

Study Guide: Matthew Lesson 46

The Sermon on the Mount - Are You Salty?

November 16, 2025

This study guide is designed to review the core teachings from Lesson 46 of the Sermon on the Mount series, focusing on Matthew 5:13-16. It explores the Christian's role in the world as "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world," emphasizing the concept of influence.

Short Answer Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on the information provided in the sermon.

1. What single word does the speaker use to summarize the function of a Christian in the world as described in Matthew 5:13-16?
 2. Explain the paradox of the believer's relationship with the world, as derived from the writings of John.
 3. How do the properties of salt and light serve as an analogy for how a Christian should operate in the world?
 4. According to the speaker, what is the "gilt-edge guarantee" for a believer who truly lives out the qualities of the Beatitudes?
 5. When faced with persecution, how should a believer respond in their role as salt and light?
 6. What two presuppositions does Jesus make about the state of the world that necessitate the presence of salt and light?
 7. The speaker argues that believers must be distinctive. What happens if a Christian in the world looks just like everyone else?
 8. According to 1 Peter 2:9, for what purpose are believers a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation"?
 9. The speaker warns against a certain mindset found in some churches regarding salvation. What must a person be taught to do, in addition to saying certain words or walking an aisle?
 10. What is the sermon's ultimate conclusion about the world's condition and its potential to improve on its own?
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Answer Key

1. The single word used to summarize the believer's function is **influence**. The sermon teaches that a Christian who lives according to the Beatitudes is meant to influence the people and the world around them for good and for GOD.
 2. The paradox is that a believer is to be *in* the world but not *of* the world. Citing John's writings, the speaker explains that JESUS prayed not for believers to be taken out of the world, but sent them into it, while also instructing them not to love the world.
 3. Salt, to be effective, must be mingled with a substance but remain distinct from it. Likewise, light dispels darkness while being completely distinct from it. This illustrates how Christians are to be in the world and affect it, while remaining distinct and not conforming to it.
 4. The "gilt-edge guarantee" is that if you live a godly life according to the Beatitudes, you will be persecuted. The world may say bad things, alienate you, or treat you poorly because of your commitment to CHRIST.
 5. When persecuted, a believer must not change who they are or alter their function in the world. They are to continue being salty and to let their light shine, not forfeiting their saltiness or hiding their light under a bushel.
 6. The presuppositions are that the world is in a state of **decay** and is **dark**. The need for salt presupposes decay and corruption, while the need for light presupposes that the world is a dark place.
 7. If a Christian looks like everybody else in the world, they are not influencing anyone. Instead, they are conforming to the world, and the world is influencing them. They have "no salt."
 8. According to 1 Peter 2:9, believers are chosen so "that you may proclaim the praises of HIM who called you out of darkness into HIS marvelous light." Their purpose is to manifest influence in the world by proclaiming GOD's praises.
 9. In addition to making a profession of faith, a person must be taught that they have to "pick up your cross" and follow CHRIST. The speaker emphasizes that this is a critical part of discipleship that is often omitted.
 10. The sermon's conclusion is that the world is not getting better and cannot get better on its own because it has been evil since the Fall of Man. The only way it will ever truly get better is when the trumpet sounds and JESUS CHRIST returns to reign in HIS kingdom.
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Essay Questions

Instructions: Consider the following questions for deeper reflection and essay-style responses.

Answers are not provided.

1. Analyze the relationship between the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) and the call to be "salt and light" (Matthew 5:13-16) as presented in the sermon. How does living out the character traits of the Beatitudes directly enable a believer's influence as salt and light?
2. The speaker describes a paradox for believers: being "in the world, but not of the world." Discuss the specific challenges of this dynamic and how being "salt and light" provides a practical solution, according to the teaching.
3. Explore the theme of persecution in the sermon. Why is it considered a "gilt-edge guarantee" for those living a godly life, and how is a believer's response to persecution directly connected to their effectiveness as salt and light?
4. The sermon argues that the world is in a state of decay and darkness. How does this presupposition shape the urgency and importance of the Christian's mission to be salt and light, and why is the church identified as the world's only hope?
5. Using the speaker's examples and arguments, contrast the biblical model of the world being influenced by the church versus the modern danger of the church being influenced by the world. What are the specific consequences of the church losing its "saltiness"?

Glossary of Key Terms

Term	Definition from Sermon Context
Beatitudes	The qualities of life (e.g., poor in spirit, meek, merciful, peacemaker) listed by JESUS at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount that should characterize a member of HIS kingdom.
Darkness	One of the two presupposed conditions of the world. It represents the spiritual and moral state of the world, which requires the presence of light.
Decay	One of the two presupposed conditions of the world. It represents the moral and spiritual corruption and degradation of society, which requires the purifying presence of salt.

Gilt-edge guarantee	A term for something considered almost infallible or certain. In the sermon, it is used to describe the certainty that a person living a godly life will face persecution.
Influence	The central theme of the sermon; the ability and calling of a Christian to affect the world around them for good and for GOD.
Light	One of the two primary metaphors JESUS uses for His followers. It represents their function to shine in a dark world, revealing truth and glorifying GOD through good works.
Millennial Kingdom	A future period mentioned in the announcements where JESUS CHRIST will reign. The speaker plans a future teaching on its characteristics.
Monastic	Relating to a secluded, withdrawn lifestyle, like that of monks in a monastery. The speaker argues against this, stating Christians should get out into the world, not hide from it.
Persecution	The negative reaction of the world towards those who live a godly life. It can include being treated poorly, being spoken of maliciously, or being alienated.
Presupposition	An underlying assumption. The speaker explains that JESUS's command to be salt and light presupposes that the world is in a state of decay and darkness.
Salt	One of the two primary metaphors JESUS uses for His followers. It represents their function to be a preserving and flavoring influence in a decaying and bland world.
Scribes and Pharisees	The religious leaders of JESUS's time. They are mentioned as being hateful toward JESUS but still dependent on HIS influence to know the truth of GOD, as they had made their own religion works-oriented.
Sermon on the Mount	The sermon by JESUS CHRIST recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7, which is the subject of the ongoing study series.

Greek Word Reference

The following Greek word was mentioned in the sermon.

- **genos**¹ (JEN-oss)

◦ **Definition:** The term means "generation" or "nation." It is used in the context of 1 Peter 2:9, which states, "You are a chosen *generation*," to describe believers as HIS own special people.

¹ genos