

Following Jesus Part 12

“Making an Impact”

Matthew 5:13-16

I can do all things in the strength of Christ, so I will follow in the example of His steps.

Introduction: One of the greatest desires of man is to leave a mark, make an impact.

A. Some call it getting your 15 minutes of fame and there is probably a lot of truth in that.

1. Everything that we do that promotes ourselves is temporary, fleeting!

- News stories come and go for a day or two there is someone that everyone is talking about.
- But all it takes is for someone else to do something and the names have changed!

➤ So we end up spending so much of our lives trying to prove to the world that we are somebody!

= I want to comfort myself and you by saying that it's only natural. But there is no comfort in doing what comes natural.

= The truth is natural is wrong!

2. We are the creation of God and we were created with one purpose to glorify God!

- Listen to these words of John the Baptist as he compares himself to being the best man *He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the*

bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. And so this joy of mine has been made full.

He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3:29-30

- It is natural for us to seek popularity, fame and prominence but it comes from a prideful heart.

= I am certainly not saying that if you are famous or that God has placed you in an influential position that you are wrong or living a sinful life.

- This is a heart matter and a heart that seeks to please God is a humble heart that seeks nothing but to glorify God regardless of our position of life.
 3. Truth is as a born again believer in Christ, surrendered to Him and having the Holy Spirit of God dwelling in us we are in a amazing, awesome position!

Transition: And in this position we are situated to make a great impact on this world.

A. Here is how!

1. The believer is salt!

I. The Impact of Being Salt

A. Salt makes an impact!

1. But we know that salt is not the main course.

- We do not sprinkle little green beans on our salt.

- Because God calls us the salt of the earth does not mean that we are the star of the show, he is.

B. Salt has some unique qualities:

1. Salt preserves: The world is decaying, it is rotting
 - When we live for Christ it is the salt that preserves it!

- We are always just one generation away from a godless society.
- If one generation of people fail to proclaim the truths of Christ then how will they know, how will they consider?
 - It is true that only God saves, it is a personal relationship with God through Christ!
 - But God has chosen to use us to share His plan, to share His Gospel, to bring His Word to a world that is lost.
- Jesus is teaching about influence he is telling these disciples you can and will make an impact on the world and they did as they lived and died sharing the Words of Christ!

= God has called us to make an impact: President Woodrow Wilson told this story: he was sitting in a common place, a barber shop. Another man came in and sits in the chair next to him for the same common purpose to get his hair cut. He noticed that every word the man said showed a great interest in the man serving him by cutting hair. President Wilson before he was finished felt as if he had been to an evangelistic service, and found out later that the man in the chair was D.L. Moody!

- Impact D.L. Moody was simply telling a barber about the love of Christ and had impact on the one who would become the President of the United States

= When we live out a life for Christ it makes an impact.

- When we live for Christ we are preserving the opportunity to share Jesus with a lost world!
 2. Salt creates a thirst: Just like when our bodies are exposed to salt we get thirsty so it is when the world is exposed to Christ.
 - Our lives impact others!

- A life that is lived in the precepts of God's Word will cause a thirst in some.
- In some God will use your life to impact someone that creates a longing to know Him and He will save them.
 - Please do not get confused God does not use us to save anyone but He surely uses our lives to impact and influence the lives of others.
- Everyone is saved by the grace of God through Christ there is no other way, but in His marvelous plan he has chosen us as vessels to impact the world with His gospel, His Good News.

Transition: But Jesus says that if the salt no longer is salty then it is good for nothing!

- A. These are very challenging words how salty are we?
 - B. How are we impacting those around us with the truths of Jesus
 - C. How are we influencing those around us?
 - Is God using use to change lives for His glory?
 - Next Jesus compares our influence to that of light.
- II. The Impact of Being Light** verse 14
- A. There is one thing we must understand you can't turn on the dark!
 1. Dark is a result of no light and God has take His light and placed it in us that we would reflect His goodness.
 - When our light is shining nothing can hide it!
 - ... **A city set on a hill cannot be hidden** Matthew 5:14b
 - B. Listen to these Word I Peter 2:9 **⁹ But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;**

- God has chosen us to reflect the light of His righteousness to a lost and dying world.
 - C. There is a presupposition for both salt and light, that is that the world is rotting and is in darkness.
 - 1. We can have an impact on that God has call us to shine His light in the darkness of the world!
 - T he world does not need to get smarter it needs to see Jesus.
 - We do not need to be in a constant struggle to fit our lives into the darkness of the world: **15 nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket**, Matthew 5:15b
 - What kind of influence, or impact do we have if when we enter a dark room we turn off the light Christ in our life, we will blend in and have no affect at all!

Transition: We have an opportunity to impact the world, we can have influence!

- A. God has come into our lives and it will show for the world to see!
 - 1. We need to show our good works!
- III. **Showing our Good Works** verse 16
 - A. What is the best way to for the world to see Jesus?
 - 1. It is in our lives.
 - The world needs to see something different!
 - “The heart of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked!
 - B. Because the world is decaying, is corrupt, and walking in darkness:
 - He is calling on us to be the salt that stops corruption and the light to show the way!
 - How does salt and light look?
 - **16 Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven** Matthew 5:16

C. Do good things!

1. Don't do good things to try and score points with God; don't get it in your mind that if I do enough good things.

= Do good works because it will impact the world for the glory of the Father who is in Heaven!

2. We sometimes shy away from good works for fear that other will feel bad or that we will not fit in and that is exactly what will happen.

= That is what happens when light shines on the dark places!

- Jesus had just warned in verse 11 "**Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.**

Closing: Isn't amazing that God would use something or someone as common as us to salt this world.

A. It is amazing that that God would take something as dirty as ourselves and cleans it up to reflect the light of His glory.

1. Do people feel uncomfortable when you talk, when you walk in the room?
- That is influence and that is making an impact on the world!