

ALL THE SAINTS — SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE — SEPTEMBER 15  
**THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH — MATTHEW 5:13-16**

1. When have you seen or experienced a church making a positive impact on its surrounding community?

Last week we considered some of the characteristics of the local church and this week we're looking more closely at the church's posture to the world. **READ MATTHEW 5:13-16**

One of the key emphases in the Sermon on the Mount is on the *distinctiveness* of believers from the world (including the religious leaders of the time).

2. In the specific context of the Sermon of Mount, what are ways in which followers of Jesus are meant to be distinct from others? (Think about what immediately precedes and follows the salt & light passage.)
3. In our own modern culture and context, what are ways that Christians can—or at least, ought to—stand out as distinct from those who do not follow Jesus.
4. How and when do you experience your commitment to Jesus as costly—and even isolating?
5. How do you remain steadfast in those circumstances—and how can we practically support and encourage you in this?

Another key emphasis in this passage is on believers *engaging* and *interacting* with the surrounding the community.

6. When the Christian community is “salt” and “light” what is the (intended) impact on the surrounding unbelieving community?
7. What does it require for someone to see *our good works* and glorify *God*?
8. The previous passage (5:10-12) speaks to the reality of persecution and rejection for one's faith, but the church can also be an attractive presence within its surrounding community. What opportunities do we have to winsomely and loving serve those outside the church?
  - a. As individuals?
  - b. As a community group?
  - c. As The Journey Tower Grove?
  - d. As The Journey as a whole?

**PRAY**

Prayerfully read out loud John 17:14-18—Jesus' prayer for his disciples—and ask the Lord to help us *not be of the world*, but take seriously that we've been *sent into the world*.