

# **“Salt and Light”**

*Matthew 5:13-20 NIV*

*Bible Lesson & Activities for Children*



**THE SUNDAY SCHOOL STORE**

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# Salt and Light

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What do light and salt have in common? Both can make quite a difference in things and are very much missed when not present.

In addition to that, Jesus used them to describe our Christian

lives! We are called to light the world with the hope of Jesus, and

to be "salt", making a difference in the lives of others. This lesson describes how light and salt impact things, and how we can influence others with God's love.

We want to encourage students to be "salt and light", making a difference in the lives of those around them.

Yet the way they can make that impact comes first from recognizing how much Jesus changes us. He is the light that guides our way, and it's because of His light that we can shine for others. He is the "salt" in our lives, flavoring and preserving us to great things for His kingdom. As you encourage young students, be sure to emphasize the blessings we have been given in Christ!

**Passage:** Matthew 5:13-20

**Target Audience:** Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Materials Needed:** Construction paper; salt; saltshakers; glue; markers or crayons; food coloring; cups; tea lights; salted snacks; flashlights or headlamps; tape; scissors; decorative supplies; Bibles. Object lesson props can include : Salt, flashlight or light bulb, salty items.

## More Resources Online

- Watch the [video demonstration of the object lesson](#).
- Watch the [video example for the craft projects](#).
- Watch the video Bible Story "[God's Story: Sermon on the Mount](#)" from *Crossroads Kids Club*
- Watch the video [Salt & Light Object Lesson](#) from *Family Moments*
- For more free Bible illustrations, visit [Christian Clip Arts](#) and [Ministry-To-Children's Coloring Pages](#)

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## Object Lesson (5 minutes)

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*Greet children and start off by reviewing concepts of light... Note: If possible, depending on the context of the message, start off in darkness, to emphasize how important it is to have light. If this does not work for the occasion, simply demonstrate the power of a flashlight or lamp of some sort.*

Hello, children of God! Wow, it sure seems dark in here, doesn't it? It's hard to even see you! Hmm, I wonder if there's something I could do to fix that. *Turn on a light or flashlight.* Oh, there we go! Phew, that's much better, isn't it? It's remarkable how much difference something like light can make, isn't it? Why do you think light is so important? *Allow and encourage answers: it helps us see, guides our way, takes away the darkness, etc.* Yes, we certainly need light for a lot of things. Light makes a difference. Sometimes you don't even realize what an impact it has, until it's not there anymore. You might not think about light until you try to turn on the lamp, and the bulb is burned out, or you realize you're out of batteries in your flashlight. There are other things in life like this, too, things that we don't realize how important they are until they're not there. Can you think of any others?

How about salt? Now, I know it might sound a bit strange, but bear with me, this is going somewhere... salt is quite an important thing. In fact, it used to be so valuable that people would use it like money, paying for things in salt rather than gold! Salt can keep things fresh, and it can keep things cold, and keep us from slipping on ice...and, of course, it gives things flavor! I mean, have you ever had a pretzel with no salt? They exist, but it's hardly worth anyone's time. Things like chips and pretzels just must have salt to taste better! It's like having French fries with no ketchup...why even bother?

But what does salt have to do with light, and why are we discussing it? Salt and light are both things that can really influence other things, and you notice when they're present or not. Did you know that we are called to make a difference in the lives of others? As Christians, part of our special role is influencing other people. In fact, in the Bible, Jesus said that we are the light of the world. We are called to shine in the darkness and guide the way to the Lord. We are to influence people and make a difference in their lives. Jesus similarly said that we are the "salt of the Earth." We are here to keep things "fresh", in a sense, and add "flavor" to the world! What does this all mean? It means that we want to impact others. We want them to see that there is something different and special about us because we have Jesus. We want to live in a way that is noticeably distinct, in all the best ways.

How can we do this? Well, there are several things we can do. We can tell other people about Jesus, and the wonderful things He does in and through us. We can share His gospel and invite people to church or Sunday School. But perhaps the most important influence we have is by loving others. When we demonstrate to people that we care about them, it goes a long way. Just by showing genuine love, we can share God's love. We can shine His light for other people. It's important to realize, too, that our light comes from Him. We can share the love of Jesus because He gives it to us. He lights our way so that we can light the way for others. He "salts" our lives so that we can have a powerful influence on His people. We should pray that He allows us to be His salt and light, and that He would bring us opportunities to love and serve people who need Him.

Why don't we pray about that now?

**Prayer:**

(Have kids repeat each line)

Dear God,

Thank you for giving us your light

Help us to shine brightly to all around us

Give us opportunities to be your light and salt

So that all can know you

Thank you for your love

We love you, God!

In Jesus name, Amen!

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## Game & Activities Suggestions (10 minutes)

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Jesus reminds us of the importance to shine His light with others, making a difference in the world for His sake. He also reveals that His task as Messiah was not to eliminate rules and laws, but to fulfill them for our sake and for the Lord. The “salty” element comes into play in this Gospel message, as well. So have fun and choose how you’d like to kick things off! Some possible ideas include:

- Salt it up relay: split the group into two lines. Provide each team with a shaker of salt. Invite students to spread out their lines, and pass the salt from one person to another, stretching to reach the next person in line if necessary. If the saltshaker is not too full, have students at the end of the line shake some of the salt out before running it back to the front of the line. Continue until the saltshaker is empty.  
\*Alternate water game method: if you need a fun water game, fill the shaker with water, and take turns running the relay until the team reaches a point on a “fill line” of a cup.
- Which rules do we follow? Discuss what kinds of laws, rules, and regulations govern our daily lives. Why is it important to have and follow rules? Are there ever times when we should not follow rules? Did Jesus follow the rules, or rebel against them?
- Flashlight tag: If you’re learning area can get sufficiently dark, play “flashlight tag” or shine a flashlight beam on certain items one at a time in “I Spy” fashion.
- Lighting the way...have a fashion show of sorts with glow stick items. See who can make the longest chain, most decorative necklace, or best overall “outfit” using

glow sticks or glow jewelry. Again, this could work better in a dark setting, but can still be done with light!

- Whose line is this? Split the group into two teams and give each team a name (something simple like apples and oranges, or something more complex to match the theme, like salt and pepper, light and dark, or disciples and leaders). Have students line up a few feet apart, with backs facing each other. Shout one team name. Students on that team will turn around and chase the other line to a designated area on the field, several yards back from the start line. If a team member is tagged, they will join the other team. Play until all people are on one team, or timing forces a “stalemate.”
- Salt is important! Have students sample a tiny pinch of salt or sugar, to see how different they are. You can also allow them to taste crackers or products with and without salt, to note the difference.
- “Let it shine” ...sing or recall the words of the classic song “This Little Light of Mine.”

Explain to students that today’s lesson includes instructions for us to make a difference for Jesus. We are called to be His light shining in the darkness, and to be “salt” among other people. What could this mean?

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## Main Bible Teaching (15 minutes)

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This passage involves some ideas that could be a little tough to understand, as they include metaphoric imagery. But the verses also involve important concepts and fun pictures to study and act out. You might have students take turns reading these verses or read them out loud and pause to explain what is being said.

*Matthew 5:13 NIV "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.*

Can salt lose its saltiness? This might sound like a strange idea but invite students to think about salt. Salt is important for changing things. It can impact how things taste and how things are. Salt makes a difference! Explain that here Jesus is calling us as Christians the salt of the earth. He wants us to know that we can make a difference. Salt alters the entire flavor of something, and we can change how things are by impacting people for Jesus. He wants us to always influence things for His sake because He "salts" us!

**Ask:** What does salt do? What do you think Jesus means when He calls us "salt"?

*Matthew 5:14-16 NIV "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. (16) In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Light is essential to so many things. We need it to see where we are going or guide our way in dark places. It drives away darkness and shows up brightly for all to see. In these verses, Jesus invites us to be the light of the world. He wants us to “shine” so that others can see something is different about us. We want to display the light of Christ. We are not just doing good deeds to be recognized. We are doing things that reflect how much God loves us and how we love Him. When others see this, they should want to follow Jesus, too!

**Ask:** How can we be the light of Jesus? How can we share His love with others?

Some people worried that Jesus came to defy the political leaders of the day. They thought He was going against the law, defying, and refusing to obey. But Jesus wanted everyone to know why He came. He was not trying to destroy the law, but He lived it perfectly for us. We can never successfully follow all the rules. We sin and deserve death. But because of Jesus and His perfect life, we can have grace!

*Matthew 5:17-20 NIV "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. (18) For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. (19) Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (20) For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Jesus wanted to accomplish the Law. That meant He wanted to do all that we cannot do. He knew that there was no way we could keep all the rules and earn our own salvation. He

lived a perfect life to cover our sins. We cannot exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, but we are able to be justified by His righteousness.

**Ask:** Why do we need Jesus to save us?

Jesus is our “salt and light.” He shines the way in our darkness, and He did all that we cannot. He lived for us and loves us, and He wants us to live for Him and for others. Jesus calls us to shine in the darkness and tell others about Him. We rely on Him for salvation, and out of gratitude for His love, we continue to “pass the salt” and light the way for others!

**Close** with prayer, asking God to help us be His light and salt to make a difference in the world around us.

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## Craft Activities (15 minutes)

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What does it mean to be the light and salt of the world? Light and salt both have a way of making a huge impact on things around them. In the same way, we influence people and make a difference by living for Jesus in all we say and do. These crafts remind students of how they can make an impact for God. A "Candlelight Lampstand" focuses on shining Christ's light. A saltshaker considers the element of salt, along with decorative salt. And a salted artwork poster uses multiple senses to put Matthew 5 on display!

### **Verses or Captions to Consider... (Matthew 5:13-20)**

- *Be salt and light!*
- *Be the salt of the Earth...*
- *Flavor things for Jesus...*
- *Light the world!*
- *Shine His light - don't hide it!*

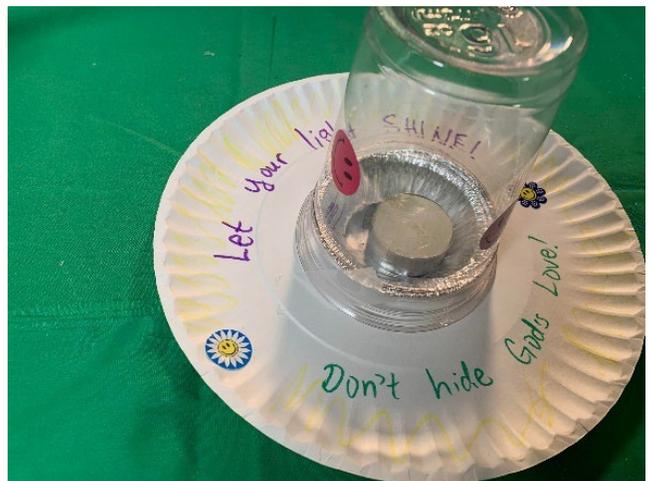
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# Craft one: "Candlelight Lampstand"

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## You will need:

- Cup (clear, Styrofoam, etc.)
- Scissors
- Markers and/or crayons
- Construction paper or cardstock
- Tape or glue
- Tea lights or battery lights
- Paper plate (Optional)
- Extra decorations as desired



## Procedure:

1. Create captions and verses on a paper plate or piece of construction paper or cardstock. Add extra decorations as desired.
2. Decorate a cup (preferably transparent) with writing, stickers, or other decorations.
3. Place tea light in a smaller cup or container and put it under the cup.
4. Place the cup over the tea light and attach it to the plate with glue or tape.

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## Craft Two: "Salt Shaker"

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### You will need:

- Markers/crayons
- Construction paper or card stock
- Decorations (stickers, glitter, etc.)
- Salt
- Plastic bags
- Tape or glue
- Food coloring
- Small container (empty baby food container or another small vessel)



### Procedure:

1. Decorate container or small jar with stickers or décor. Punch holes in the top to make a shaker.
2. Add verses or captions.
3. (If desired for color) Place salt in a small bowl or plastic bag. Add a few drops of food coloring and shake to distribute.
4. Place the salt in the container or bags.
5. Keep the salt for later, or use it in the salt shaker to have a fun reminder of how we can be the "salt of the earth".

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## Craft Three: "Salted Art Poster"

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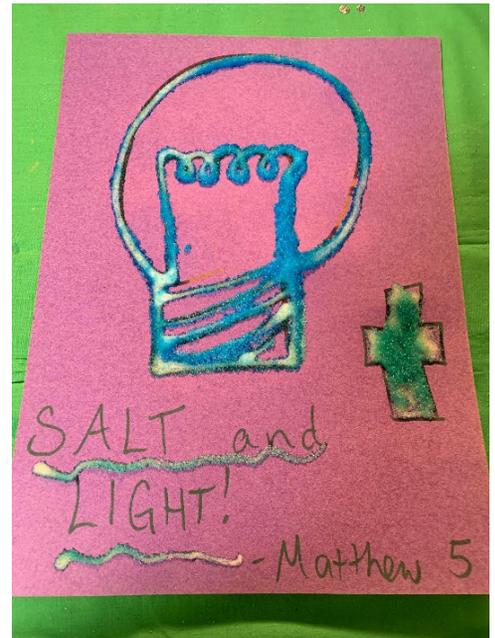
### You will need:

- Markers/crayons
- Construction paper or card stock
- Decorations (stickers, glitter, etc.)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Salt
- Food coloring
- Plastic bags



### Procedure:

1. To make colored salt, add salt to plastic bags. Place a few drops of food coloring inside, and shake to distribute the dye within the salt.
2. Decorate the paper with drawn pictures or written messages.
3. Add verses or captions and extra decorations as desired.
4. Place glue over the lines of the images. Sprinkle salt on top of the glue.
5. Dust extra salt off and allow remaining salt to dry. Place a string or magnet onto the artwork, if desired, for hanging.

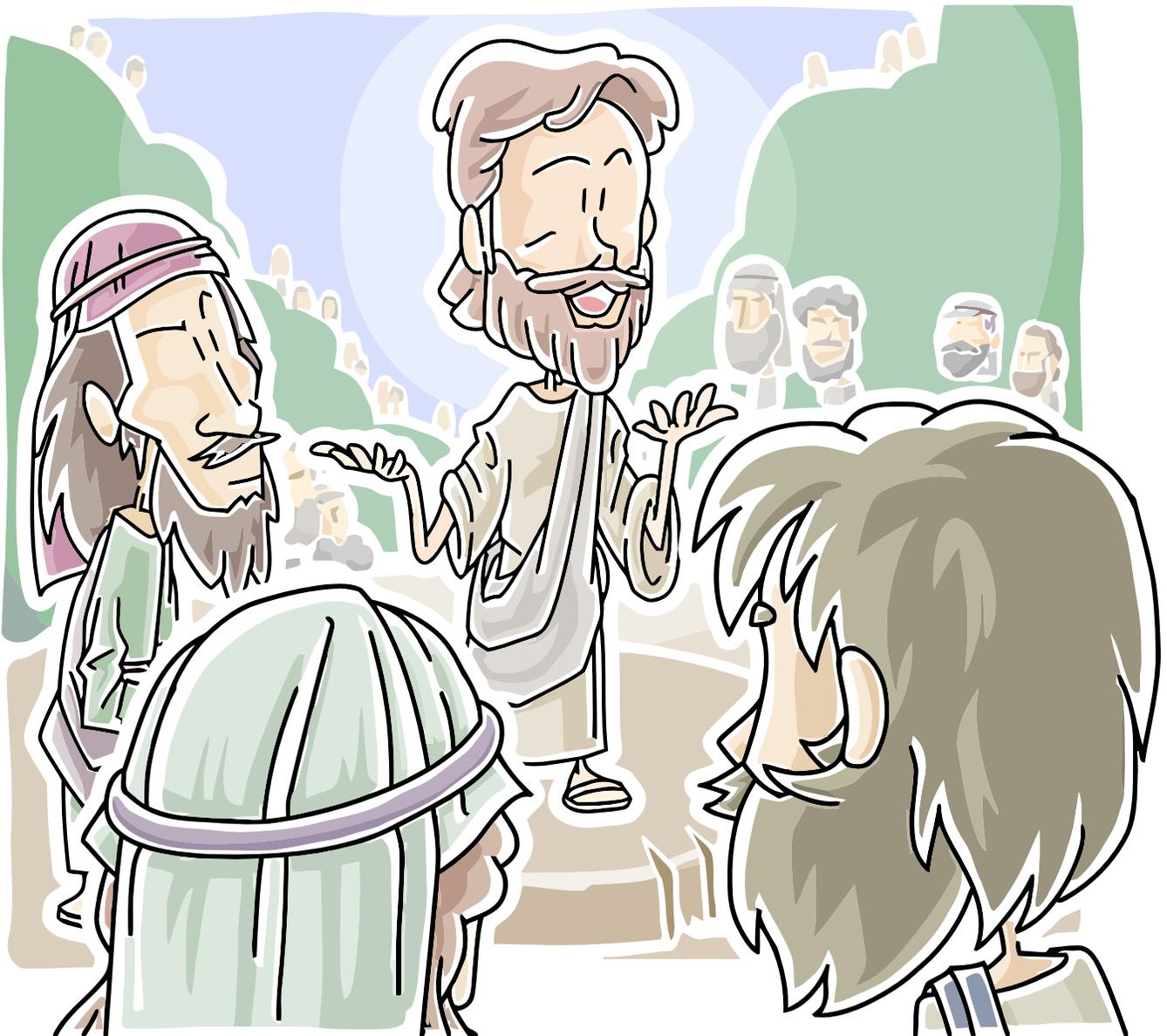


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## Matthew 5:16 NIV

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*In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*



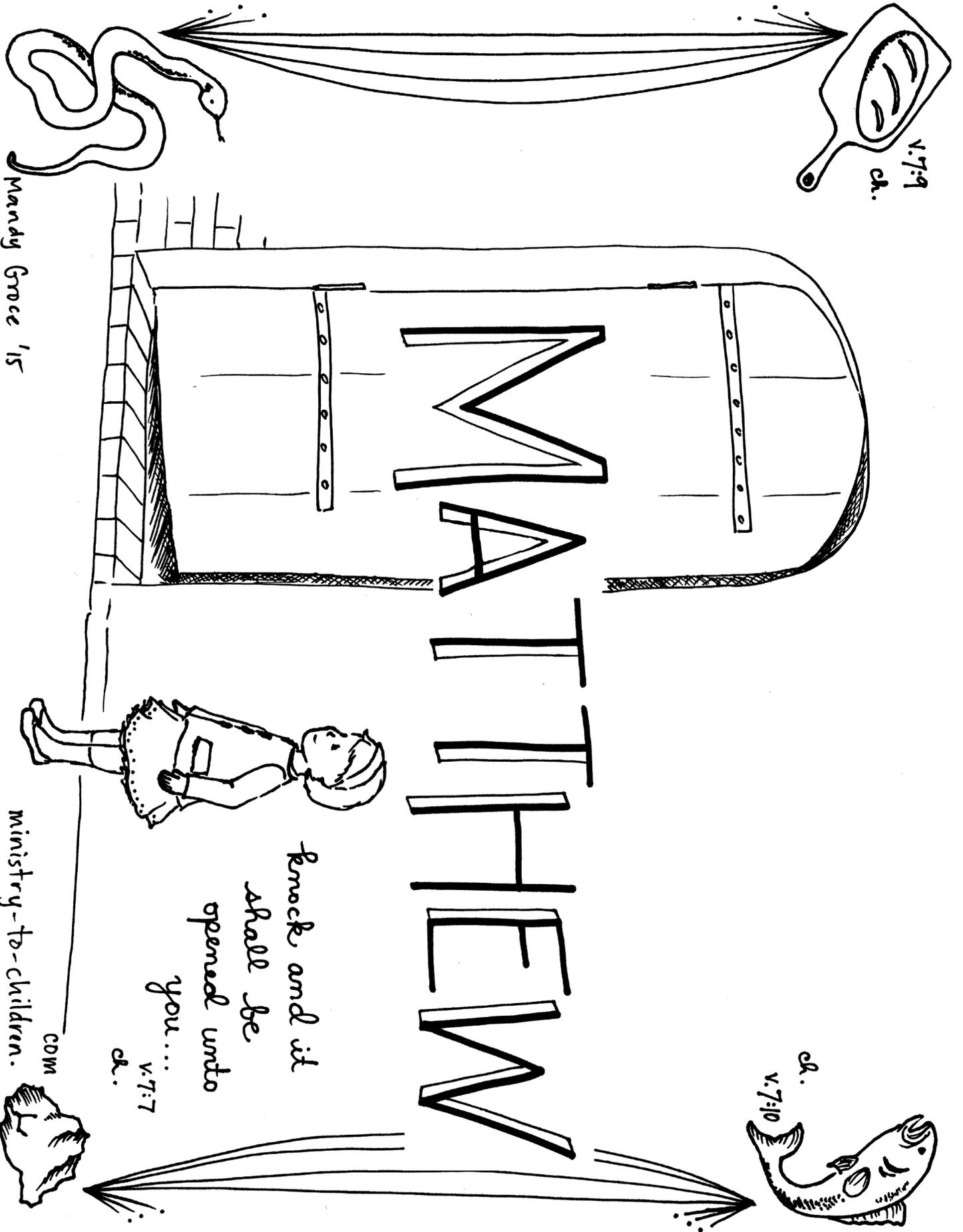
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**Matthew 5:16 NIV**

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*In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*







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## Word Search Puzzle: Matthew 5

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CITY – EARTH – FATHER – GLORIFY – HEAVEN – HILL  
JESUS – LIGHT – MATTHEW – SALT – SHINE – WORLD

P E P V N N C L A C A  
A S D T V J E S U S H  
S H I N E P H X G W D  
F A T H E R R I V O C  
Q G L O R I F Y L R T  
K G P T B Y V F S L B  
X X W R Y V L H H D I  
X T J X X C I T Y A H  
H E A V E N G W D T G  
Y I M A T T H E W N E  
T D V E A R T H W Y E

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## Word Search Answers

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P E P V N N C L A C A  
A S D T V J E S U S H  
S H I N E P H X G W D  
F A T H E R R I V O C  
Q G L O R I F Y L R T  
K G P T B Y V F S L B  
X X W R Y V L H H D I  
X T J X X C I T Y A H  
H E A V E N G W D T G  
Y I M A T T H E W N E  
T D V E A R T H W Y E