

"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." Peter 3:15b

### **Icebreaker:**

Share a Faith Story: Continue having one or two people share their faith story in each meeting until everyone has had a chance. Have everyone ask the person sharing questions about their story.

### **Study**

Mark shared a survey in his sermon. The survey said that the people of San Francisco and Silicon Valley are "far less likely to belong to a place of worship, to volunteer in a place of worship, to find a sense of community there, or even to trust the people they meet there. They attend religious services with less regularity than Americans pretty much anywhere else..."

One university professor said, "If some mad scientist were put in a laboratory and asked to create the quintessentially secular metropolitan area in the United States, they couldn't do better than the Silicon Valley."

1. Why do you think the San Francisco Peninsula is arguably the most irreligious place in the country? Why do you think God has placed you on the Peninsula for such a time as this?

2. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus describes how his kingdom citizens are to live differently within earthly kingdoms. Read Matthew 5:13-16. (Salt and Light)

- Out of all the metaphors Jesus could use to describe his followers, why does he describe us as "salt" and "light"?
  
- What happened when salt and light were absent in the ancient world?
  
- How do you see salt and light applying to us in the 21st-century world on our Peninsula?

Read Matthew 5:3–10

3. The Beatitudes describe how kingdom citizens are to look different from their neighbors, friends, and co-workers. Each beatitude comes with a promise. Share a beatitude in which you need God to transform you.

Leslie Newbigin said, \*We must live in the Kingdom of God in such a way that it provokes questions for which the Gospel is the answer."

4. What are questions for which the Gospel is the answer when Christians live differently? What does living differently look like to you?

5. Consider that we in the church carry some responsibility for the secularization of our society. How can we encourage each other not to withdraw but to engage our culture more?

## **Become More Intentional**

6. Put aside your church and your church programs for this question. Where has God placed you, and who has He placed around you? How can you be more salty and shine brighter right where you are?

7. Where can you go, and what can you do to be around folks who are not yet following Jesus?

In Colossians 4:5–6, Paul says, "Be wise in the way that you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer (or talk) to everyone.

8. What kind of questions might you ask to begin to open spiritual conversations with folks, in a sense, "to season your speech with salt"?

9. Share with your group one personal next step of faith to be salt and light to the people in your life who have yet to put their faith in Jesus Christ as their savior.

### **Prayer**

Along with your personal requests, pray about your next faith step and pray for those on your prayer list who have yet to come to faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior.