

# REAL IDENTITY

BECOMING REAL [MATTHEW, PART 3] · MATTHEW 5:13-16 · FEBRUARY 28, 2021 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

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## SERMON OUTLINE:

*"You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world..." (Matthew 5:13, 14)*

### "You are..."

- The disciples
- The crowds
- Who is the "you"?
- The unexpected ones in God's mission

### Metaphor and the Power of Mental Pictures

- Jesus' use of metaphor in Matthew 5:13-16
- Why mental pictures are invaluable for life

### "You are the salt of the earth..." (5:13)

- The importance of salt: flavor, preservative, fertilizer
- Discipleship and saltiness
- Warning: don't lost your saltiness

### "You are the light of the world..." (5:14-16)

- The importance of light in a town and a house
- Discipleship and light-shining
- Encouragement: let your life shine to God's glory

### Wholistic or Complete Discipleship

- Discipleship of being and resting
- Discipleship of mission and action

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you met someone who truly seemed to live out their faith? What was it about their life that makes you describe them as this sort of person?
2. This week we continue studying Jesus' Sermon on the Mount by looking at Matthew 5:13-16. Begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through His Word, and then, whether you are alone or with a group, read that text aloud.

3. From what you know about the context of this passage, both in 5:1 and the previous section of the beatitudes (5:2-12), who would you say is the "you" of this section?
4. This section of Jesus' teaching is built on two rich metaphors. The first is salt, which was used as a preservative, seasoning, and even fertilizer in the ancient world. In light of these uses, what do you think Jesus means when He says, "you are the salt of the earth"?
5. In verse 13 Jesus offers a warning about salt that loses its saltiness. What would you say this warning means for disciples of Christ?
6. What do you think it looks like to live a "salty" life for God on earth?
7. Jesus' second metaphor is light. First, He references light in a corporate sense of buildings that are gathered in a city on a hillside (5:14). Next, he references light in an individual sense of a household lamp (5:15). What do you think Jesus is trying to say with these two metaphors when He states, "you are the light of the world"?
8. With verse 16 Jesus makes a straightforward connection between being light and our daily lives. What is that connection between our daily living and our relationship with God?
9. What do you think it looks like to shine our light for God's glory through our good deeds?
10. Reflect on this section we are studying (5:13-16) in light of Matthew 5:11-12. How do you think these two teachings support, augment, or balance each other?
11. What is one thing God is speaking to you through this study? If you're on your own, write that down and pray over that this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

## DIG DEEPER:

This week dig deeper into this section of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in one or more of the following ways:

- Consider memorizing one or both of the images here: Matthew 5:13 or Matthew 5:14-16
- Sketch, draw, or paint one of the images from this portion of Scripture. Share it with someone when you're done to start a conversation about what it means to follow Jesus.
- Consider reading Professor Anthony B. Bradley's article on this passage, "You are the Manure of the Earth," here: <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2016/october/you-are-manure-of-earth.html>.
- Explore parallels to this passage from other parts of Scripture, writing your own comments and thoughts about how these illumine Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:
  - Isaiah 9:1-2
  - Mark 9:50 and Luke 14:34
  - Mark 4:21 and Luke 8:16
  - John 1:4-9
  - John 8:12
  - Acts 13:47
  - Ephesians 5:8-14
  - Philippians 2:14-16
  - Colossians 4:6
  - 1 Peter 2:11-12