



# THE CHRISTIAN IN TODAY'S SOCIETY

This past Sunday Pastor John continued in our sermon series titled “The Christian in Today’s Society.” In this message, Pastor John began to have us consider how choosing to be salt and light in American society today may actually lead us to encounter backlash or opposition. For many, this very real possibility keeps us from being the salt and light we are meant to be. In this week’s curriculum, then, we’ll be looking at what Jesus had to say about possible backlash and consider what this might mean for us as we step out to be the salt and light we are called to be.

## **SUNDAY SERVE TEAMS**

We are beginning to recruit for Sunday Serve Teams for this next year! As you are aware, we have switched from a system that relies on lifegroup leaders mobilizing their lifegroups to inviting all people to serve whether they attend lifegroup or not. We believe this change will have many benefits, including: allowing more people to get involved, taking the burden to recruit off lifegroup leaders, developing relationships outside of lifegroups, and help us to continue to create a space where we all can worship and encounter God. Please encourage your folks to sign up for a Serve Team, if they aren’t already serving elsewhere. The more people we can get involved, the stronger our church will be. You can have folks pull out their smartphones and sign up either through the app or at [epicentre.church/serve](http://epicentre.church/serve).

## **FAMILY TIME**

Take some time to share prayer requests and praise reports with each other and encourage folks to keep praying for each other’s prayer requests throughout the week and to believe that these will become future praise reports.

## **BIBLE DISCUSSION: Matthew 10:16-34**

This week’s key text is a little long so feel free to shorten it and cover either the first or second half. If you decide to cover the entire text and are using a discussion based approach, you may want to focus in on those questions that are more crucial to the purpose of this text and to spend less time (or skip) those questions that are not as relevant.

Introduction Question: Have you ever stood up for something you believed in even though you were afraid it might negatively affect you in some way?

Bible study sheets are attached.

Key discussion questions:

- What does Jesus say will happen to his followers as they go out to share the gospel (or to be the salt and light of the world)?
- How does Jesus say his followers should respond when they receive backlash or opposition?
- Why does Jesus think it is important for us to continue to be the salt and light of the world even in the face of backlash/opposition?

Reflection Question: In what ways might I receive backlash or opposition by being the salt and light I am meant to be? What does God want to say to me regarding these things?

Small Group: Break up into groups of 3-4 to share what our fears regarding being salt and light might be and what we think God might be saying to us about these fears. Then take time to pray for each other especially in light of our fears. Encourage the small groups to support each other as we all step out to be the salt and the light that our world desperately needs.

## **MATTHEW 10:16-24**

<sup>16</sup> "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup> Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. <sup>18</sup> On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, <sup>20</sup> for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. <sup>21</sup> "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. <sup>22</sup> You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. <sup>24</sup> "The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. <sup>25</sup> It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

<sup>26</sup> "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. <sup>27</sup> What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. <sup>28</sup> Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. <sup>30</sup> And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup> So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. <sup>32</sup> "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. <sup>34</sup> "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.