

PRAYER

- Thank God that through a relationship with Christ, we can show His love to others and bring them closer to Him. Thank Him for the gift of salvation He has given us.
- Ask God for a deeper relationship with Christ, and for His increased influence in and through your lives. Pray that you would be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.
- Pray for opportunities to share Christ's love and influence in your life through your actions to a family member or friend this week. Pray that it will enable you to preach the gospel.

NOTES



WEEK 2

A Christian's Influence: Salt and Light

WARM-UP

- Tell us about something you got into (books, movies, games, artists, sports) because you were influenced by a family member or friend.
- What is one of your favorite childhood memories? Tell us about it.
- Who has had a lot of influence on the kind of person you are today? Tell us about him or her.

WORD

¹³You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

MATTHEW 5:13-16

Jesus called His first disciples—fishermen, tax collectors, zealots—to be *fishers of men* (Matthew 4:19). For the next few weeks, they watched Jesus preach, do miracles, and eat with sinners, but they did not yet fully know the role and purpose Jesus was calling them into. And then, during the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told them, *You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.* He named two elements that are small, but have a great impact when they are used according to their purpose. Here, we will look at these two illustrations of how Christ's influence in our lives should affect us and the world.

1 We are the salt of the earth.

"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet."

MATTHEW 5:13

Anyone who has ever tried to bake or cook knows how important salt is. A pinch of salt is enough to flavor an entire cake, or a whole dish of food. Even if the amount is small, if we forget it, we end up with a bland cake or dish. Jesus told His disciples, *You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, it is no longer good for anything.* He could have said, "if salt has lost its purpose, role, or influence, it cannot be used as salt anymore." Christians are meant to live in such a way that the influence of Christ in our lives is noticeable and obvious to the world around us. Have you ever stood up for something you knew honored God even when you were told it did not matter? How did you bring Christ's influence in your life to that experience?

2 We are the light of the world.

¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." **MATTHEW 5:14-16**

Light should be something that can be seen, something visible, and it is also something that should help others see. In fact, it should be as obvious as a *city set on a hill*, which is very hard to miss because it is lit up, and set on a high place. Jesus told His disciples to let their *light shine before others*, since Christ's influence comes out in our lives as we extend His love to others through our *good works*, or actions (Ephesians 5:8,9). As others see His love, they may give glory to God and turn to Him. Share a time you showed God's love to someone and were able to speak life to or preach the gospel to them as a result.

APPLICATION

- Have you put your faith in Him for salvation? Would you like to do so today? If you're a follower of Christ, how has your relationship with Him changed your life?
- How can you deepen your relationship with Christ every day, and influence others as salt and light?
- How can you reflect Christ's love to your family members and friends through your actions? Name three things you will do this week.