

Sermon Series:
“Giving Your Life Away”
Me, Salt and Light

Nov. 22, 2009
Matthew 5:13-16



Time in the Word

Read & Ponder: Matthew 5:13-16

Let's face it, there is a lot in this world to be negative about. As Christians we constantly are surrounded by sin and sin's effects. Our culture is breaking under the strain. As you read this passage, let God bring to your mind that “one” thing above all things that really breaks your heart—that evil that's seems so pervasive and destructive. What is it?

Answer

1. First the salt. 5:13.
 - a. In our world salt is primarily a spice; not so in Jesus' day. It was the substance that was used to keep meats and fish from rotting. It was above all things the thing which stopped rot from spreading. With that in mind, in what way are the disciples “salt”?
 - b. Think about history for a moment. Name some of the world evils that the followers of Jesus halted by being the “salt of the earth”.
 - c. The word “you” is actually a plural (like “you all”). What is the significance of the fact that Jesus is addressing the disciples as a community, not just individuals?
 - d. The final line is tough. What happens to the Christian community when it fails to be “salt”? What does getting “thrown out and trampled” look like?
2. Now the light. 5:14-16.
 - a. If salt stops the negative (the spread of evil), what does light do? Give some illustrations in today's world of followers of Christ being Light in their world.
 - b. Jesus speaks about an absurdity—lighting a lamp and then hiding it. Once again there is an implied warning here for the church not to be a “hidden light”. So how does our light get “hidden” (and how do we not do this)?
 - c. Verse 16 seems tricky. How do we let our light shine so that folks can see our “good works”, and yet the praise doesn't go to us—it goes to God?
 - d. Why does Jesus say that being light is about people seeing our “good deeds”, not hearing our “good words”?



Time for the Heart

It is so easy to take on the role of “culture critiquer”—you know, someone who just loves to gripe about how sinful and evil the world is. But unless we personally engage our world as salt and light, evil will continue to march forward unhindered. What are some of the evils of our day that you personally would like to get engaged with as the “salt of the earth”? How about on a church level—where could our light shine brighter than it currently does?