

INTRO//

- Welcome
- Introduce Self
- Heart of the series
 - When Jesus walked among us, he brought with Him a way of life that was backwards from the cultural norms. His ways, His thoughts, His practices were, and still are today, upside down from how we typically tend to think. And we don't see more in any place like we do in Jesus's most famous message, the Sermon on the Mount.

BIBLE//

MATTHEW 5:11-16

“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way. 13 “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. 14 “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. 15 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

- Can we talk through some of the initial impulse responses we have to this verse?
 - Jesus throughout the sermon on the mount is invoking responses from people, and parts of this resonate with us today
 - **Fear** - I don't want those types of things to happen to me, why would I be happy about that?
 - **Insecurity** - As far as people are concerned, I'm barely a Christian, why would I act crazy and start preaching?
 - **Lost** - It's not the first part of this section that bothers you, it's the second. You don't feel like light, salt, or anything good. You may not even be here that often and may be wondering, why are we talking about this?

CONTEXT// WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT SALT & LIGHT?

- We're going to circle back to verses 11-12 and later, but first I want to look at verse 13 and learn about salt with you all. **Why did Jesus pick this analogy to explain our identity?**
 - Salt does a number of different things when it's put inside of things: preserved and purified. It's necessary for everyday life. How many of you had salt today? You probably didn't even realize it, salt is literally everywhere. Actually, the human body cannot survive without salt. It's crucial for your nervous system to function.
- Ok now look at verses 14-16. Why did Jesus pick this analogy?
 - Often the homes back at this time would be pretty small. Usually 1 room and people would put a lamp with a small wick and oil in the middle of the room and light it. At that moment people would be seen. Light hasn't really changed in 2,000 years. When it's dark you can't see, you stub your toe, etc.

“Each is essential but has its necessary effect on its environment only if it is both distinctive from it and yet fully in it.” - Richard France

- What does that mean? **Salt and Light change the environment they're in.**
 - Salt - Preserves, purifies
 - Light - directs and clarifies
- When salt and light show up in an environment, they change it from what it was originally. They make it better.

You are designed to change environments.

- We are meant to be people who are purifying things that are messed up, preserving and making things healthy, clarifying the love of God and directing our environment to look and become more like Jesus.

CONNECT//

So the question then becomes...

WHAT'S OUR ENVIRONMENT?

- Jesus isn't saying it, but think of the context now in light of salt and light. Our current environment is one where things are not preserved, healthy, or living well. There's darkness, confusion, people getting hurt!
 - There's some of you that sit there in your classroom feeling as if there's darkness in your school. You are the light to start praying and expelling the plans of the enemy
 - There are some of you who are in unhealthy family situations and God is calling you to be the salt and light to be in the situation but also to carve out a new path. Not one of continued abuse, or choosing not to prioritize God in a home but to be a light that would show a better path.
 - I know there's some of you who see the legitimate problems that exist right now in our world and God is calling you to be a light in providing real solutions and help to those who need it.

POINT 1// ACT OPPOSITE TO THE ENVIRONMENT YOU'RE IN

- The ideal environment is one in which you and Jesus are together and have the ability to grow alongside other people
 - A safe place to share about your struggles, receive support and prayer from the basis of the Bible
 - This is good for you to have these environments, but Jesus, very early on into the development of the disciples is telling them to find the opposite environment and be salt and light there.
- What does the opposite environment look like for you?
 - Cafeteria
 - Online
 - Youth Group
- Are you the opposite?
 - This is what Jesus gets at with the salt. Salt doesn't lose its saltiness, salt can become absorbed with other things and change and not become salt anymore.

POINT 2// PUT YOURSELF IN A PLACE OF VISIBILITY

- Understand this first and foremost: you don't need a lot of salt or light for them to be visible. They are obvious!
 - Often we put pressure on ourselves to be larger than life, take the place of God and be the light
 - Just a little of these things can impact you a lot

ILLUSTRATION// STORY OF A SMALL ACT THAT YOU STILL REMEMBER WELL

- This is what happens when you are salt and light- you become visible, ingrained in the memories, history, story of other people
- When you're in light a lot you don't realize that other people see it more intensely.
- Examples:
 - Mission Trip - you thought nobody noticed
 - Standing up for a friend when everyone else is trashing them
 - Leaving your friend group to hangout with the kid whose alone
 - Getting disciplined to pray everyday
 - Being the guy in your small group who gets vulnerable and shares the real struggle
- **You have enough!** You have enough to make a difference

FINAL POINT// POINT PEOPLE TO JESUS AND WHAT HE'S DOING

- Salt - Who put this good thing here? Jesus.
- Who lit that light? Jesus.
 - You're not just putting on a show your pointing in a direction

CHALLENGE//

- Salvation Call