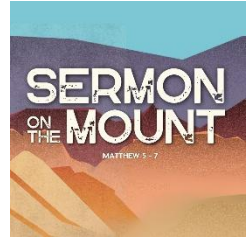


The Sermon on the Mount: Salt & Light

Lesson 3: September 29 & 30

Read Matthew 5:13–16



Sermon Reflection Question: What captured your attention from Sunday's sermon?

Observation & Interpretation Questions:

The two short metaphors from this passage are teachings to Jesus' audience of disciples. The Beatitudes describe the character of Jesus' Kingdom community. He now moves on to talk about its role.

1. What metaphors does Jesus use to describe his followers and why do you think he does this?
2. What happens when salt loses its saltiness and when light is put under a bowl? How does this relate to the role as a follower of Christ?
3. What are some areas of your life where your "light" is hidden? What fears or pressures contribute to this hiding?
4. Why does Jesus transition the last Beatitude in verse 11 to teaching about Salt and Light? How does this show the warning and role for God's people?

The images of Salt, Light, and City are not random. Let's learn how the book of Isaiah portrays the new covenant people of God who carry on the work of "God's servant."

5. Israel was called to become a city through which God's light would shine into the world. Describe this calling from Isaiah 2:2–5.
6. As Israel fails to be this light and city on the hill, what do we learn about the "servant" God appoints on his people's behalf from Isaiah 42:1–9?

In Isaiah 60, the new Jerusalem is a community of people who follow the servant and participate in his new covenant witness to the nations.

7. Describe how God's people will participate in this witness from Isaiah 60:1–3.

Jesus is the great prophet and suffering servant of Isaiah, bringing light and grace to the world. By extension, then, Jesus' disciples are likewise heralds of this new covenant message... and they embody this 'salt and light' effectiveness through good works that are visible and bring honor to their heavenly Father.

8. Let's look back to Matthew 5. What does it mean that Jesus says "you are" (not "you should be") the salt and light? What does this imply about identity vs. behavior?
9. Identity in Christ precedes action. What do you learn about your identity in Christ? See 1 Peter 2:9-10.
10. *Everyone* in the house benefits from a candle that is put on a stand. Who are the "everyones" in your life? Write a prayer for those placed in our life today.
11. Why is it significant that the goal in v. 16 is that the Father receives glory for our good works—not the believer? Are there areas in your life where you're seeking self-recognition rather than God-glorification?
12. Christ followers are meant to be distinct and engaged, not withdrawn or assimilated. Describe a time when you witnessed the good works of Christ-followers. How did this encourage you or cause you to respond in faith?
13. With unhindered lights, God truly gets all the glory, honor, and praise in all that we do, including good works. Take time today to praise God for the work He has done in and through you.