

# **BUILD YOUR HOUSE ON THAT!**

Sermon-Based Study Guide  
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Matthew 5:13-16  
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## I. Connecting With One Another

Who in your life have you seen who has a heart for God and has been a light in the community?  
Before continuing, please pray:

- a. Pray for our friends at SHIP who will be staying with us at Good Shepherd for two weeks beginning on June 30<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Praise God for our graduates who through God's help have finished a milestone in their life.
- c. Pray our Student Ministries program as they enter a packed summer including Summer Camp, Rendezvous at the Park, Urban Plunge, and Water Ski Retreat
- d. Pray that God will inspire you to keep you "salty" so that you can be a light in the community.

## II. Introduction to this Study

Last week we began the Sermon on the Mount, which began with the beatitudes where Jesus starts his great sermon with a list of people who will be blessed (the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those who are persecuted because of righteousness). From last week, we saw certain characteristics that seem weak, but Jesus turns them into a blessing. This week we see Jesus use two metaphors (salt & light) of how those characteristics are to be an influence in this world. Salt and light are two basic things that we are all familiar with, and in this passage Jesus uses them as a metaphor for a people who are to be a healthy influence within their culture.

## III. Study the Text-Read Matthew 5:13-16

- a. Salt is a metaphor for Christian character as seen in the beatitudes. What are the qualities of salt do you think Jesus had in mind when he said, "You are the salt of the earth? Can one lose their saltiness, if so what is causing Christians to lose their saltiness? How does one have Christ-like character?
- b. Read 1st. Corinthians 13:1-8.  
How does Paul's description of needing love compare to Jesus description of salt needing to be salty?
- c. Read Mark 9:42-50.  
How is salt described in this passage? What correlation does the lack of saltiness have in the warning against making little ones stumble?
- d. In John 8:12 Jesus says that he is the light of the world, "When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." How does this compare to the Matthew passage in which Jesus tells his audience, "You are the light of the world"?

- e. Light is a metaphor for our good works, according to Jesus what should people see by seeing our good works?

#### IV. Reflect and Respond

- a. Who are people in your life who are salt of the earth? What characteristics do they have? Do you know anyone who has lost their saltiness? With-out gossiping what were those circumstances?  
  
\*note I am not talking about losing saltiness as losing salvation, but losing their good witness.
- b. Your light might be the only Jesus that people see. What kind of light are you reflecting? How can you better live a life that reflects a God who is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in love?
- c. What are ways that we are already being salt and light here at Good Shepherd? Think about our community that is yet unreached, what are ways that we can have a stronger influence as salt and light in our community?
- d. Pray about ways that you can be light in your community, about ways we can go into our community and reach out, about ways that they can see our light and glorify our Father in heaven.

How do we know if we are good representations of salt and light in our world? When we look like Jesus. Here is section from Jesus for President, by Shane Claiborne and Chris Haw. Feel free to reflect on this short section.

#### Looking like Jesus

Remember when ole John the Baptizer sent his disciples to ask Jesus whether he was the one they were expecting and he didn't answer with a simple yes? Jesus instead told them to go tell John what they saw him doing. He knew that John could read the trail of crumbs. John knew that when lepers were healed, the blind saw, the dead rose, and the good news was preached to the poor, the one they were awaiting was indeed here.

What does our trail of crumbs look like? If some asks if we are Christ-followers, can we say, "Tell me what you see"? Is there enough evidence to prove that we are taking after the slaughtered Lamb? What if they ask the poor around us? What if they ask our enemies? Would they say that we love them? Christians haven't always looked like Jesus. Perhaps the greatest barrier to Christ has been Christians who pronounce Jesus so loudly with their lips and deny him so loudly with their lives.

In the South, we have a saying: "You are the spittin' image" of someone. Folks still speculate over how exactly the phrase originated, but I've heard it put like this. It's shorthand for, "spirit and image," Spittin' image. (Go ahead and try it out; it won't hurt). For us, it meant more than just that you look like that person. It goes beyond just appearance to include character and temperament. It means that you remind people of that person. You have their charisma. You do the same things they did. In the truest sense. Christians are to be the spittin' image of Jesus in the world. We are to be the things he was. We are to preach the things he preached and live the way he lived. We are to follow in the footsteps of our rabbi so closely the get his dust on us.

We are to remind the world of Jesus. The criterion for whether something is a manifestation of the kingdom of God is the person of Jesus. Does it look like him?

'Be imitators of God' (Eph5:1)—that word imitate derives from the same word as mimic, like a mime." (Page 230-231)