



But I Tell You...

ICE-BREAKER:

- Share a time when you needed a fresh start and/or you had to change directions in your life. What was the final straw that pushed you to change, and how did things turn out?

DISCUSSION:

1. Read Matthew 5:13-16.

- What is the purpose and significance of salt, and how are we to be like salt in the Christian life?
- What is the purpose and significance of light, and how are we to be like light in the Christian life?

2. Read Matthew 5:21-22a; Matthew 5:27-28a; Matthew 5:48.

- Jesus raises the moral/ethical bar when he uses the repeated refrain: *'You have heard it said... but I tell you...'* Why do you suppose Jesus' standards are so much higher than the world's standards?
- Why do you think Jesus asks us to do the impossible (be as perfect as God) in Matthew 5:48?
- Is it possible for us to live up to Jesus' standards? If so, how?

The Formula for Following Jesus:
Desire + Decisions = Devotion

3. Read Matthew 10:37-39.

- Following Jesus starts with a desire to be different. The people who first followed Jesus didn't have it all together, they simply had a mustard seed of faith and a whole lot of desire. How does a person get in touch with the true desires of their heart?

4. Read Matthew 6:25-34.

- Following Jesus also requires making daily decisions to trust God and forfeit your own agenda. What are some ways you can seek God and His Kingdom first on a daily basis?

5. Read Matthew 7:24-27

- What is the difference (spiritually) between the two builders in this story?
- Where do you see yourself in this parable?

APPLICATION:

- Think about this formula: Desire + Decisions = Devotion. Assuming you want to follow Jesus, do you think your struggle is more with desire or daily decisions? What can you do to overcome this challenge and be more effective as a follower of Christ?