

Week 1: Salt & Light

(Matthew 5:13-16)

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. Matt. 5:13-16, Also Luke 14:34-35.***

- Passage speaks about the ...
 - **Brilliance** and **Visibility** of Light
 - **Strength** and **Effectiveness** of Salt

Motivation (9:05)

- As we begin I wanted to briefly highlight some challenges facing the church as it lives as Salt & Light.
 - The world is increasing **hostile** toward Christians. We are under **attack** and are **reluctant** to live openly about our faith. (We will be address this further in upcoming Fear of Man study.)
 - I suggest that we are also challenged by the church ...
 - The **liberal** church is non-distinct and **blends** into the social landscape. Their light is **weak** and **impure**. Church of Laodicea "neither hot nor cold" (Rev. 3:17)
 - The **insular** church is sometimes so inward focused that it is **invisible** to the community in which God placed them.
- Sawyer/Converge we need continue to strive to and confront the world's hostility with God's grace. Hard work, but it our calling.
- As Christians we have the privilege to reflect the character of God to the world.
 - Living as Salt and Light we **call** people to a life with God and **show** them how get there.
 - John C. Maxwell defines a **Spiritual Leader** as "one who **knows** God's way, **goes** God's way, and **shows** God's way."

What is the Nature of Light?

General Definition:

- Light displaces darkness.
- Light clarifies.
- Light shows the way, keeps us from stumbling.

- Light helps us see in the distance (provides perspective).
- Light causes things to grow (sustains life).
- Light make things safe (night vs day driving).
- Light is a source energy.
- Many other benefits of light ...

What is the Source of Light?

- **Jesus** is the light **OF** the world

¹² *Jesus said, “**I am the light of the world.** Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12 (ESV)*

*“As long as I am in the world, **I am the light of the world.**” John 9:5 (ESV)*

*“**I have come into the world as light,** so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.” John 12:46 (ESV)*

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- Jesus **radiates** the exact **nature** of God.

*He is the **radiance** of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature
Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)*

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- Jesus is the very **essence** of light. It is his **nature**. It is **who he is**.
 - In concrete terms, **light** its God’s truth, his love, his mercy.
 - The metaphor of Salt & Lights is rooted in OT Exodus 25 (Hebrews 9:1-10)
 - In the Holy Place ...
 - Table of Bread – the showbread or the bread of God’s presence.
 - Symbolizes God’s presence and provision
 - Foreshadow of Jesus – the **Bread of Life** (John 6:35)
 - Golden Lampstand – casts light on the bread.
 - Calls attention to God’s goodness and provision
 - Foreshadow of the Holy Spirit – **Illumination, bears witness** of Jesus

How Does God’s Light Impact Us?

- The way it works is that "**GOD's light reflecting IN and THROUGH us draws people to GOD**".
 - Essentially, the work of God’s light **starts** and **ends** with God.
- God’s **light** reflecting **IN** us, **draws** us to God and **transforms** us.
 - God’s light illuminates in us the **truth** of His character and the **truth** of our sinfulness.

*"God has made this **light shine in our hearts.**" 2 Corinthians 4:6*

*²⁷ The **spirit of man** is the lamp of the LORD, searching all **his innermost parts.** Proverbs 20:27*

- God's light **determines** the path of our transformation.
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*¹⁰⁵ Your **word is a lamp** to my feet and a light to my path. Psalm 119:105*

*¹³⁰ The **unfolding of your words** gives light; it **imparts understanding** to the simple. Psalm 119:130*

- Benefits of light:
 - Cuts through the cloud of denial, self-deceptions, lies about us.
 - We are able to see God's holiness, exposure of sin, leads to repentance, peace with God, and ultimately fullness of life.

How Are We to Live as Light?

- We are called to **be the light IN the world** (Matt. 5:13, Phil. 2:12-16, Eph 5:8-9)
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*⁶ I will make you **a light** to the Gentiles. Isaiah 49:6 (NLT)*

*So, **live** as people of light! Eph 5:8 (NLT)*

*14 "You are the **light** of the world. Matt. 5:14 (ESV)*

- God's **light** reflecting **THROUGH** us, **draws** others to God.
- The light that we **bear** is a result of God the HS living in us.
- God's light doesn't come from **outside** of us, it radiates from **within** us (Heb 1:3).
- We are holy lanterns.

Principles for Living as Light ... (9:30)

- Bain Research Group determined that the #1 contributor to how well we influence and inspire others is something they call CENTERNESS.
- For the Christian, centeredness is the ability to **focus our lives** on God's truths and **live confidently** in God's truths.
- 4 Christian centers

Principle 1- [Being] God-Centered

Rooted in the **HOLINESS** of God, and the Pursuit of **GODLINESS**, and modeling **RIGHTEOUSNESS** (living rightly).

- Jesus says that we **are** Salt & Light, not that we are LIKE salt/light.

- Metaphor, not Simile (being vs. like/as)
- “like/as” implies conditional similarity
- “are” implies unconditional
- Always applies; it’s a state of **BEING**
- There is never a time (situation, circumstance) that we are not light.
- We have an **obligation** to act as light. Without excuses.
- God’s truth transforms us into the **likeness of Christ**, into salty salt and bright light.
- We pursue Godliness (Holiness, Christ-likeness), so our light can be **bright**, and our salt can be **salty**.
 - Daily submission / surrender to God and cooperate with the HS.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. James 4:7

Submit to God's righteousness. Romans 10:3

- Rely on God’s power.

*⁹ “My grace is sufficient for you, for **my power is made perfect in weakness.**”
2 Corinthians 12:9*

- Training/spiritual practices (reading, meditation, prayer, etc.)

*Train yourself for **godliness**; 1 Timothy 4:7*

*¹⁶ All **Scripture** is breathed out by God and **profitable** for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for **training in righteousness**, 2 Timothy 3:16*

- In a world of increasing terrorism, social injustices and school violence, the world is desperately looking for people who live **RIGHTEOUSLY** (rightly).
- Sometimes, the only way people see God is there us.

Principle 2 - [Being] Gospel-Centered

Rooted in the **WORK** of God (Jesus), and the Pursuit of the **GOSPEL MESSAGE**, and modeling the **VICTORIOUS** and **GRACIOUS** LIFE

- Fundamentally, the Gospel is the **centerpiece** of the Christian faith.
- Without the Gospel our faith is futile and devoid of power.
- Paul writes in Romans 1:16 that the Gospel of Jesus is the “**power of God unto salvation**” (KJV).
- It is the power to fundamentally **change lives**; our life and others’ lives.

- We need to **know** the Gospel and **experience** the Gospel, before we can effectively **communicate** the Gospel.
 - The gospel delivers us from **guilt and** enables us to live a **victorious** and **full** life.
 - We **exchange** your guilt/forgiveness, weakness/strength, failure over sin/victory.
 - We **triumph** over our sinfulness.
 - **In a Facebook world where people live behind a facade of “having it all together”, many people live with guilt and despair. They long to see someone live a victorious, full life.**
 - Essence of the Gospel message – Gospel in a Nutshell:
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⁴ God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, ⁵ that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!) ⁶ For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:4-6 (NLT)
