

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 5 (PART 2)

IF THE BEATITUDES ADDRESS OUR CHARACTER, THE PART OF JESUS' TEACHING ADDRESSED OUR INFLUENCE.

MATTHEW 5:13-16 - SALT & LIGHT

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT SALT AND LIGHT: BOTH IMPACT/AFFECT THEIR ENVIRONMENT. THERE IS A DIFFERENCE WHEN SALT OR LIGHT IS INTRODUCED TO A PLACE WHERE THEY WERE NOT PRESENT.

SALT: PRESERVATIVE - STOPS THINGS FROM GOING BAD AND DETERIORATING

PURITY - SALT SOMETIMES MADE THINGS BETTER, SALT SOMETIMES WAS THE LEFTOVER OF THINGS BEING PURIFIED BECAUSE THINGS HAD GOTTEN WORSE. (CP. SODOM AND GOMORRAH)

FLAVOR - ONE OF THE PRIMARY USES OF SALT IN OUR MODERN WORLD IS TO ADD FLAVOR TO SOMETHING THAT IS BLAND.

THIRST CREATOR - WHEN YOU EAT A LOT OF SALTY FOODS, OUR BODIES CRAVE WATER TO COUNTERACT THE SALTINESS AND SO WE GET THIRSTY. SALT STIMULATES THIRST IN THE HUMAN BODY.

LIGHT: ILLUMINATION/VISIBILITY - WHEN LIGHT IS INTRODUCED IN PLACES OF DARKNESS, YOU CAN SEE WHAT IS AROUND YOU, WHERE TO GO, ETC.

GUIDANCE/WARNING - THINK OF A LIGHTHOUSE OR FLASHLIGHT OR WARNING LIGHT

Q - HOW CAN A DISCIPLE BE "SALTY"?

Q - HOW CAN A DISCIPLE "SHINE"?

THE CALL TO BE THE "LIGHT OF THE WORLD" IS DEFINED BY JESUS IN VERSE 16. BY OUR GOOD WORKS DONE VISIBLY TO OTHER PEOPLE, THIS WILL GIVE GLORY TO GOD OUR FATHER. THERE MUST BE A WAY TO DO GOOD DEEDS THAT PUTS THE SPOTLIGHT ON OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

Q - WHAT ARE WAYS WE CAN LOSE OUR SALTINESS?

Q - WHAT ARE WAYS WE CAN COVER OUR LIGHT?

NOTICE THAT JESUS DECLARES THAT HIS DISCIPLES *ARE* SALT AND LIGHT. HE DOESN'T SAY THAT THEY SHOULD *BE* SALT AND LIGHT. THE QUESTION FOR EACH OF US IS NOT WHETHER WE ARE EITHER OF THOSE THINGS, BUT WHETHER OR NOT WE ARE PROPERLY FUNCTIONING AT THOSE THINGS. ARE WE SHINING OUR LIGHT OR HIDING IT UNDER A BASKET? ARE WE IMPACTING AND FLAVORING THE WORLD AROUND US OR ARE WE NEUTRAL TOWARDS OR DAMAGING IT?

MATTHEW 5:17-19 - JESUS & THE LAW

THOUGH THESE WORDS CAN BE UNDERSTOOD ON THEIR OWN, THEY ARE IN PART AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NEXT SECTION OF THIS SERMON, ONE THAT WILL SPECIFICALLY CONTINUE TO THE END OF MATTHEW 5. RABBI JESUS IS GOING TO BEGIN CONTRASTING WHAT HIS AUDIENCE HAS

"HEARD THAT IT HAS BEEN SAID" WITH HIS INTERPRETATION ON A VARIETY OF TOPICS (MURDER/ANGER, ADULTERY/LUST, MARRIAGE/DIVORCE, VOWS/INTEGRITY, RETRIBUTION/JUSTICE, AND LOVE.)

JESUS WILL AT TIMES BE ACCUSED BY PHARISEES AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF INVALIDATING OR CONTRACTING THE LAWS OF MOSES. HERE JESUS AFFIRMS HIS BELIEF IN AND HIGH VIEW OF THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS (SHORTHAND FOR WHAT WE CALL THE OLD TESTAMENT). BUT HE'S ALSO TRANSITIONING AWAY FROM THE MOSAIC LAW BEING GOD'S WAY OF INTERACTING WITH HIS PEOPLE AND POINTING TO HIMSELF AND HIS OWN TEACHING (CP. HEBREWS 1:1-2).

HE'S NOT GETTING RID OF THE LAW AND PROPHETS (IN FACT HE SAYS THEY ARE GOING TO BE IMPORTANT TILL THE END OF THE AGE). INSTEAD, HE'S FULFILLING THEM. JESUS' MINISTRY AND HIS DEATH/RESURRECTION ARE GOING TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF MOSAIC LAW. THE MOSAIC LAW WAS GIVEN BY YAHWEH TO ISRAEL (THROUGH MOSES) AND DEALT WITH BEING HOLY, HOW TO WORSHIP, DEALING WITH SIN, RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS, MORALITY, AS WELL AS DIRECTING A COMMUNITY AND THEIR DAILY LIVES (IN THIS CASE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL). IN JESUS, THESE THINGS FIND THEIR FULFILLMENT. ULTIMATELY, THROUGH THE WORK OF CHRIST, A NEW COVENANT IS MADE WITH HUMANITY, ONE WHICH WILL SUPERSEDE THE "OLD COVENANT" (AKA MOSAIC COVENANT).

THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS OF JESUS SPEAK OF A UNIQUE TIME WHERE THERE IS AN OVERLAP BETWEEN THESE TWO COVENANTS.

Q - JESUS IS NOT ABOLISHING THE LAW OF MOSES - BUT FULFILLING IT. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

Q - WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW FOR THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS?

MATTHEW 5:20 - SURPASSING THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE PHARISEES

THIS IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT (YET OVERLOOKED) STATEMENTS OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. IF WE REMEMBER THE AUDIENCE AND THE SETTING, AT FIRST LISTEN, THIS WOULD HAVE SEEMED LIKE AN IMPOSSIBLE STANDARD. THE COMMON PEOPLE OF THE GALILEE REGION ASSUMED THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES WERE THE MOST RIGHTEOUS AROUND. BUT WHAT JESUS WILL BEGIN TO EXPOSE IS THAT THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS WAS BASED ON HUMAN EFFORT AND EXTERNAL APPEARANCE WHERE JESUS IS GOING TO (THROUGH HIS LIFE AND TEACHING) GET TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER.

HERE'S A QUICK EXAMPLE. SOMEONE CAN BOAST OF A RIGHTEOUSNESS BASED ON NEVER MURDERING ANYONE - BUT JESUS WILL ASK THAT PERSON "DO YOU HAVE HATRED IN YOUR HEART?" THE WAY OF JESUS WILL START WITH THE HEART - IF YOU DON'T HATE, YOU WON'T MURDER.