

# Welcome to the Neighborhood

Week 3 – September 5, 2021

Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16

*Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Look up the verses below and share your thoughts. It's that easy!*

**Share:** Who is one person in your neighborhood that is a light to the community? What makes them unique in that way?

**Read Matthew 5:13-16 together:** Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

**Discuss the following context:**

The places where we find ourselves, whether it be our workplace, school, neighborhood, grocery store, gym, or coffee shop, we are not there by accident. God has strategically and intentionally placed us there to be salt and light. When our thoughts, attitudes and actions are right with God then it comes out in our good works. Others see Jesus through us. When our light shines before others, they see our good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

**Share your thoughts about following questions:**

1. **Read and Discuss Matthew 5:13-16:**

- a. Jesus says “You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.”
  - How do those words speak into the identity of the disciples listening?
  - Why do you think Jesus doesn’t say “you could be” but rather says “you are.”?
  - How does that change how people live what Jesus says about them?
- b. Jesus says, “A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”
  - How does Jesus’ language of being set or placed strategically challenge the disciples to live differently?
  - What are some of the places that God has “PLACED” you to be a light?
  - What has gone well and what has been difficult about being a light in those strategic places?
- c. Jesus says, “In 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.”
  - How difficult is it to navigate the tension of self-promotion vs God-promotion?
  - How do you keep your identity and focus on giving glory to God in the middle of these strategic placement?

2. As you reflect on the strategic places that God has placed you to be salt and light, how can we as a community encourage one another? How can we learn and challenge each other?

**Pray together:** Ask each other to share what is on your heart today about your neighborhood. Pray about the strategic places you have been placed. Pray for open doors of engagement. Pray for opportunities to neighbor well beyond individual moments. Ask God how to join what He is already doing in and around your neighborhood and how to move from an individual mindset to a communal mindset.

