

JESUS GREATEST HITS PT4
Growth Group Notes Week 2
PASTOR BOB RICE: SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2018

Main Text: Matthew 5:13-16

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Premise: Christianity stands to lose its influence in the world and faces the danger of extinction due to irrelevance. Not because there are too few Christians, and not because the Christian message is invalid, but because there are too few people boldly engaging the culture openly in the marketplace of ideas with the uncompromised truth of God’s Word.

Notes:

1. Introduction -

- Matt 5:1-12 is called the Beatitudes.
- Matt 5:13-16 is called the similitudes - the quality or state of being similar to something.
- In this passage, Jesus is using two metaphors to describe the believers calling and assignment in this world.
 - “You are the salt of the earth”
 - “You are the light of the world”

SPECIAL NOTE: this is the Master giving His clear expectations to His people.

2. Jesus uses 3 terms in this passage that everyone in his audience understood and used everyday.
 - **Salt** – (NaCl) The only rock on earth that people can and must eat to stay alive. It was used every day for preserving and flavoring food. It was so useful and valued in their culture that Roman soldiers were often paid with it. In their day, salt could be traded in any market anywhere in the world like cash.
 - Like salt, the assignment of the believer is to:
 - Preserve the world from corruption.
 - Flavor the world with our contrasting lifestyles.
 - **Light** – the energy used by our eyes to help perceive the world around us (reality). In the absence of light, darkness exists, disabling our ability to see the world around us (deception).
 - In a world that relies entirely on physical perception, perception can become deception.
 - This is why darkness and light is one of the central themes of scripture.
 - The world is in spiritual darkness because the knowledge of God comes through the light of revelation as opposed to physical illuminations.
 - **World** / Earth – Does not refer to the planet earth as a geographical or planetary entity. Instead it refers to the entirety of the human experience since the Fall of Adam. It includes all people all cultures throughout all history.
3. Matt. 5:13 begs us to ask a few crucial questions:
 - What would a godless world taste like? A secular world or a world with only false religion void of the true and living God.
 - What would the world taste like if Christians were not distinct?
 - And what does the world do with indistinct Christians?

The role of the believer in culture is to touch all aspects of the unbelieving world leaving behind God's distinct truth. (Once something is salted the salt cannot be removed).

4. Matt. 5:14-16 "you are the light of the world"
 - We are light because we have been enlightened.
 - We see therefore we can influence and direct.
 - Hiding doesn't make sense.
 - Our responsibility to God and man is to find a high perch and shine.
 - We glorify God when we make people aware that God is real.

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Questions:

1. From Sunday's Sermon, was there a particular point, comment, or scripture that caught your attention or challenged you?

2. Discuss some examples of how Christianity has lost some of its influence in our culture.

3. Why was salt important in Jesus' time, and why is it important to us today.

4. Discuss some practical ways that we can fulfill Jesus' metaphor of being salt in the world we live in today.

5. Describe some scenarios in which believers can lose or have lost their saltiness?

6. Discuss the biblical concept of light and darkness.

- a. What is it?
- b. Who is in it?
- c. How do you get light?

7. Discuss what it means to “let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father”, and some practical ways to do it.

Walk it out

- 1. Evaluate your personal saltiness and brightness.
- 2. Pray for guidance and opportunity to be saltier and brighter.
- 3. Pray for boldness to let your light shine before people.
- 4. Be the light as opportunities present themselves. (and they will)
