

07-20-14

Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16

Title: Salt and Light

Matthew 5:3-10

Continuing on in the Sermon on the Mount

Jesus' first sermon

Preached on hillside overlooking Sea of Galilee

Starts w/ how to be happy

How to be blessed...

True happiness is found when we realize we are

Poor in spirit

We mourn over our sin

We meekly/gently understand this

As a result we hunger and thirst for
righteousness

We show mercy and are shown mercy

We are forgiven, cleansed

We share this truth w/ the world around us,
sharing the true peace that only God can make
available

Which means that we will face opposition from
the world that is opposed to God

When we live like this we will have an influence on
the world

In Greek mythology the story is told of one goddess who everywhere she goes she brings life. You don't see her but you can tell she has been there...

Trees burned by fire – put forth new leaves

A stagnant pool becomes a fresh spring of sparkling water

Violets sprout up where she walks

Parched fields blossom w/ new life

There is another goddess, who though beautiful...

...was raised on poison

The poison so permeated her that death comes wherever she walk

She breathes on a swarm of insects – they fall to the ground (might be nice down at the lake ☺)

The most beautiful flower placed in her hand soon withers and fades away

A hummingbird flying into her presence would shudder and fall down dead

Our lives will have the effect of one of these 2 women

We will either bring life

Or, we will bring death

Which are you?

If we live by the beatitudes we bring life

If we live by the world – death

President Woodrow Wilson tells of a time he was sitting in a barber chair having his hair cut

A man came in and sat in the next chair

*Though this man wasn't teaching or instructing
Every word showed interest in the man who was
serving him
Before he was finished having his hair cut
He became aware that he had just been in an
evangelistic service
The man sitting next to him – D.L. Moody
Hanging around the barber shop for a while he saw
the affect this man had had
They didn't know his name
Something had elevated their thoughts
As he left he felt as though he were leaving a place of
worship*

What impact is felt after you leave a room?

When our lives are characterized by the beatitudes
There should be a difference
A difference after we've left a room

We are to be in the world, but not of the world
We have been sent to this world, but we
shouldn't love this world

Not an easy thing to do, very thin line
How do we do this?

Influencing others

Matthew 5:13-16

We need to be salt

We need to be light

The character of the believer has been defined

Now we must use that to influence our world

Some will persecute us

Others will be saved

Just b/c we may be persecuted – our function in this world does not change

We are to continue to be salt and light

Don't give up your saltiness

Don't hide your light

Jesus is telling us we are to be different

We are to be poor in spirit, mournful and meek,
thirsting for righteousness, merciful, pure in
heart, peacemaking

And we don't crawl into a monastery

We live it before the world

So they can see it

In verses 10 – 12 we see the attitude of the world toward us

In these next verses we see what our attitude is to be towards the world

The world will hate us

We still need to be salt/light to influence them

The world may hate us
But, the world desperately needs us

Jesus looking out over the crowd that day...

Saw the corruption...

The disintegration of life at every point

Still He loved them

As He loves us

He knew they needed salt to stop the corruption

He saw their need for light for they were lost, like
sheep w/o a shepherd, groping in the darkness

The world is decayed – it needs salt

The world is dark – it needs light

Not the view the world has of itself

Things are getting better and better???

Truth is – things are getting worse

We may know more...

There is more evil than ever in this world

It is in desperate need of salt and light

1 Peter 2:9-10

This is what we are to be in this world

We are to have an influence, make a difference

13 **You** are the salt of the earth...

14 **You** are the light of the world...

16 Let **your** light shine before men...

You – you and I – believers in the Lord Jesus –
those who have repented and trusted Him as our
Savior

If we do not spread the salt

If we do not shed the light

The corruption will continue and get worse

The darkness will stay and grow darker

In Tolkien's books The Lord of the Rings

The darkness is a tangible thing

It can be seen and felt

The heroes fight against it

It is ever creeping toward them

Trying to catch them, trying to stop them

Trying to destroy them

They are battling to keep the darkness away...

The darkness of our day is no less real

We don't always see it

We don't always feel it

It is there nonetheless

It is trying to destroy us

We must stand against it

We must be on guard against it, fight to keep it away

We are not to hide in the woods

We are not to retreat in face of persecution

We are to stand firm

Be the salt and the light

The world so desperately needs

Those who possess the character of the Kingdom
Those who are the blessed the truly happy
Are the salt and light this dark and dying world needs

Like it or not we are the salt of the earth

It is not a question of whether we are or not
The only question is have we lost our savor, our flavor

This isn't a request – this is what we are

Ephesians 5:8

We are salt, we are light

When we repent and trust Jesus as our Savior

We step out of the corruption

We step out of the darkness

We become salt and we become light

Salt to retard the corruption

Light to manifest the truth

The great blessedness (happiness) of verses 3-12

Also comes w/ great responsibility

*Famous line from spider man – with great power
comes great responsibility
Actually quoting Voltaire...*

Salt

Salt has always been important

Greeks considered it to be divine

W/o refrigeration only means of preservation

Rub salt into meat let it dry – jerky

Soak it in a brine – salt water—preserves meat

Roman soldiers were paid w/ salt

If you were a bad soldier – not worth your salt

Used as a sign of friendship, a sign in covenants

Throwing salt over your shoulder when you
make a promise perhaps a carryover from this
time

No notaries at this time

Eat salt when making a covenant

Eat it face to face – made it binding

Salt has 5 basic functions

Purity, flavor, sting, thirst, and preservation

Salt is white against darkness of world

Salt adds flavor to food

Salt stings in a wound

Salt makes us thirsty, help us drink more

Salt preserves food, keeps it from spoiling

2 Corinthians 2:15-16

Good description of salt in the world

For those being saved – a preservative

For the unsaved – it is a sting, a rebuke

We are to be pure glistening white against the darkness of this world

Our presence should point people to God

Our presence should affect the way people think

We are to flavor life w/the wonder of God's presence

We are to sting/convict the sinful wound of the world

We are to create a thirst for Christ by the way we live

We are to be a preservative – slow the spread of corruption

Political change is not what the world needs

It needs our lives, salty lives, beatitude lives

They need to see God at work in us

Light

Salt is the influence of Christian character

Light is the communication of the Gospel

Salt may be hidden as salt is rubbed into a piece of meat to preserve it, it disappears – so our lives should affect those around us

Our light should be open and ablaze in the way
we live and speak the truth of the Gospel of the
Lord Jesus

Salt can only slow down the spoilage
When the light comes – the spoiled becomes whole
and well again

We are to speak and live the truth of the light

When salt is put on something – it melts into it
Light shines on the outside

It is the communication of the Gospel

We turn on the light so everyone can see

We are to be a subtle influence like salt
And we are to be bright and glaring like light
Shining on the world around us

John 8:12

Jesus is the light of the world

Light is the revelation of God

Through His Word, through His Son, through Himself

We are to proclaim the message of light in a
dark world

We are to be the light of the world

Spreading, sharing the gospel to those around us

2 Corinthians 4:6

6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Sharing the knowledge of the glory of God brings light

The light has to shine openly

A city set on a hill...

The cities in Galilee are generally set on the top of hills – open to cooling breezes, more easily defended...

At night, light a lamp – find your way

We are light, and light should not be hidden

We are not some secret society, some mystery

We are a city set on a hill – for all to see

We need to have the character and the influence of salt
And the bold bright message of the light of the Gospel

Warning

...but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.

...nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

Don't lose your flavor

Salt that has lost its flavor is good for nothing

Don't hide your light

Fail to share the truth w/ those around you

They say the salt of today doesn't lose its flavor

It is highly refined

Most of the salt of Jesus' time was from Dead Sea

Easily picked up, but it was mixed w/ gypsum
and easily became alkaline

If that happened only good to be thrown on the road

Would kill a field if put there

Not much good for anything else

If we are not careful – we will lose our influence

If sin enters our lives we lose our influence

You can't slow down the corruption of
the world – if you're in it

Conform to the world – lose your saltiness

To be salt we have to stay away from corruption

They say perfectly pure salt never loses its flavor

That fits quite well here

When we stay clean, we stay salty

None of us can be perfectly pure in this life

In this life we will have impurities
The potential for losing our saltiness
By God's grace, w/ His help we can influence the
world around us

Who would light a light and then cover it w/ a basket?
When we are not sharing the truth of the Gospel
We are hiding the light inside of us
We need to be light so all can see it

The fear of persecution can easily make us afraid
What will people think?
What will people say?
Last week – blessed are the ???
Persecuted...

The world desperately needs the light of the truth of
God's word – don't hide it from them
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine...

If Jesus lives inside of us, He is the light
We cannot change that
The light is there

Don't hide under the basket of fear...
Don't hide under the basket of acceptance...
Why should we do this?
What is the biggest priority?

God's glory

Matthew 5:16

When we keep our mouths shut

When we are afraid to stick our necks out

We make ourselves more important than God

He is more important than anything

We need to live this way

Psalms 115:1

Not to us, O Lord, not to us,

But to Your name give glory

Because of Your lovingkindness,

because of Your truth.

God is our Father

Tender, kind loving

He is our Father in heaven

In the majesty, the splendor, the glory

We are to glorify God

This is the reason we live

It is for Him to bring glory, bring honor to Him

He is most important

More than anything else in life

The way we live, the things we say all points to Him

Conclusion:

Only believers are the salt

Only believers are the light

If we lose our saltiness – there is no other

If we lose our light – there is only darkness

There are no alternatives

Have you repented and trusted the Light, Jesus?

Are you living your life as a light in this world?

Adding flavor, preserving...

Benediction:

Matthew 5:16

16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Sermon outline

07-20-14

Matthew 5:13-16

I _____ others

S _____

L _____

W _____

God's g _____