

We're done with the Beatitudes and now Jesus is moving into His sermon...how to live in this particular section, He is telling us we need to stand out as Christians | Salt & Light
Can I embarrass myself? Can I tell you of a time when I stood out in an obnoxious way?

The year is 1996 and my Senior Prom was upon us...I had gone tuxedo shopping with GF

- Everything bored me...black, black, and more black...so I had an idea – Costume shop
- Went to the costume shop and found it...perfect...it was the yellow zoot suit...mask
- I rented my GF a roaring 20's Flapper Dress and it was off to the Prom...We stood out

The Christian is not called to blend into the culture but to stand out for Christ

- We live in a world standing out is discouraged...who stand out weirdos - LIZARD MAN Erik Sprague - Phd Philosophy candidate Albany Jesus | Different not weird...Goodwill
- Fit in, follow crowd, avoid making people uncomfortable, and keep our faith to yourself Stand apart from world by living so distinctly for Christ others can see Him through your life Are you living so differently from the world that others can clearly see Christ in you?

But Jesus never called His followers to blend into the world—He called us to be different

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet."¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. God has not placed Christians in world simply to occupy space, but make eternal difference

- Isn't that a wild idea...God could use you to make an eternal difference in this world You could be the example and the mouthpiece that leads someone into arms Christ The way we live should cause people to see something in us that points to Jesus Christ

Our character should point to Christ – Our conduct should reflect Christ

Our conversations should communicate Christ

- Our attitudes should reflect Christ - We should respond to people with the humility, compassion, and grace that Jesus demonstrated.
- Our actions should represent Christ – The world is watching and we should demonstrate that we belong to Jesus.
- Our reactions should reveal Christ - When we respond to criticism, conflict, suffering, and disappointment with faith and grace, our character points people to Christ.

Big Idea - Our presence on earth should direct others toward heaven

David Livingstone – 19th century Doctor and Missionary from London – Ministered in Africa He experienced serious illness, loneliness, and physical hardship...continued serving Christ "If you have men who will only come if they know there is a good road, I don't want them.

I want men who will come if there is no road at all."

Livingstone died on 1 May 1873 at age 60 – Dysentery – Malaria African carried – Heart

"Livingstone gave his heart to Africa." – One convert – Sechele – Convert Kwena Tribe

We are placed here to influence people for Christ – Destination is Heaven...we work earth

Today...I'm going to give you two ways that you can stand out in this world...lead to Christ

1. Be the Salt that Preserves (13)

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

I love salt. I remember when I found out about salt – Grandpa Hickman – Wendy's

Autumn and I just had dinner at Alan and Karma's house...Ribeye...Kosher Salt

First century (height of the early Roman Empire), salt was often referred to as "white gold"

'salt of the earth' He is referencing something valuable – 14,000 Industrial Uses for Salt

⇒ Preserving food - Salt slowed decay of meat, fish, and other foods w/o refrigeration

⇒ Seasoning food - Salt was used to improve the taste of food

Job 6:6 even asks, "Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt?"

⇒ Purification and cleansing - Cleansing and purification in various ancient practices

⇒ Sacrificial offerings - Old Testament sacrificial system, salt was specifically required

Leviticus 2:13 - "You shall season all your grain offerings with salt." | God likes salt

⇒ Trade and economic value - Important commodity throughout the ancient world

Salt was valuable because it influenced what it touched; Christians are valuable to the world when their Christlike lives influence the world around them | Three ways to do that...

a. Preserve what is good - "You are the salt of the earth,

As I said earlier...One of the primary uses of salt in the ancient world was preservation

- Salt helped preserve something being destroyed by corruption – Christian Influence

The Christian should be a preserving presence in a decaying world

We live in a world where sin is constantly trying to redefine what is right and wrong

⇒ Truth is being redefined - "Your truth is your truth, my truth is my truth." | Gods Word

⇒ Sexual morality is being redefined - Presented as normal, healthy, or even virtuous

⇒ Relationships are being redefined - Biblical union of man woman | AI - Lee Jin-gyu

⇒ Greed is being called success - Pursuing wealth, possessions, and status | Jesus Danger

⇒ Pride is being celebrated – Entire generation...things don't go their way = injustice

"The world does not try to convince us that sin is wrong. Sometimes it simply changes the label. What God calls sin, the world calls freedom. What God calls pride, the world calls confidence. What God calls greed, the world calls success. What God calls rebellion, the world calls self-expression.

Sin has always tried to make evil look acceptable"

We are called to be the salt of the earth...we must preserve what is good...stand...declare truth

b. Permeate where your placed - Salt sitting in container cannot season a meal – Contact

Unseasoned fries are garbage...then you add salt and it permeates the fry makes delicious

- Jesus has placed you somewhere intentionally: Family – Workplace – Community...SALT

Wherever Christ has placed you, He intends you to influence & reach people around you

"You are the salt of the church." - "You are the salt of the earth." – Be salt every day ends Y

c. Protect your distinctiveness - but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

- Much of the salt available around Dead Sea was not pure sodium chloride – Rock Salt

- Mixed w other minerals and impurities - Moisture leached in and took actual salt away

It still looked like salt—but it no longer acted like salt

The picture Jesus gives of a professing disciple who has lost his distinctive Christian influence

- This text is a warning | You can look like salt on the outside...but not be salt on inside

How many people do you know who claim to be Christians but look just like the world

- Maybe they started off rockin & rollin as a Christian but have since gone back to world

'It is no longer good for anything' – Their discipleship has become worthless...ineffective

'except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet' – Salt b/c useless & discarded

Jesus is emphasizing the seriousness of compromised Christian witness

If believers abandon distinctiveness of faith...lose influence God intends them to have

Saw this a lot in recovery ministry...believe...get sober...be baptized...get drunk...world

The world does not need Christians who simply blend in

It needs Christians who are shaped by Christ and their lives create a noticeable difference

Protect Your Convictions - Protect Your Character - Protect Your Commitment

2. Be the Light That Proclaims (14–16)

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. - Have you ever been spelunking...southern Missouri...lights off

Light exposes what is hidden, gives us direction in darkness, helps us see the way forward

Darkness does not need to be taught how to be dark. It simply exists when light is absent

Light has a purpose - Even a small light can make a tremendous difference in a dark place

Jesus tells His disciples: “You are the light of the world.” | Not you have light...you are light

Christians are called to shine distinctly before world so others may see Christ & glorify God

How should followers of Christ shine in a dark world?

a. Shine vividly - ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden

Live so distinctly for Christ that His character, truth, and goodness are clearly visible through

Think about this...you live in first century – Walking from Bethlehem to Jericho...stop on way

You’re going to stop through Jerusalem – Mount Zion – Mount Moriah – Western Hill

As you walk through the darkness...you see it on the hill...lit up...inviting you in – That’s us!

- A city on a hill naturally stands out. It cannot easily be concealed
- Likewise, a follower of Christ should be distinguishable from the world around them
Our convictions, character, conduct, and compassion should make our faith vivid

b. Shine visibly

¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.

How great is this imagery...funny...who in their right mind would light a lamp...under basket

First Century – Small oil lamps – Put them on high stands to illuminate as far as they could

- Power goes off at your house...turn on a flashlight and throw it under a blanket...done!
Teach our kids ‘This little light of mine....let it shine’ - God did not save us to hide our faith!

Silence – Speak | Compromise – Stand | Fear – Courageous | Private – Public

Jesus did not die so we would be ashamed of believing in Him...been saved! Shine Gospel

Corey – Fanny Pack - Power Team – Gym – Lights went out

Don’t Hide your Light – Position your Light (Stand) – Let your Light Shine

c. Shine vertically – See what we did there...vertical church...shine vertically...witty

¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. - We shine horizontally so that people will look vertically

Should shine before others so clearly they see Christ in us and are directed to glorify God

Inside every person who was every born is an intrinsic desire to glorify God

- Jesus is not teaching us to live good lives so people will say: “What a great person!”
 - He is teaching us to live good lives so people will ultimately say: “What a great God!”
- Our good works are not designed draw attention to us; designed to direct attention to God

“Only but by the grace of God”

Patience – Generosity – Faithfulness – Respond in Suffering – Love others

Let your good works lead people to your Christ

Five things that will let your light shine bright

- ⇒ Christlike Character — Your attitudes and actions reflect the character of Jesus.
- ⇒ Cheerful Giving — Giving of your time, talent, and treasure for the work of kingdom
- ⇒ Compassion for Others — You demonstrate genuine love, mercy, and kindness.
- ⇒ Courageous Witness — You are willing to speak openly about Jesus ☑
- ⇒ Compassionate Service — You use your time, abilities, and resources to serve others.

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