

Make an Impact - as Salt and Light

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[0 : 00] I was thinking of helping to demonstrate this session by having something to smash, some kind of bowls or something, hit it with a hammer.

Impacts, impacts, because there's impacts that are happening. Some good, some bad. Influences, impacts. An 18th century Scottish writer said this, and you follow me here, Andrew.

An 18th century Scottish writer said this, he said that nations have a cycle that they follow. From bondage to spiritual faith. From spiritual faith to courage. From courage to liberty. From liberty to abundance.

From abundance to selfishness. From selfishness to complacency. From complacency to apathy. From apathy to dependency.

And then from dependency back to bondage again. There's a cycle that goes through. And this writer said it's, on average, every 200 years, world's great civilisations progress through this sequence.

[1 : 33] From bondage to all of these stages through to dependency back to bondage again. At what stage is Australia at today? At what stage are we at? Could it be apathy? Could it be apathy?

I know we refer to that in thinking of who are here today. Not that you're apathetic. You're the ones who aren't. Could it be apathy that we're at in Australia today? Someone put it like this, do we as churches care enough to do anything about the ever-accelerating moral decline and do what we can to help make an impact on our societies?

Do we as individuals, as well as churches, do we as individuals, as well as churches, care enough to do everything we can to help spread the saving gospel of Christ across the street and around the world?

For without Jesus, people are lost forever. There was an interviewer who went out one day, and it's a common joke people use. He went out asking people, do you think that ignorance or apathy is our biggest problem today?

And the answer he kept getting was, I don't know and I don't care. Ignorance and apathy, the church is full of it. Ignorance, apathy, complacency.

[3 : 01] Who cares? Think of the impact of Australia's condition on the next generation. There was a survey in late 2009 that said, Australia is ranked the 8th least corrupt country in terms of the corruption of its government.

Now that sounds pretty good, doesn't it? In other words, it's the 8th most honest nation in the world out of 180. However, another article that featured in January 2010 described Australia as having the dubious distinction of being the most sinful nation on earth.

It's official. Australia has won the award for the most sinful nation on planet earth. We scored highly in every one of the seven categories based on national statistics that measure the so-called deadly sins of pride, of envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony and lust.

We are on the top of the list. It prompted a response from the then PM speaking on behalf of the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd. The spokeswoman said, the spokeswoman said, she disputed whether Australia was overtly sinful, overly sinful.

Quote, The Prime Minister believes Australia to be a great country and Australians are good, generous and hard-working people. That was the official response from right at the top.

[4 : 31] Some people think somehow we are a Christian nation. After all there's four crosses on our Australian flag. I put it to you however that Australia is very corrupt in the eyes of Almighty God.

It's rotten to the core. From the top to the bottom. Sinful strongholds are holding our nation in bondage and captivity.

And the pollution and curse of sin is rank and vile in the nostrils of our God. Australia is rotten. And forces are at work today that are making it ever more rotten.

The very foundations of our nation. There is an impact. An impact of sin. An impact.

We see that. For example, the sexualisation of popular culture. We see that Australia is not in a good state morally or spiritually. 91% of Australians don't make it to church.

[5 : 32] Not that church going is any merit to heaven. But it's just a reflection, isn't it? Immorality. It's rampant. Alternative lifestyles they call it.

It's another word for sin. As are affairs. As are relationships outside of marriage. Minority groups are actively threatening the God-ordained institution of marriage.

There's a clamour today for so-called same-sex marriages. Ex-marriages. An impact of sin. We have the world-renowned Mardi Gras.

Australians celebrate indecency and perversion under the slogan of tolerance. Meanwhile, the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases is escalating.

Australia has one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the developed world. What about abortions? Abortions. And this is not to condemn anyone who may have had an abortion.

[6 : 37] God can cleanse and forgive such a thing. But for the past 40 years in Australia, more than 3 million unborn babies have been put to death.

The beauty, the safety of a mother's womb should be the most amazing, beautiful place. It's been invaded by murderous instruments and become a place of bloody execution.

And the carnage goes on. Day after day. Relatively unchallenged. There's some 90,000 abortions per year.

And the Bible teaches that God is the author of life. At seven weeks, seven weeks in the mother's womb, there's already a well-proportioned small-scale baby with facial features, fingers, toes, and everything else that we would conserve would be a fellow human being.

And this little person reacts to pain. Slaughter in the womb. Sin has an impact. Crime, lawlessness abound.

[7 : 48] Alcohol, the world sees it. It's recognised as by far the largest and most serious substance abuse problem in Australia, costing the nation 15 billion dollars annually.

What alcohol costs our nation. I was troubled, in fact, to hear just days ago. Life FM were promoting an event.

They said beer and soft drinks there. As if that should appeal to those who would want to have attended. And why would you put that on the airways? There's a mounting wickedness in our nation.

A mounting wickedness. Australia has violated the word of God. And we're witnessing the degeneration of a nation. Hollywood, it mounts an assault against the Bible and Christian values at every chance it can.

And churches, meanwhile, churches, meanwhile, are striving more and more and more to be relevant. That is the buzzword, the catchword.

[8 : 52] The driving force. Relevant at the expense of truth. To the detriment of true faith and godliness. An undermining of the scriptures of the authority of God's word.

Friends, it's okay to be relevant. But the message cannot be watered down. It cannot be changed. It cannot be accommodating to man's sin.

It must drive at the very heart of sin. And address it. And point to the answer. Certainly in love, as was spoken of.

But it must be boldly declared. And soundly declared. We're seeing yet today another Jesus worshipped. Another Jesus. An abandonment of biblical doctrine in the all-consuming effort.

To be entertaining. Leaven. Leaven. Is in the lump. Leaven. The word says, watch out for leaven. That yeast that makes the dough rise.

[9 : 56] That sin. That corrupts. That impacts. We've got to be very guarded. Sin is most certainly having an impact. An impact.

What of the future of our children? We have failed our nation. Talking we in the corporate sense of the church worldwide. Australia-wide. We have failed our nation.

We have failed our children. We've failed the next generation. We've failed our children. We've failed our grandchildren. What kind of nation will we hand over to the next generation? We've got a big challenge today.

Sin is having an impact. We've got a nationwide. A national responsibility. What's the slogan? Act locally.

Think globally. Or something or other. I know that's a new agey type thing. But we have got a local impact. An individual impact. Every one of us as Christians should have an influence. An impact. [10:55] We've heard as was referred to of us being salt and light. You might like to follow me in Matthew 5. Sin has an impact. And so should we. We should have an impact.

We should have an influence. Whilst we're seeing sin having an impact. In the ever increasing disregard for morals and manners and respect. Where there is no fear of God before their eyes. Where we're seeing the impact. We're considering what lies ahead for our nation. I think we're nearing midnight. Sin is making an impact.

Now for an application. What then? What then for me, for you? As God's people. The time has come for the saints to make an impact. Sin makes an impact.

It's time for the saints to make an impact. When I say the saints. I'm not talking about a footy team today. I don't know if you follow the saints. I don't know who they are. But I'm not talking about a footy team today.

[11:52] I'm talking about you. As individual godly men and women. Saved people. God's people. We are the ones who need to make an impact.

It's been said that when a nation is threatened. Men go out to war. This is the day we're living in. There should be soldiers of the cross here. Ready to say, yes sir. To the Lord. The captain of our salvation. When a nation is threatened.

Men go out to war. I've detailed how Australia is rotten. And becoming Warsaw. Salt is needed. To stop the rot. To stop something rotting. We need the salt. And we see that in Matthew 5.13. As we read. Ye are the salt of the earth. If the salt have lost his savour.

[12:48] Wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing. But to be cast out. And to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world.

A city that is set on a hill. Cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle. And put it under a bushel. But on a candlestick. Yeah. Light a candle.

And hide it under a bowl. Or some container. You display it. You set it high. He says. Put it on a candlestick.

And it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men. That they may see your good works. And glorify your Father. Father which is in heaven.

Ye are the salt of the earth. Ye are the light of the world. Salt is needed when something is rotten. To preserve. To contain. To hold back the rot.

[13:45] And as Christians we must put our faith into action. We're meant to be salt and light. You're meant to be light.

Salt and light. In this darkness. We need to shine his light. We must mobilize the troops. In this spiritual battle that is raging all around us. Join the resistance. In World War II there was a resistance movement.

In the enemy occupied territory. We're in enemy occupied territory at the moment. In case you didn't realize it. We need to join the resistance.

We need to fight back. Fight back. Someone has said there's over 1700 scriptures dealing with civil government. And the Bible shows many of God's people through history as active in political life.

We know for some of course there was a theocracy. There was kings. Etc. But even in worldly governance there was God's people active. And at work.

[14:52] Having an influence. Making an impact. People like Joseph. Moses. Moses. Daniel. David.

Nehemiah. Ezra. Esther. Men and women of God making an impact. Having an influence. And friends we need to pray for our government.

We need to pray for our Prime Minister. For the opposition. For every political flavour. That is governing our nation. That they'll have the wisdom of God.

That they'll be convicted. When they try to enact ungodly legislation. We need to pray for our politicians. For our armed forces. For the police officers. Australia needs God.

It's in a dread state. We're here on the weather front. Of famines and floods. In Australia.

[15:47] At the moment. It's not so bad. But there is a famine. Actually right now. In Australia. In the world. Amos 8.11 Behold the days come.

Saith the Lord God. That I will send a famine in the land. Not a famine of bread. Nor a thirst for water. But of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea.

And from the north even to the east. They shall run to and fro. To seek the word of the Lord. And shall not find it. A famine in the land. Now.

It's not speaking of Australia directly. That verse. But I believe you could apply that. Fairly. You could apply that today. There is a famine. A lack of hearing the word of God.

A famine. Not of bread. Nor of a thirst for water. But of hearing the words of the Lord. Australia has turned its back. On God. You can make an impact.

[16:44] Friends today. You. Each one of you here today. You can make an impact. Wherever you are. Wherever you're stationed in life. You can make an impact.

Being part. Of an active. Faithful. Bible preaching. Assembly. Of God's people. Even if. It's only. An assembly. Of.

Two. There may not be a godly. Faithful. Bible preaching church. Where you live. Wherever. Two. Or three.

Are gathered. In my name. He says. There am I. In the midst. You can make an impact. Even in an assembly. Of two. An assembly.

That's founded. Upon a faithfulness. To God's word. Friends. We need to make an impact. To have an influence. It doesn't have to be a big church. It doesn't have to be.

[17:38] All the razzmatazz. And the bells and whistles. And the. Holy balloon. And the. All the. You know. The. Disco dancers. And the. The rock band.

A faithful assembly. Of two people. And God helping you. They'll be more joined. And gathered. In faithfulness. To God's word.

I was speaking to a brother. Just. Yesterday. And saying how. His assembly is dwindling. In number. And yet. Hold fast. Hold fast.

Australia needs. A return to biblical Christianity. For biblical fellowships. For biblical gatherings. Of God's people. Who love the word. Who care about it. Let's not settle for.

Ignorance. And apathy. And complacency. I don't know. Ignorance. Complacency.

[18:37] I don't care. Apathy. I'm not going to do anything about it. You're meant to be salt.

You're meant to be light. Instead. Let's make an impact. How? How can I make an impact? How can you make an impact? Be informed.

Be informed. Be informed when it's election time. Be informed. Who are you voting for? There's some Christians who vote for people. And I just wonder. What on earth is going on inside their head?

When I hear who they're giving their number on to. I just wonder. What in heaven's name are you doing? It's hard sometimes for preachers and churches to make a political statement.

For fear that we're aligning with one or another. It's a personal decision. I know that. But look at the values that these men and women are standing for. When they're asked, what are your beliefs?

[19:42] What are you going to stand for? What are you going to legislate? We should want to know that. We should want to know that. We're giving our support to that.

Be informed. Know who you are voting for and what they stand for. Hand out how to vote cards for godly candidates. Join the campaign.

There's people here today who are very active on the political front. Be praying. Be praying for them. And see when this next election time comes.

See how you can play more of an active role. Be informed. Be praying. Be fasting. Be in the word. Become spiritually active. Become politically active.

Stand for political office. Stand for political office. It could be a local council. It could be that you can make a difference where you live.

[20:38] Be a witness. Support godly Bible based ministries. Help plant gospel preaching churches where they are needed. How can I make an impact?

Ask yourself that. For some you might think, well I can't do any of those things. You can write a letter to the paper. You can write a letter to your MP when you see something that you're troubled by as a Christian.

You can be salt. You can be light. You know I'm encouraged by the book and materials from our sister Margo. I haven't read that. But it's ordinary everyday Australians have made an impact through time.

We may not see eye to eye with every one of them. But friends, make an impact. As you faithfully can. As you faithfully led by God's word are following it and obeying it.

Let it make an impact on your life. And so you can make an impact too. Friends, to close, think of it now. The true health and welfare of our nation.

[21 : 40] Is partly our responsibility. Ultimately God's in charge. Ultimately God does it all. But he wants his people to be awake.

He wants his people to be active. He wants his people to be faithful. And we see the record of scripture how men and women made an impact.

He wants you to follow the heroes of the faith. Write to the politicians. Be men and women with backbone. With resolve. Be prepared to stand up for righteousness.

For responsible government. For the truth. It's not for the faint hearted. Some will mock you. You know you'll get disappointment. I'm sure our brother who has stood for election is disappointed. That more Christians didn't respond to the obvious need. It's not for the faint hearted. But when there's a war on.

[22 : 43] The soldiers are caught up. Make an impact. Let's pray. Let's pray. Thank you.