

Matthew 5:13-16

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- [0:00] Good evening, everyone. Welcome back, or for the first time today, whichever one it is. Tonight we'll continue with our series in the Sermon on the Mount.
- We'll be looking at verses 13 through 16 tonight of chapter 5. We'll just continue to pick up and to build on what Greg and Nick have already preached on throughout this time.
- Let me start us off with a word of prayer. Lord, you've called us. You've elected us. You have a purpose laid out before our lives.
- You've made us unique. You've separated us in so many ways. Lord, we need to know. We need to yearn and desire to know you better and to know how it is that we fit into your great plan, what it is that you've called us to.
- And I just pray that through this series, through us looking at what salt and light is, that we will see how we could be that in the lives of those around us as you send us out.
- [1:22] And I pray that all these things in Christ's name. Amen. So Greg started off this series about two weeks ago, giving an overview of the Sermon on the Mount.
- And thank God for a podcast. I was sick that week. I couldn't make it. I would have loved to turn it in person. But the thing that from that that stuck out to me was that he said that this life we live in Christ, this is what our lives can and must look like, these verses, this sermon.
- As he points out a lot of things, as he speaks these blessings, as he gives all of these practical lessons on these different topics, as I kind of like to look at the Sermon on the Mount, is this lesson in practical holiness.
- It's something we can live out on a daily basis as these things that, well, all these things may not always be affecting our lives at the same time, or these things may never touch us, but he's equipping us and he's giving us the tools to live this out, to live this life out that he's calling us to.
- And we see a little bit earlier than this, he just calls his first disciples, like right before this, at the end of chapter 4, he calls them. And even as we see in Luke, he begins to teach a little bit more after that.
- [2:46] His disciples are around him, and this is a perfect opportunity for him to bring them in, to start to teach them, for them to see what his ministry is going to entail, what their ministry is going to entail, what it looks like to follow God.
- And it isn't clear what they kind of thought of him during these early times, but there was something there that made them leave their fishing boats and their tax booths to follow this great or good teacher, however they may have thought of him.
- And we see, we don't really see Jesus giving them verses to remember wise. We don't see him giving them laws to follow and things like that, but he's just saying, follow me, continue to follow me.
- And we can take that example into our lives. And he's going to break down some things and give us some warnings. He's going to give us some exhortations. He's going to encourage us in all these different ways.

So whether we continue to follow him or continue not to follow him, he's going to speak on both of those things. And as we kind of see his disciples, they really didn't have the social capital to go anywhere.

[4:03] No other teachers were clamoring to make them. They're star pupils as we kind of see in Acts like the Sanhedrin, as they stand before him, like they perceive that these were uneducated men.

And another point to pick up is when he called them, they really weren't qualified. They weren't the right people. They didn't have the right stuff. So as we see him calling them, as we see him calling them, it wasn't because of who they were or what they were doing, but it was because of his great plan.

And we see that in these verses. And he starts off, you are. He doesn't say you could be. You have the potential to be. You might be.

He says, you are. There was no posters of hope or progress or change. There wasn't an image of President Obama looking at them with these bold words in Helvetica, staring them right in the face that encouraged them and spurred them on.

But this was God sitting before them, teaching them, telling them who they were, giving them a new identity. He was preparing them. Though they might not use these things now, though they may not perceive fully what was going on there, but he was giving them something and equipping them for their future ministry of what was to come.

[5:41] And we see Jesus training and teaching them here of what was pretty much wasn't fulfilled to Pentecost came, to the Spirit came upon them and gave them the power to live these things out better.

And as we dive into this section, we're just going to look at what salt is, what light is, what Jesus has to say about us going out and living out these things in the world.

And I'll go ahead and read this for us real quick. Matthew 5, verses 13 through 16. I believe that's on page 810 of your pew Bibles.

Everybody there? 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. You are the light of the world. A city set upon a hill cannot be hidden.

[6:53] No other people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all the house. 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's in heaven.

So, why do I even need to continue? I should be done here. Be salt. Be light. Glorify your Father in heaven. Pretty simple instructions, right?

We can all kind of get that and grasp that. But what are we doing there? Are we assuming that we know what these things mean? Are we assuming that the person next to us has the same gospel-centered worldview that's going to point them in the same direction that we are?

And I'm just thankful that the Lord gives us this body, this community. He gives us preaching. He gives us teaching to bring us together, to be on one accord. And I guess a lot of times when we look at this, we look at this salt, and we look at this light, and we think we have it figured out.

We kind of look at the salt, but a lot of times we just want to talk about being light. We're a light to our coworkers. We're a light to our friends. We want to be a light to our families. But what does that really look like?

[8:15] What is Jesus calling us to here? And then in that, if we just kind of skip the salt, then how do we be light? And I think it's really important, as much as the substance is, the way he ordered it here, the salt comes before the light.

And I think there's something to that that he really wants us to see. So, in glorifying God, do we just become salty?

And setting upon a hill, does that make the light brighter? Like, how do all these things fit together? And we're seeing here, to glorify God, he says, and to glorify God, he says, your light must shine before others.

In order for your light to shine before others, it can't be hid. And if it's not hid, it should be set upon a hill. It should be put in a prominent place. But in order for this light to shine, there must be salt.

You must be salt. Not just something that fades away, loses its saltiness, but he's talking about a salt with lasting effects, with a lasting savoring that we get from that.

[9:42] And a lot of us think, being light is easy, we can sound spiritual, we won't judge people, we can be open and affirming, and most importantly, we can be nice.

And we're a light to people, and that's what we see a lot of times, people just want to be nice, and we think that's being a light to someone. So what is salt saying right here?

We're like, what's tying all this together? And as we look at this first section of the Sermon on the Mount, he's telling us who we are, who he's calling us to be, what he's calling us to do.

And as we look at the salt, we see before that, he says, we're to be poor in spirit, we're to be merciful, we're to be meek, we're to be peacemakers, pure in heart, hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

So what I see him saying here is, who we know, who we see ourselves to be will affect how we operate, it'll affect what we do, it'll affect how we think, how we talk, and it'll affect how we are salt and light in the world.

[11:00] So for us to operate it in salt and light, we have to be continually reminding ourselves of who we are, remembering Jesus, describing who we can be and who we should be as believers.

And it can be tough, like, we can be people pleasers, we can be feeling the weight of our own sin, we can be feeling condemned, we can think that we're not quite there in our faith where we don't understand the gospel enough to be salt and light in the world.

Or it could be that we just have this humongous log in our eye and we're always looking out, like, that speck in their eye is just so horrifying that we don't see what's going on with us, we're not aware of who we are, we're ignoring that.

But Christ steps in and says, you are, you are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world.

And we just can't leave this, leave this teaching here and be like, okay, I'm salt, I'm light, I'm just going to go out and love people. What does that mean?

[12:20] How does that live itself out? What embodies that? Or do we just think these are too lofty a characteristic of our lives to attain?

Do we think, well, I'll get there someday, I'll work on this other thing first and then I'll work on being salt in life. I'll work on myself first before I go out and be a light to others.

And so, I would kind of view this as kind of like bearing fruit.

We have love, we have kindness, gentleness, peace, patience, self-control. I can never say all of them for some reason. But we have all these fruits that we, we have all these fruit that we bear and how do we get there?

Like, what does that come from? How does Paul get us to that point? And he says, walk by the Spirit. That's his way of getting to these fruit, walking by the Spirit.

[13:25] And to live this out, to live out our lives as being salt, we, we need to be regenerated.

We need to be walking in the Spirit. We need to be the living out and not just acting these things out. And what I mean by that is, is to live these things out, is to, is to have our hearts changed and not just our actions.

to, to live them out, to, to know what it is, to, to genuinely love someone, to genuinely have kindness, to genuinely want to have self-control and not just to be disciplined for a little while and, and then kind of fall away from it.

But if our hearts change, that, that changes the rest of us. And as we, as we look to be salt, we, we see around us, we live in a fallen world.

And, and salt serves many purposes. It can preserve, it can, it can, it can season, it can, it can do all these things. And I, I don't think Christ right here is just calling us to do one thing.

[14:41] He's not just calling us to, to evangelism. He's not just calling us to, to love our neighbor. He's just not calling us to, to love our brothers. He's, he's calling us to do all these things as we are salt.

And in that, we're, we're, we're, we begin to embody this word that he's speaking to them. So, we're embodying this word, we're living by the spirit. And we also kind of see that in the vision of our church where we are reaching locally and, and affecting globally through the word of life.

And, and I think that's just a, a cool vision for us to have. And I think that's just embodies the fact that, that we're to be salt in this world. And Jesus seems to, to liken light to being a, a city set upon a hill.

It's like in this prominent place. You can't, you can't ignore it. You can't miss it. It's just right there in front of you. It's a beacon to all who see it.

But what else is light? What do we think of when we, when we think of being light? Is it just kind of exemplifying a few things in front of a person?

[16:06] Or is it more than that? Is it, how is it affecting our relationship with God? How is it coming out of that relationship? Is our, is the life we're living giving praise to God?

How does that, how does that become light? And how, and how in that when we walk by the spirit and the fruit being made, manifest, how, how is that exemplifying light?

in our small group we've been, we've been looking at the book of Luke and, and I think is, is really, is really telling with, with the Lord's, the mission statement for, for his ministry as he, as he points out in chapter four, he says a few things.

He says, proclaim good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to the captive, recover sight before the blind, proclaim the year of our Lord's favor.

And we see in these things that he, that he's come to do something. He's making himself known, he's making himself visible before the people so that they know what he's, what he's coming for.

[17:24] But before that, he, he says one thing. He says, the spirit of the Lord is upon me and he's anointed me. And with that, he goes into these other things.

And, and not only as we look at light, is it, is it this beacon that people kind of see from afar off and, and come to? But, but with light, there has to be something else.

He's, I don't think he's saying you are the light of the world, you're just kind of added to the light that was there. If he, if he was saying that, then, then why would, why would he, why would we need this extra light?

Why would we, why would we need more light? Why would he need us to be light? Why would he specifically say you are light and not say the world is light as well? And I think we need to look at that because in this world we live in, there, there is darkness.

And not only being a weakness, but, but shedding light on that, that light piercing into the darkness. Even if you're in a dark room and you see like a tiny flicker, that's something you, you acknowledge, something you can, you can notice in a dark, in a dark room.

[18:37] You can see that tiny flicker. You can see the light in contrast to that darkness. And, and it's kind of been, been our natural state since the fall of Adam.

Being, being blinded to this truth of the darkness within our own hearts and in the darkness around us. And the defibrillator of God's word is we're unresponsive to that on our own.

We, we have no way or no ability to respond to that. And how, and how do people get along so well in this world if we know this is the truth?

Well, if you, if you aren't responsible to that, then, then you're not able to respond to that. how you know, how do you know what you're being saved from? Is it hell?

Is it an angry God? Am I being saved to follow these rules? When am I going to get out of my salvation?

[19:47] And we can just go on and on with that, with that list. and we were, and we can continue to realize how we once walked and lived and lived in that darkness.

You were once that way, I was once that way. For me, it was, I can do it all myself. I've been driving since I was in the second grade.

I've been working ever since middle school. I mean, what do I have that I can't just provide for myself? And, and God gave me a pretty good gut check my freshman year of college.

Asking myself a lot of hard questions, not coming up with any answers, trying to make my own explanations, those things not working out.

and in the midst of that, hearing the gospel and, and seeing, and seeing these, these believers around me who, who genuinely followed and loved Christ and in that being, my mind being, being open to the truth.

[21:01] And, and John says, in him being Jesus was life and the life was the light of men. Hmm. So this, so this light that, that pierces, pierces the darkness brings life with it.

It just doesn't come to, to illuminate. It is bringing, it's bringing life, it's bringing something living with it. And with that being said, we, we need to be constantly being reminded that, that this world is broken and, and sin has severely wounded our minds, our bodies, our soul.

But we see here that, that all is not lost. Like, you, you wouldn't break out the salt to, to preserve something that was already rotting, that was already, already gone.

There's something left to preserve, there's something left to, to save. So, so for us to be, to be salt in this world, there's something left that, that God is doing, that God is working in this world.

Like, we're not the, just the salt of the church, we're not just the salt of our houses, but, but he calls us the salt of the earth. And he calls us the light of the world.

[22:34] And metaphorically, metaphorically here, he, he calls us a lamp. And I think in that, we, we can be ones that, that reveals the riches of God's great glory in the world and to the people around us.

We have great opportunities with, with whoever it may be, co-workers, classmates, friends. We, we have great opportunities to, to be a light into these people's lives.

And, and something, I, I thought about, um, talking to a friend who, who came from the city. He was, um, he was visiting me, he was visiting the country. He was like, when I'm out here, it's a lot darker than I like.

It's a lot darker, darker than the city. It's a lot, there's no light out here when it, when the sun goes down. And that scares me. So, so whether you're walking down Elm Street or, or York Street, let's kind of think about that.

Like, when you're walking down the street, you're just kind of, it's the normal thing for us to do. Like, we're not noticing, like, the lights. We're not noticing how beautiful these DOT fixtures, how beautiful these DOT fixtures are.

[23:48] We're, we're just kind of walking and we're, we're realizing that there, there's light to, to light our path. And, and hopefully we can be that to the, in the lives of the people around us, that they, they're now, they're not looking to us, but they're doing what it says right here.

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. So, there, there's a summation here to be salt, to be light, and that pushes us into these good works that are going to point other people to Christ.

And I'll leave you, leave you guys with that. Lord, as we depart, as we go about our weeks, that, that we may be confronted with the, the truth of this word to be, to be salt and, and light in this world and in this earth, that, that you haven't called us to a faith that, that is private and that, and that is our own, but you called, you called us to, to live it out amongst the, the people around us and, and I just pray that we would use that, just that, with your power upon us, in Christ's name.

Amen. Anytime. Anybody have anything? Anything? Well, I don't know if I can't say it's different by the, but I am listening to you and when Jesus was on earth, he was the right to the Lord and he, his one that states all these examples of us, he said, the light and the darkness cannot take so we are there to be goodness and you are a great Christian and you cannot stand it.

So you have to speak up to correct and to get the gospel straight. That's me, so that's what we want to get people, people, peacemakers and everything because we cannot.

[26:14] So we are the ones who are supposed to correct the becadness and get peace on earth because God really wants us to do that for his kingdom. That's how I see the gospel and that's how I learned because we have to become people but still we don't put up, I'm going to put up the wrongs, we don't cover it wrongs.

So we as a church have to speak out that the rules of God can find people in the right way on the cross. yeah, I think in our love for people, we can't be silent on that.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I think I think I think I can give an example. There I have, there was this single lady and I watched her and they were trying, and then one came, suddenly I hand, and I told her, and it was all right, and I said, well, I have to say to her.

Then I embraced her, I told her, and that was like the correction, and she's like, she's not perfect, but she's coming. So that's how we have to spread the news.

We have to teach, we have to rebuke, we have to correct. Yeah. So that's all I see there in the gospel, and love, and peace, and joy, and happiness.

[27:44] Yeah. Thank you. Thank you. Anybody else? I would say that there is something separate and unique about both of those, but I think the way he groups them here is because they go together.

You have one, and you have the other. They go hand in hand. Can I say something again? So would you summarize Salt as maybe being the, probably being distinct, something about being distinct for God and that light is displaying that?

How would you summarize what's distinct about salt and light? I guess I would put it, I've been searching for words all week to describe them.

man. I would say salt is, hmm, I would say salt is a lot like, it kind of like embodies the characteristics of the beatitudes.

it's kind of, it's kind of like, I want to say character in a sense. It's kind of, uh, I don't know, I just, when I, when I have the word for it, I'll tell you.

[29:55] But yeah, I would, I would view, view light as, as the thing that, that goes forth, light, light is the thing that, that's visible and seen in our lives. I am a good day, you know, but I'm just saying what is inside of me.

The Bible says, we are the church, we are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and that means we are safe and home. So, that means that we are the strong of this church, so we supposed to, I'm a great day, you know, that's what I'm seeing that way, that our lives should be lived in such way that people can be like us, or not, as a bad sense, we should be the imitator of Jesus Christ, so that's how we should be more alive, that other people can see and try to be like us.

We have good deeds, we can correct, we can love, we love, we are loving people, Christian, we are really loving people, we are humble, we are gentle, we are kind, and everything, but then there is forgiveness, we don't love, we talk about it, and then we love me, that we embrace our love, so that's how I see, we are soft.

Yeah. Yeah. great. God's love, it's taste, what does that store mean?

How does his saltiness be restored. Oh, flip that real quick. If salt has lost its taste, how shall his saltiness be restored?

[32:11] I've kind of read that as being like a rhetorical question. It's like in a sense like if salt loses its saltiness, then it can't get it back.

You really can't reclaim that for it. So once it's gone, it's gone. You had a question?

I'm just stretching my head. Oh. I tend to agree with you guys. It's a character, a characteristic of a person.

You know, you've heard of his question, he's a normal salt, or she's salt. You know, sort of like almost the third year of a snack. I think that as Christians, we shouldn't be snarky.

I think we should be like salt. Salt is rubbed into a hole and it's stink. And so, like our sisters and others, look at this. I think we're allowed for our wives to tell that person that what you're doing and what's going on.

[33:27] It's not a right. It's not in accordance with God's will. And therefore, that way, we become salt. And it may sting. It may not be well received, but we're told to be salt.

We have taste. We have a certain character. That's different. Yeah. Yeah, that saltiness does call us to be distinct.

Because if we were, it's kind of like both of these things. Like, if these things were already in existence, if they were already in the world, then why would Christ be calling his disciples to embody these things and to be these things if they were already there?

Jeff? Do you, what do you say when a person can be very moderate and say, I just turn on my light when I'm at work and to turn it on when I go home again?

Do you think that that's, that there's a problem with that scripturally, even with the salt? Can salt choose when it's effective and choose when it's going to be just like sand?

[34:53] Or what do you think about that? I wouldn't say that there's much of a choice there. When he calls them these things, he calls it, he does it in a way that makes it definite, a definite thing, like all the time, 24-7, 365.

Like, like you'll always be salt and light. Though we may not always feel that way, we're called to be that. One more?

What? Do you have? Okay. Okay. How would you connect your passage to the attitudes?

I can see you connecting to the entire world, and it's like all, and it's just a stress that's connected just to be can, plus every university. What are your thoughts?

What was that again? How would you connect your passage to the attitudes? Come back and forth. I would say that they're connected in the way that all these things embody who we are.

[36:07] They connect in that way. So just as we're peacemakers, just as we're meat, just as we're poor in spirit, we are salt and we are light. These things are what we're supposed to represent and what we're supposed to be.

So. Got to dig way back in the vaults for that one.

Oh, he wanted to know when I said like I was making my own explanation, explanations and doing all those things before I came to Christ, came to Christ.

And how those things are kind of fleshing those things, fleshing out in my life now. I would say that I really, really didn't have a belief in anything or any God.

I mean, I grew up in going to church in the South, just as everybody else in the South does. It's kind of expected of you. But it wasn't much that I paid attention to or learned from.

[37:42] But, yeah, I would say probably my senior year of high school into my freshman year of college is just kind of getting all of this knowledge, learning all these new things.

And trying to think through those things logically and nothing really sticking, nothing really making sense until hearing the gospel and learning what it did for me.

Does that kind of answer your question? Oh. Great. Let me give just a couple quick announcements before and try to give us the benediction. If you're both on the way in, there's more on the chair back there.

If you could get one. Thank you.