

Study Guide: The Sermon on the Mount - Lesson 51

January 4, 2026

This study guide is designed to review the core concepts presented in Lesson 51 of the Sermon on the Mount series, focusing on Matthew 5:14-16.

Quiz: Short-Answer Questions

Instructions: Provide a detailed answer for each question in 2-3 sentences, based on the provided sermon transcript.

1. What is the source scripture for this lesson, and what is its central command?
2. The speaker notes a shift in Jesus's audience. Who was Jesus addressing in the Beatitudes, and to whom does He shift His focus in Matthew 5:14-16?
3. According to the sermon, what is the "biggest problem" or fear that causes believers to hesitate in portraying the light they possess?
4. Explain the distinction the speaker makes between the collective "church's light" and the individual's responsibility based on the phrase "Let your light" in verse 16.
5. What is the ultimate, overarching purpose for a believer to be "salty" and to manifest "light," as stated in the final five words of Matthew 5:16?
6. The speaker uses the metaphor of putting a light under a "bushel basket." In practical terms, what does this action represent in a Christian's life?
7. What two conditions does Jesus presuppose about the state of the world in this section of scripture?
8. Beyond the shared experience of salvation, what is the one thing the speaker identifies that every saved person has in common that is completely unique to them?
9. The sermon highlights two historical figures, Dr. Robert Murray McShane and Fénelon. What powerful quality did they both possess that profoundly impacted those around them?
10. What powerful analogy does the speaker use to illustrate the condition of lost people in the world and the urgent, collective responsibility of believers to reach them?

Answer Key

1. The source scripture is **Matthew 5:14-16**. Its central command is: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." The passage uses the metaphors of a city on a hill and a lamp on a lampstand to illustrate the visible nature of a believer's faith.
2. Initially, during the Beatitudes, Jesus was speaking to the large crowd. In this section of the sermon, He shifts His focus and centers in specifically on **His disciples**, teaching them about their responsibility to the world as followers with a "kingdom character."
3. The biggest problem identified is the **fear of persecution**. The speaker suggests that believers become hesitant and afraid to let their light shine because they fear pushback, rejection, or even prosecution from a world that sometimes hates the light.
4. The speaker emphasizes that while there is a collective light of the church, the command "Let **your** light" makes the responsibility deeply personal. It is not the group's light or the church's light, but the individual believer's personal light and good works that must shine to attract others and glorify the Father.
5. The ultimate purpose, found in the last five words of verse 16, is to "**glorify your Father in heaven**." The speaker notes that this is the overarching reason for the entire universe and is identified by the Westminster Catechism as the primary purpose of mankind.
6. Putting a light under a "bushel basket" represents **hiding the fact that you are a Christian**. This happens when a believer becomes uncomfortable telling people about Jesus Christ due to fear of rejection, fear of causing offense, or a desire not to "make any waves."
7. Jesus presupposes that the world is in a state of **decay and darkness**. Believers are given "salt" to retard the decay and "light" to illuminate the darkness, making their role essential in a fallen world.
8. The one unique thing every saved person has is their **testimony**. The speaker emphasizes that this personal story of salvation is a powerful tool and that withholding it from someone who needs to hear it retards their ability to come to the Lord.
9. Both Dr. McShane and Fénelon possessed a manner, voice, and face that so perfectly reflected the **glory of God** that they were irresistibly attractive to others. It was said that Dr. McShane's face seemed lit with a hallowed expression, and Fénelon's communion with God was so visible that a skeptic feared he would become a Christian just by spending another night with him.
10. The speaker uses the analogy of a **vast wheat field** where a young boy has become lost. The wheat is so tall that he cannot be seen, and he eventually perishes in the cold. This represents lost souls in the world, and the believers' responsibility is to join hands and walk through the field together to find them before it is too late.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Reflect on the sermon's themes to formulate a comprehensive essay for each of the following prompts. Do not provide answers.

1. Analyze the speaker's argument that a believer's concern for their own glory, reputation, and prestige is inversely proportional to their concern for God's glory. Use examples from the sermon to explain how this internal conflict can diminish a believer's effectiveness as "salt and light."
2. The sermon emphasizes the phrase "Let your light so shine," arguing this means the light is already present within a believer and does not need to be switched on. Discuss the theological implications of this interpretation

and explain why, according to the speaker, a Christian must make an active decision to *stop* their light from shining.

3. Explore the concepts of "persecution" and "fear" as presented in the sermon. How do these factors function as a "bushel basket," and what is the speaker's prescribed solution for overcoming this fear to live a life that glorifies God?

4. The speaker describes his own transformation after being saved at age 38, noting how he went from being feared to being known as a "Jesus freak." Using this and other examples from the text, discuss the practical relationship between a believer's unique testimony and their ability to fulfill the command of Matthew 5:16.

5. Based on the sermon, describe the "kingdom character" that Jesus outlines in the Beatitudes. How does this character serve as the foundation for a believer's ability to function as "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth"?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Beatitudes:** The foundational teachings of Jesus at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, which portray the "kingdom character" of those who live in His kingdom.
- **Discourses:** The sermon is identified as the first of five great discourses, or lengthy speeches, by Jesus recorded in the Gospel of Matthew.
- **Kingdom Character:** The qualities and attributes described in the Beatitudes that should be reflected in the lives of believers, setting them apart from the world.
- **Light:** A primary metaphor for believers, representing their God-given responsibility to illuminate the darkness of the world. This light should be visible through their good works and testimony, attracting others to God.
- **Persecution:** The hostile or ill-treatment, pushback, and rejection that believers may face from the world for openly living out their faith and being a "light." Fear of persecution is cited as a primary reason believers hide their light.
- **Salt:** A metaphor for believers, representing their responsibility to act as a preserving agent that retards the moral and spiritual decay of the world.
- **Testimony:** A believer's unique and personal story of how they came to faith in Jesus Christ. The speaker identifies this as a powerful, individual tool for evangelism that should not be withheld.
- **Westminster Catechism:** A historical Christian document cited in the sermon to affirm that the primary purpose of mankind is to "glorify God."

Greek Terminology

- **Kalos¹ (carlos):** This Greek word is translated as "good" in the context of "good works." However, the speaker explains that it means more than just a good deed; it signifies things that are intrinsically **beautiful**. In this context, it means that when a believer's light shines, they manifest a spiritual beauty, attractiveness, and winsomeness that comes from being a child of God, which in turn draws people to the Father.

¹ The phonetic spelling "carlos" is provided as it was stated in the source material.