

Salt and light

Matthew chapter 5:13-5:16

This morning we look to a familiar verse of Scripture.

It is the Scripture where Jesus tells us to be the Salt and Light to the world. It is Jesus teaching the multitude of people that followed Him, the disciples that worked close with Him and each one of us.

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus Inaugural address if you will.

He declares blessings, He declares ethical behavior, and he declares what is to be a follower of Christ.

Matthew Chapter 5:1-11 is the Beatitudes.

The word beatitude comes from the Latin beatitudo, meaning "blessedness." The phrase "blessed are" in each beatitude implies a current state of happiness or well-being. This expression held a powerful meaning of "divine joy and perfect happiness" to the people of Christ's day.

So....Matthew Chapter 5:1-11 is the Beatitudes and then for 2 ½ chapters He gives us applicable teaching.

You think I get windy at times, I am sure this was not a 30 minute sermon.

Matthew chapter 5:13-16

Remember that red words in your Bible tell us that these words are the words that were spoken by Jesus.

(13) "You are the salt of the earth."

**Salt And Light**

Matthew 5:13-16

You: being the crowd of people following Jesus, His disciples, and future followers of Christ.

(14) “You are the light of the world.”

Let’s break this into two parts- salt and light.

What does it mean to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world?

What is our responsibility?

## I. Salt of the Earth

You have to take this into context, and you have to understand the importance of salt in the ancient world at the time.

They had no refrigeration, so they never had a freezer full of food that they would grab something from.

Kings actually store-housed salt and at one time was used as money for exchange of goods.

Because of primitive mining of salt, salt was sometime impure and lost saltiness. It was then thrown out and used as a hardener for sidewalks.

So, what does Jesus want to tell us when He calls us to be the salt of the earth?

First of all, he is talking to all of us that profess Christ as Lord and proclaim to be followers of Christ.

“You are the salt of the earth”

He is telling us to be preservatives.

We are to make an impact with those we come into contact with.

We are to be an influence to people.

Salt had to be rubbed into the meat so that it would prevent decay.

Becoming part of the meat and keeping it from being spoiled. We are to do that.

Christianity- Christ-followers have to make a positive effect on the world.

Most colleges started in the USA were started by Christians, hospitals, Red Cross, orphanages, also started by Christians.

You can never make an influence if you never make contact.

One of the reasons for our coffee and pastry time after church is we want fellowship time. Time where people get to know each other and become connected to each other.

Have you ever gotten salt in an open wound? Stings! Irritates.

Have you ever been around Christians that the only way they get involved in your life is to tell you all the things you are doing wrong?

Even what they say may be true; they will not connect and build community because they are not making a positive connection.

Jesus says as followers of Christ we can change the world, change circumstances, change situations, but it will come as we are pure salt with pure motives.

Because of impure mining procedures, salt lost its worth and it was thrown on the ground and walked on.

Pure salt will do what it was created to do- preserve and flavor.

When people look at you and your life, are they saying you are the real deal?

Inconsistent lifestyle rebels people from the church.

Does your walk draw people toward God or away from God?

How many times have you heard – “If that is what a Christian looks like, I don’t want any part of it”

How many times have you heard someone say that they are Christian and do things that they know is wrong?

Illustration-

A preacher was building a wooden trellis to support a climbing vine, he was pounding away; he noticed a little boy was watching him. The youngster did not say a word, so the preacher kept on working, thinking the boy would leave, but he didn't. Pleased at the thought that his work was being admired, the pastor finally said, are you trying to pick up some pointers on gardening? No, said the little boy, just waiting to hear what a preacher says when he smashes his thumb with a hammer.

We are always influencing someone- positive or negative.

If your influence was to wait for us to become perfection, none of us would be able to do anything for God.

Listen to some quotes about salt and see how that can influence the way that you connect to people.

“Neither sugar or salt taste particularly good by itself. Each is at its best when used to season something else.”

“Nobody likes salt rubbed into their wounds, even if it is the salt of the earth.”

It is not about perfection, it is about obedience.

We are called by God to be authentic, to be the real deal.

We cannot allow the impurities of the world to affect our usefulness in the kingdom of God.

We cannot be an irritant for the sake of just irritating, but allow those around us to become thirsty for the things of God.

Remember the story of Lot's wife- she became a pillar of salt because she wanted to be a part of the world. She looked back and wanted the

world more than escaping. We are not to be pillars of salt, but emphatically told by Jesus to be salt of the earth.

Illustration-

We are getting a new church sign out by the road that will tell people who we are, and we will have a message on that board at all times.

People will pass by that sign everyday and read that sign.

Most will never step foot in these doors, but if we had an inappropriate saying out there, the ones that would never step in now would have ammunition to use because we are held to a higher standard.

We are supposed to be the salt of the earth. People are watching each one of us and evaluating their own thoughts on being a Christian and what that looks like.

“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 by men.”

Most of the salt used in Israel came from the Dead Sea and was full of impurities. This caused it to lose some of its flavor.

Salt is a preservative and seasoning, but unless it makes contact with something or someone, it is wasted.

Salt that stays in the shaker is useless.

## II. Light of the World

(14) “You are the light of the world; a city on a hill cannot be hidden. 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 home.”

Clearly Jesus expects His people to transform the world by our presence.

Our testimony is a light that we shed on those that we come in contact with. It can be positive or negative.

Jesus says John 8:12-

“I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Jesus is the light, and as followers of Jesus we reflect that light that comes from Him and we become light to this world.

As believers, we are to reflect the things of God to a world that needs Christ.

Just as leadership is to influence people to go in the right direction, we are to be a light and move people toward the things of God, and away from the world.

There is no such thing as a secret Christian. Halfway Christians don't influence anyone.

Is your life making light in the darkness or don't people even know you are a believer?

People inside church see you one way, but does the world see you the same way?

Are you reflecting the light of Jesus to those that you come into contact with everyday?

It is important what you do when you walk out these doors!

Song – Shine Jesus Shine

Lord the light of love is shining

In the midst of the darkness shining

Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us

Set us free by the truth you now bring us

Shine on me, shine on me

Reflection to others

Chorus

Shine Jesus Shine

Fill this land with the Fathers glory

Blaze, Spirit, Blaze

Flow river flow

Flood the nation with grace and mercy

Send forth your word

Lord, and let there be light.

As we close, what impact are you making with those that you come in contact with?

Do we become so busy that we forget the command that Jesus gives each one of us to be a factor in other people's life by influence and by shedding God's love by example.