** The goal for the icebreaker is to prepare your group for the conversation ahead by connecting with one another’s hearts and building joy together.

What small act of kindness has someone done for you recently that added “flavor” to your day?

BEGIN WITH PRAYER || **Leader Note** Begin your time together thanking God for his presence and praying His word back to Him. Ask a few people to pray, taking a posture of humility and dependence!

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

“*But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light*”
[1 Peter 2:9]

BIG IDEA || Leader Note Read this aloud so your group knows the theme of today's reading and discussion.

Christians bless the world with good works because they have been blessed, are being blessed, and will be blessed by an infinitely good King.

PASSAGE & DISCUSSION || Leader Note Have people read aloud the passage as instructed. Your role is to FACILITATE, so keep your group moving along, encourage people to share, and look for opportunities to point out the grace and glory of God! Here are two reminders: 1) Every question does not have to be answered ... go where the Spirit leads! 2) Answers do not have to be read aloud ... they're for guidance!

1. In the sermon we heard, "*Jesus' Kingdom people are different and therefore, make a difference.*" How has someone else's "salt and light" witness impacted your own walk with Christ?

Have someone read aloud Matthew 5:13-16. Have someone else read it aloud in the Message paraphrase?

2. Why does Jesus emphasize that salt can lose its flavor and light can be hidden? *Answers will vary: these warnings highlight the danger of Christians losing their distinctiveness or hiding their faith. A tasteless salt or a hidden light becomes ineffective, symbolizing believers who fail to live out their Kingdom identity in the world.*
3. How does being "salt and light" show those around us that our Christian identity precedes our actions? *The metaphors describe who we already are because of God's grace. Position leads to purpose—our Kingdom identity produces Kingdom activity. Christians don't earn their place by good works; rather, good works naturally flow from God's grace already at work in us.*
4. Why is it important that our good works point to God rather than ourselves? *If our deeds are fueled by self-interest (reputation, guilt relief, or cultural approval), they do not reflect the Kingdom. True Christian works flow from grace and result in glory to the Father, leading others to say, "What a Father these people must have."*
5. In the sermon we heard, "*Being salt and light does not necessarily change what we do, but it does change how and why we do it.*" How is God inviting you to change how and why you are already doing something, so that it is filled with salt and light?
6. How can we guard against living as "tasteless salt" or "hidden light"? *Answers will vary: by continually grounding ourselves in grace, embracing our Kingdom identity, and living distinctly even when inconvenient. Staying rooted in worship and remembering that God is the source of all effectiveness keeps us visible and "salty."*
7. What is currently diminishing your "saltiness" or hiding your "light" in daily life? *This is a good opportunity to go first!*
8. What is one specific area in your life where you need to let your light shine more openly? *Each person should consider a real-life example—workplace, neighborhood, or family. The goal is to name one context where God may be calling them to live more visibly as a Kingdom person.*
9. What are practical ways our group can be "salt" and "shine light" together? *Answers will vary: volunteering at local shelters, practicing radical hospitality, partnering with ministries, or intentionally praying for and blessing neighbors. Group good works should be visible and God-glorifying.*

STEP OF OBEDIENCE || Leader Note *This is an opportunity for people to put into practice what the Spirit is inviting them to do and live in obedience to God for the sake of love! You can encourage your group to be accountable to one another and use these to follow up with one another throughout the week.*

Jesus calls His followers the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Good works, fueled by grace, are meant to **glorify the Father and serve as a foretaste of His Kingdom**. Remember ...

Being salt and light is both a privilege and a responsibility.

Being salt and light means we go to bless NOT to get blessed.

Being salt and light is a vision for how to live and that is worth living for!

As you consider your next step, reflect on: 1) How am I tempted to “hide my light” out of fear, comfort, and convenience? 2) How might I live that causes others to ask, “What a good Father you must have”?

Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 3-4 for this question. The possible next steps of faith below are not for discussion, but simply a resource for your group members.

Step of Faith Ideas

1. Identify one specific place or relationship this week where you can intentionally live as “salt and light.” Pray for the courage to do so!
2. Commit to daily asking, “How can my life today glorify my Father in heaven?”

PRAYER FOCUS || Leader Note *Be intentional about saving at least 5 minutes to pray together. Try the prayer activity below or pray for one another’s personal requests!*

Blessed to Bless

Let’s prayerfully awaken gratitude for God’s blessings and invite Him to lead us in blessing others through good works.

- Say to your group: *“Take a moment in silence to thank God for one blessing from the past, one blessing you’re experiencing now, and one promise of blessing you’re holding for the future.”*
- Go around the group and invite short prayers: “Lord, thank you for blessing me with ____.” Encourage simple responses—one blessing per person at a time.
- Now invite prayers of availability: “Lord, because you bless me, help me bless the world by ____.” Here are a few examples:
 - “... showing kindness to my coworker.”
 - “... sharing hope with someone who’s hurting.”
- Close your prayer time by reading this prayer together:
 - *“Good King Jesus, you have blessed us, are blessing us, and will bless us forever. Send us to bless the world with Your goodness. May our good works bring glory to You. Amen.”*