

— *weekly* —
**STUDY
GUIDE**

WORK MATTERS

WEEK 7 // *Making a Difference*

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Introduction

Welcome to week seven of the Work Matters study. Last week we learned how to have courage when working in Non-Christian environments. This week we seek to answer the question: How can I make a difference at work? As you begin, prepare your mind to receive the truths God has for you.

In this guide you will find questions for your own personal study along with questions to discuss at a Bible study, neighborhood gathering, or at the dinner table with family and friends. Enjoy!

Personal Study

Salt was a valuable resource in Old and New Testament times. Not only was it used as a seasoning, it also helped preserve foods and disinfect wounds. With an abundance of uses, biblical writers often use salt metaphorically.

READ

Read Matthew 5:13 and consider the questions below.

CONSIDER

- This verse comes from Jesus' most famous teaching, the Sermon on the Mount. What point is He trying to make with the salt metaphor? Do the surrounding verses in Matthew 5 give any clues?

- What would it look like, practically, for a Christian to lose their "saltiness?"

Personal Study Continued...

- In your workplace, can you tell who is a follower of Jesus and who isn't? How? What sets them apart from the others?

READ

Read the rest of Matthew chapter 5 and consider the questions below.

CONSIDER

- The Sermon on the Mount is a call to live counter-culturally. Make a list of Jesus' teachings that seem radically different from the cultural norm.

- What would it look like for you to be "salty" or counter-cultural in your workplace?

- True counter-cultural saltiness originates from a pure heart. When our hearts aren't pure we feel the need to fake Christian virtues like joy, love, and humility, but coworkers can tell when our actions aren't authentic. What unhealthy thoughts or feelings towards your workmates do you need to confess to God?

PRAY

Spend a few minutes telling God about your coworkers. Pray for the ones that are easy to love and the ones that are difficult. Ask Him to give you a heart like His, filled with grace and mercy. Lastly, ask God to show you how to be the "salt of the earth" in your workplace, family, and neighborhood. Then, listen for His guidance.

Group Study

ICE BREAKER

Have each person in the group briefly describe their favorite fall tradition. (*Example: Roasting S'mores with neighbors during Neighborhood Night Out*)

Previously, we learned these key truths about work:

- We represent Christ well in Babylon when we do not hide the secret of our success, commit to giving our best and we resolve to not become defiled.

DISCUSS

- What new insights or questions about work came to your mind over the last week?
- What obstacles are impeding your ability to withstand the pressures of living in Babylon (non-Christian workplaces)? What can we do to overcome these challenges?

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is a call to live radically different than the rest of the world. If we put these teachings in to practice through the power of the Holy Spirit, there should be a significant contrast between us and the world.

READ

Read Matthew 5 and discuss the questions below:

DISCUSS

- Why is it tempting to keep our faith hidden (like a light hidden under a bowl)?
- What does it look like for a Christian to lose their "saltiness?"
- What opportunities do you have (at work, with family, or in your neighborhood) to be "salt and light?" What can you proactively do to make the most of these opportunities?

CASE STUDY

Use the following case study as a model for a real life situation and try to put this week's lesson into practice.

Cedric's supervisor Dan is critical, unethical, power-hungry, and those are his best qualities. When he is in the office, life is miserable for everyone. Luckily, he travels a lot. So, Cedric's work environment isn't always stressful.

Cedric actually enjoys his work when Dan isn't breathing down his neck, but that doesn't mean there aren't other challenges. The rest of the employees in Cedric's office make derogatory jokes and spread gossip about Dan while he is gone. At first Cedric was glad to know that he wasn't the only one that disliked Dan's leadership. It all began when everyone was out to lunch one day. A few people began to vent about Dan's unrealistic demands and all of a sudden Cedric found himself trashing his boss just like everyone else.

Cedric wants to be "salt and light" at work but feels a constant temptation to join in with the behavior of his peers. Using the scriptures from Matthew 5 as guidance what could you say and do to help Cedric?

PRAY

Close your time together by asking God to give you the strength and courage to be "salt and light" in all situations. Take time to pray for specific needs within your group. Lastly, ask God to show you how to love the most difficult people in your life.