

OVER THE HILL



SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

February 11, 2024
“Over the Hill”



OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the ways you’ve spoken into our lives, pushing us to take steps to go “over the hill.” Help us to connect with each other and connect with you during this time we have together, giving us ears to hear what others are saying. We pray this in the powerful and matchless name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Matthew 5:13-16 (NIV)

¹³ “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.

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.

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Week *February 11, 2024*
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INTRODUCTION

Taking in the view from a mountaintop is a unique experience. Basking in the glow of an unrestrained sun. Tracing the lines of shadows sweeping over the valley below. Feeling as though you may be able to reach up and touch the sky. Mountaintops can be a place of spiritual renewal. They also played a pivotal role in a number of major Biblical stories and events.

Most of us don't live on a mountaintop. At some point we have to come back down, abandoning the majestic vistas. But while our lives may not be lived on the mountaintops, it's important that we recall the grandeur we experienced while we were on them. This week's questions focus on five events that took place on mountaintops in the Bible; and what a mountaintop experience may mean for us.

QUESTIONS

1. In what ways has God spoken to you when you've had mountaintop experiences (literal or figurative)? How did those experiences change you?
2. Think about a time when you had to sacrifice something to follow God. What was it? How did it change your view of God? How did it change the way you follow God?
3. Read Matthew 5:13-16 (on page 1). What does Jesus mean in his teaching about “salt and light”? How can you be “salt and light” in your daily life?
4. Have you ever been at a loss for words as a result of an experience with Jesus? What happened?
5. When have you experienced a situation differently than others around you experienced it because of your faith? How did it change the weight of that moment for you?

FINAL APPLICATION

Choose one of the following “mountaintop” stories in the Bible to read:

- Exodus 20:1-17 (Moses Receives the Ten Commandments)
- Genesis 22:1-18 (Abraham's Faith is Tested with a Sacrifice)
- Matthew 5:1-11 (An excerpt from Jesus' “The Sermon on the Mount”)
- Mark 9:2-9 (The Transfiguration)
- John 19:17-29 (The Crucifixion of Jesus)

Go into this week considering what the story you read means for you as an everyday follower of Jesus.