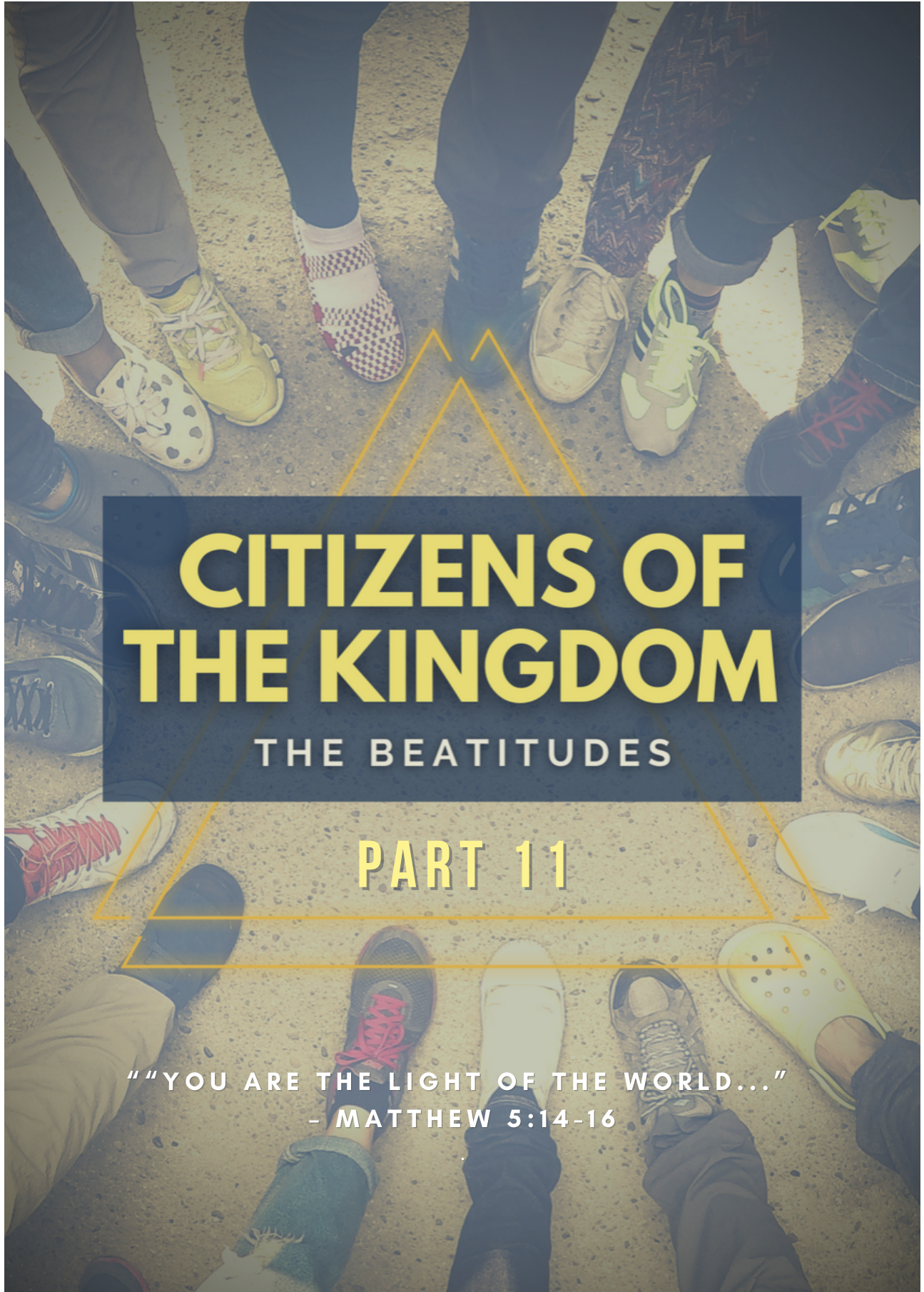


SEPTEMBER 5, 2021 | STUDY GUIDE |



CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

THE BEATITUDES

PART 11

“YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD...”
- MATTHEW 5:14-16

LIGHT OF THE WORLD



Citizens of the Kingdom: The Light of the World

Colton Conrad

14 "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.

– Matthew 5:14-16

THE CALL:

Israel had a call: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn." (Isaiah 60:1-3)

But, Israel, like much of the world around them, loved the darkness. They needed God's law written on their hearts (Jer. 31:33). And the same goes for us.



THE SOURCE:

What or who is the Light?

Psalm 27:1 – The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall, I fear?

“In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”

- John 1:4-5

“This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.”

- John 3:19-21

“12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”

-John 8:12

You together are the light of the world, reflecting the source of your light, Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father.



“Jesus is the ultimate light, set up on a hill-top, crucified for all the world to see, becoming a beacon of hope and new life for everybody, drawing people to worship God, embodying the way of self-giving love which is the deepest fulfillment of the law and prophets.”
Isaiah wrote of Jesus

“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.”

-N.T. Wright

Jesus is the light of the world, and we are the light of the world as we reflect Him.

THE CITY:

How are we to be a city on a hill?

“The salt must retain its saltiness, they say. It must not become contaminated. The light must retain its brightness. It must not be smothered by the darkness. That is true. But that is merely survival. Salt and light are not just a bit different from their environment. They are to have a powerful influence on their environment. The salt is to be rubbed into the meat in order to stop the rot. The light is to shine into the darkness. It is to be set upon a lamp stand, and it is to give light to the environment. That is an influence on the environment quite different from mere survival.”

-John Stott.

More than a place of survival, the city on the hill is a place where the gospel is proclaimed and lived out by the people who have been redeemed by God.

THE GOOD DEEDS:

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

These gospel implications are beautiful!

1) *Beautiful, Selfless Love*

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.”

Love is the mark of a Christian (John 13:35). ... have the same mindset as Jesus, “6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature[b] of a servant, being made in human likeness.8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! (Phil. 2:6-8)

2) *Beautiful Righteousness*

Reconciliation and love for one another
(Matt. 5:21-26)

Adultery and Sexual Purity (Matt. 5: 27-30)

Oaths and our word (Matt. 5:33-37, Ps.15:2,4)

Turning away wrath, laying down our right for revenge (Matthew 5: 38-42)



“...Personal self-sacrifice displaces personal retaliation, for this is the way the Savior himself went, the way of the cross. And the way of the cross, not notions of “right and wrong” is the Christian’s principle of conduct.”

–Don Carson

3) *Beautiful Feet*

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!” (Is. 52:7)

This is a message that the church proclaims, that salvation is in Jesus Christ alone – that He is the source of life and light and that His light is a light that cannot be put under a bushel – it will shine in the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it. This is beautiful news worth sharing.



Sam Chan, author of the book “How to Talk about Jesus without being **that guy**”, tells us that when it comes to making an important decision, there are three factors

1. facts and data,
2. our experiences, and
3. the community we belong to.

The most important factor in defining what we believe is our community.

So, here’s a “next step” to put this into practice. Have a BBQ with some of your Christian and non-Christian friends. No agenda other than to enjoy a meal and create some community.

You are the light of the world, reflecting the source of your light, Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit to the glory of God the Father.

Will God be glorified in you today? Will you let the gospel shape your life and shine through you?



Life Group and Reflection Questions

1. A big point from today is that, the source of all we do and are, is Jesus Christ. He is the light.
 - a) Is being connected to Jesus Christ prioritized in your life?
 - b) How can our good deeds become about shining our own lights rather than on Christ? Have you seen this happen?
 - c) What are some ways that as a community you can help one another to grow closer to Jesus, the source of our light?
2. What are some of the challenges out there for the world to see Jesus as beautiful? In what ways have you seen people become alive and in tune to the beauty of Jesus?
3. Talk in your small groups about the beauty of each of the three things Pastor Colton mentioned in his sermon. What is so beautiful about:
 - a) Selfless love
 - b) Beautiful righteousness (and the ways Jesus addresses these in the sermon on the mount)
 - c) Beautiful Feet that bring good news

Out of those three, do you find any aspect to be more personally challenging for you when it comes to living out your faith before others?

4. How does the church shine forth in these areas? And in what ways could your group come together and shine brightly in these three areas, compelling the world to see how beautiful Jesus is?
5. Shining is different than “survival.” In what ways are we tempted to “survive”, as John Stott states, rather than “shine.” Name some of the temptations to focus on survival that can hinder shining, and how we can hold the two in tension.