



# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

June 1, 2025

"A Commencement Address"

## OPENING PRAYER

"Lord, we come before you with open hearts to praise you for your goodness and faithfulness. We thank you for the gift of this time together, and we ask for your guidance as we seek to understand your word and grow in your love. May we be filled with your Holy Spirit, and may our hearts be united in love and purpose. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen."

## SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

### Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV)

<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

### Matthew 6:19-21, 24 (NIV)

<sup>19</sup> "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

<sup>24</sup> "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

### Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV)

<sup>13</sup> "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass  
against us.  
And lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power and  
the glory forever. Amen.

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## **“A Commencement Address”** (A Special Message for Graduates)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Every spring, America's colleges line up commencement speakers for their graduations from the worlds of politics, entertainment, or sports. This year's speakers included President Trump, former vice presidential candidate Tim Walz, actor Steve Carell, musician Snoop Dogg, baseball hall-of-famer Derek Jeter, and Olympic champion swimmer Katie Ledecky to name a few. But what would Jesus say if he were invited to give a commencement address to high school or college graduates?

If Jesus were giving a commencement address, Pastor Eric believes he would focus on 4 truths from his teachings:

- 1) We are called to be light of the world.
- 2) Life does not consist of an abundance of possessions.
- 3) Take the narrow road in life.
- 4) Surrender your life to God.

And according to Jesus, if we can live out these truths, we will find life.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. If you were to make a commencement address at a high school or college, what is one thing you would want to say to the graduates?
2. Read Matthew 5:14-16 (on page 1). What is one thing you can do to overcome darkness in your sphere of influence?
3. Read Matthew 6:19-21, 24 (on page 1). If you were to look through your monthly expenditures, would it show that you serve God or money?
4. Matthew 7:13-14 (on page 1). Have you ever taken the more difficult path in life and it turned out to be a blessing? Explain.
5. Read the Lord's Prayer (on page 1). What stands out to you about how you should live your life?

### **FINAL APPLICATION**

What area of your life do you need to surrender to God? How can this group help?