

HOW DO CHRISTIANS ENGAGE THE CULTURE

MATTHEW 5:13-16

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE - SEPTEMBER 29, 2024

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 5:13-16 ESV

Salt and Light

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 [b] they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

Which do you prefer, fries with or without salt? Why?

SERMON RECAP

- This world is decaying and dark. It needs salt and light
- Christians are called to engage the kingdoms and cultures around us
 - "You are the salt of the earth"
 - "You are the light of the world"
 - He has designed us to live in a decaying and dark world:
 - You are a distinct, otherworldly community
 - Whose purpose is to positively and proactively engages this world with gracious truth and good works
 - In order to lead people all over this world to glorify God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read Matthew 5:13-16 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
 - Who is the "You" Jesus is referring to in the passage? Matthew 5:13 - 14
 - What declarations does Jesus make in Matthew 5:13-14?
 - What warning does Jesus give concerning salt? Matthew 5:13
 - What does the passage say about light in Matthew 5:14-15?
 - What is the usefulness of lighting a lamp? Matthew 5:16
 - In Matthew 5:16, what is the goal of good works?
2. How would you summarize Matthew 5:13-16?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. What does the imagery of salt and light reveal about the world? Genesis 3:2-19; John 3:19-20, Romans 1:21-25, 2 Tim 3:1-5, 13; 1 John 2:17a
2. The symbols of salt and light are throughout the scriptures:
 - What are some characteristics or uses of salt? - Leviticus 2:13; Job 6:6; Colossians 4:6
 - What is the purpose and effect of light? Genesis 1:3, Psalm 27:1; 119:105; John 1:1-5, 9; John 8:12
3. How are Christians called to be salt and light? John 17:11, 14-17; Roman 12:2; Philippians 2:14-16a; Ephesians 5:8-14a; 1 Thess 5:5-11; 1 John 2:15-17

- How should we reflect God's truth in the world? Colossians 4:6; 1 Peter 3:15, Matthew 28:19-20
 - What makes good work good? Matthew 5:16; Proverbs 3:27-28, Ephesians 2:10, 1 Timothy 6:17-18. Hebrews 13:16
4. What makes the church a distinct, otherworldly community to the culture around us? Some examples highlighted in the sermon—marriage, sexuality, abortion, materialism, racism, and refugees.
- How is the church today softening its convictions to adapt to the culture?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Live to positively and proactively engage the world around us
 - What does the way you live say about what you believe?
 - When is it most difficult for you to live distinctively from the world?
 - How is the fragrance of Christ evident in your walk and interactions with the world?
 - What compromises are you making with the world? Are you tempted to withdraw from the culture, keeping quiet on your convictions on issues that bring contention?
 - What are 1-2 ways Jesus is calling you, or your Church Group, to positively and proactively engage the world?
2. Share the Gracious Truth
 - How are you prioritizing the word light in your life?
 - How are you sharing the light of the gospel with others? Who in your life can you share the gospel with this week?
 - What marks your speech? Do not speak harshly, proudly, or bitingly, instead of humbly, compassionately, and graciously? If not, what do you need to confess? Read Colossians 4:6.
 - How can your Church Group pray for you?
3. Good works for the glory of God
 - What are 1-2 ways Jesus is calling you, or your church group, to participate in good works this week?
 - How can you guard against the temptation of self-exaltation instead of glorifying God in all that you do?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

PRAYING FOR NORTH KOREA | During lunch on Sunday, October 6, a pastor from South Korea will share his personal story of involvement in helping North Koreans. We will have an opportunity to pray together for him, for the people of North Korea, and for the spread of the gospel in North Korea. Lunch will be hosted at MBC Tysons and all MBC Locations are invited to join. Register in advance at mcleanbible.org/persecution; seats are limited.