

Study of Matthew

August 21, 2022

Discussion Question: How are you influencing and impacting the world?

Matthew 5:13-16 *"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* [KJV]

Jesus describes the characteristics of the citizens of the Kingdom of God.

First, we are distinctive as disciples...blessed...we exhibit these characteristics

- poor in spirit, mourning for sin; meek, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers

Jesus reveals a couple of reactions of the world to the those in the Kingdom. One is to persecute them...He then pivots to describe how the those in the Kingdom change the world and how it creates a different reaction in the world.

With this intentional discipleship lifestyle we draw the attention of the world to our good works that have the intended goal of inciting them to worship God.

How do we do that?

1. Influence the World

"You are the salt of the earth"

Salt is said to be one of the essentials for human life. The body needs sodium to transmit nerve impulses, contract and relax muscle fibers (including the ones in the heart) and it assist in maintaining a proper fluid balance.

Salt does not change a dish if it is not involved in the dish!

- It has no influence if it stays in its own container.

If we are not present in the world, influencing it, the world is in danger of total devastation. Remember the story of Sodom & Gomorrah. The influence of righteousness keeps God's judgment held back.

Our influence, like salt, is unseen many times. We need to understand, as those committed to distinctive discipleship, we are influencing the world in ways that can't be seen nor understood. (Example: Pray in secret, God rewards openly)

Salt **permeates**, it **preserves**, it has **power to heal** and it brings flavor where there is bitterness.

2. Impact the World

You are the light of the world

From a scientific point, without light humans can have no sight. The ability of all humans and animals to see things is based totally and irrevocably on the complex interaction of light with our eyes and brain. Anything we see is a result of the light traveling from that object to our eyes through space.

Some reasons for Light

- Enlightens,
- Energizes
- Evaluates
- Exonerates

1 John 1:5 – 7 *“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”*

Jesus said are the light of the world. For what purpose? We want the world to see Jesus!

Light is effective because it contrasts with the darkness around it. It is not like the world. On the one hand it creates hostility from the world because it shines light on their evil. Jesus said, Men love darkness because their deeds are evil. On the other hand it is what leads them to Jesus.

So shine the light...the blessed Gospel light...let it shine

3. Incite the World

They see your good works and glorify your Father

By being salt, influencing the world and by being light, impacting what they see, it incites the world to praise God.