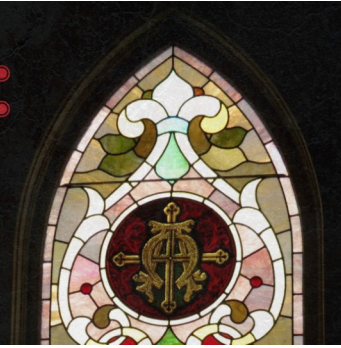


CHRISTIAN:

it's not what you think



Matthew 5:3-16

context:

line by line:

application:

Now Showing
4.28.2013

Study Questions

Use these questions in your community group time to dig deeper and discover how you can apply today's message to everyday life.

INTRODUCTION

Today, we associate Rome with crosses and churches, but if you could go back in time to tell that to Jesus' early followers, they wouldn't believe you. People around them considered them members of a strange cult. The emperor Nero falsely accused them of setting the Great Roman Fire of 64 AD and punished them by crucifying them and feeding them to dogs. Yet... by the third century, Christianity had taken over Rome. How did such a hated, powerless people become so influential?

WEEKLY READING

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said some surprising things that reveal what he thought about power and influence: **Read Matthew 5:3-16 together.**

Jesus used two word pictures [Salt & Light] that explain how his followers, living on the margins of Roman society, changed their world. Though they had no standing in the culture in which they lived, their lives would be the last stand. They were salt and light. Salt always preserves food from rotting. Light always shows the way.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you're a Christian, talk about the people who influenced your faith by being salt and light in your life. What did you learn from their example? If you're not a Christian, talk about followers of Jesus who left you with a good impression of Christianity. What was it about them you liked? How were they different from other Christians you'd met?
2. Why is it so rare for Christians to be salt and light in the world? Why is it difficult to live as Jesus describes in the Sermon on the Mount?
3. The last three weeks, we talked about Jesus' command to his followers to love others. How does that command relate to being salt and light in the world?
4. Read Matthew 5:3-12. Is what Jesus describes realistic? In what practical ways could you live as he describes at home or at work?
5. Read v. 13-16. Is it realistic to think that God is using you as a preservative right now, or a light to show the way in your life situation? Why or why not?
6. Who is one person for whom you can be salt and light? What is one thing you can do this week to help that person connect the dots between how you live and the God you serve?

MOVING FORWARD

If you're a Christian, it's because someone was salt and light in your life. You've had providential relationships. When you look back on your life, those people were "towns on a hill," showing you the way to God's grace. Their persistence may have been a little irritating, but their love changed your life.

PRAYER

For each other and your brothers and sisters at Eastridge Church, ask God to do the miracle in us of making us people who are salt that always preserves, and light that always shows the way: *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.* **Matthew 5:16**

