

THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

JESUS IS KING



Salt and Light

Text: Matthew 5:13-16

What happens when you and I are attacked or persecuted? Our fight or flight mode kicks in. Our tendency is to recoil, to curl up, to withdraw, and to hide away. Jesus continues His sermon and teaches clearly that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. We are to play an important role in engaging this world.

1. The Salt of the Earth - Matthew 5:13

Jesus never challenged us to become salt or light. He simply said that we are – and we are either fulfilling or failing that given responsibility.

Our discipleship is not just for our benefit but to benefit others. Christ puts us - His followers - in this world to be a blessing. It's not about us. Jesus doesn't want you to write off the world - He wants you to be salt and light to the world.

Disciples are like salt in 3 ways (Considering the historical context)

1. Precious
2. Preservative
3. Flavorful

The World is supposed to be better for the simple fact that believers are in it. The world may still hate you despite the great flavor you bring - be flavorful anyway. Christians should be a blessing to the community they inhabit.

2. A Big Compliment; A Larger Responsibility - Matthew 5:14-15

Jesus gives this gathering of peasants, blue-collared attendants, fishermen, and disciples a great compliment by calling them lights - and lights of the World. **This compliment was typically reserved in Jewish culture for the brightest and most influential rabbis of the day.**

Jesus looked at His fisherman disciples and said to these guys you are the light of the world. What a blessing and responsibility He gives us.

It was common to have a lampstand in the home to place the light on. The idea of a lampstand gives the sense that we are to be intentional about letting this light shine. Even as lamps are placed higher so their light can be more effective, we should look for ways to let our light shine in greater and broader ways.

Don't be a secret Christian who hides their light under a basket. Jesus knew that there would be strong temptation for the men that had it in them to be lights to hide their light.

When your light is shining - it does draw attention. It would draw the world's attention to them, and so expose them to the ill will of such as hate the light.

The early Christians make constant reference to it and their lives display the glory of the radical beatitudes.

3. The Goal of being Salty and Light - Matthew 5:16

The goal of shining and being salty is not that people see how shiny you are or how flavorful you are! The purpose in letting our light so shine by doing good works is so that others will glorify God, not ourselves

Jesus is calling us to be distinct and to be different.

Light is needed because the world is in darkness, and if our Christianity imitates the darkness, we have nothing to show the world. To be effective we must seek and display the Christian distinctive - salt and light. **We can never affect the world for Jesus by becoming like the world. To make a difference with your life you must be different.**

Conclusion: The sermon on the mount isn't the way to accomplish salvation but the sermon on the mount teaches this is how the person who is made right with God lives their life. It's not about how to become a disciple of Jesus but about what a disciple of Jesus values.

GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why is it important that the context of being Salt & Light is in light of persecution?
2. How can we act as a preservative in our culture to prevent moral decay?
3. Have you ran into a Christian grump or constant complainer? Does being a seasoning or adding favor challenge you to reveal to those around you the joy, peace and satisfaction you find in a relationship with Jesus?
4. What did Jesus mean that if salt loses its savour it is to be cast out and trodden under foot? Practically speaking what does it mean for a believer to lose their saltiness?
5. Do you think the people listening to Jesus were shocked by his statements that they were the light of the world? Why or why not?
6. How can we be deliberate in shining our lights like putting our lights on a lamp-stand?
7. Why is it tempting to be a “dimmer switch” Christian and hide our lights?
8. Is it wrong to receive praise for a good deed? How do we point people to Jesus when we do good?