

Sermon Study

Salt and Light
Mathew 5:13-16

vision

Eastview
Christian
Church is a
fearless church
of Christ
followers whose
ridiculous love
and dangerous
witness are
irresistible.



AUTHOR'S NOTES (summary of key points for this study)

John Stott wrote, "Nevertheless, God intends the most powerful of all restraints within sinful society to be his own redeemed, regenerate, and righteous people." Dr. Lloyd-Jones similarly stated, "The glory of the gospel is that when the Church is absolutely different from the world, she invariably attracts it. It is then that the world is made to listen to her message, though it may hate it at first."

Gather (your group getting to know each other)

Is your favorite food spicy, sweet, salty or some combination?

What is the darkest hour in history that you have lived through?

Go (your group on mission)

As a group, what good deeds will you do and then point people to Jesus as the reason? Think of “Twinkle, twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are.” Discuss how you would respond if people were to ask why you do good deeds or ask who you and your group are.

Grow (your group growing as Christ-followers)

Discussion

1. Read Matthew 5:13-16.
2. What were the uses for salt in the New Testament times and also now?
3. Looking at the sermon on the mount on the whole, what makes Christ followers the salt of the earth? How does the “saltiness” of Christ followers make the Church distinct from the world? What does Jesus mean in Mark 9:50 when He tells followers to have salt in themselves?
4. What would you point to as evidence that our society needs fearless followers of Jesus to be “salt” today? Looking at our society, Bloomington-Normal/Illinois/United States/world, how salty do you think the Eastview and the broader Christian Church have been? Explain your saltiness rating.
5. Sodium chloride, salt, is a stable chemical compound, but it can lose its saltiness. How can Christ followers lose our saltiness? In New Testament times, salt that lost its saltiness was indistinguishable from dust on the roads. How much and what kinds of decay and contamination are evident in you?

6. Read John 8:12 and John 9:5. We are the light of the world only because Jesus is the Light living in us. What verses in Old Testament and New Testament point to what light symbolizes (e.g., Phil. 2:14-16)? What are the purposes of light?
7. What false lights does the world rely upon today? How does such reliance only increase the darkness? Compare the darkness of our times with those of Jesus’ time.
8. What good deeds is Jesus referring to here? What good deeds have you displayed such that you have directed others to praise God?
9. Like salt, Jesus expressed concern that the light can become hidden. How do we obscure or hide the light of Jesus in us? How do we detour the light from praises going to Jesus?
10. Give examples of how good works by the fearless followers at Eastview have led to the unchurched, those outside of the kingdom of God, praising God.

Give

(your group
serving each
other)

John Stott’s commentary identifies three lessons from this passage. Within your group, rate how well you have learned/displayed these lessons: There is a fundamental difference between Christians and non-Christians, between the church and the world. We must accept responsibility which this distinction puts upon us (“Each affirmation begins in the Greek sentence with the emphatic pronoun “you”, as much as to say “you and you only” are the earth’s salt and the world’s light.”) We must see our Christian responsibility as twofold (a negative influence by arresting the decay and a positive influence by bringing light into darkness).