

Christian Influence

Salt, Light, Leaven, Lost Sheep, Good Samaritan

Introduction

1. In the world, most people are concerned about self.
2. Jesus turns us away from that kind of thinking and teaches us to ask, "What about others?"
3. Jesus communicates the need to consider those around us in Matt. 7:12. "*Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them...*"
4. He illustrates this principle in several of His parables which we will discuss in this lesson.

Discussion

I. Salt: Matthew 5:13

A. The value of salt.

1. It flavors
2. It preserves
3. It makes that upon which it is applied more bearable.
4. In any case, it affects that with which it comes into contact.

B. The salty Christian.

1. Such make the world around them more bearable.
2. Their flavor affects those around them.
3. Preserves the world perhaps for a little longer so that others might come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9; Gen. 18:28-32).
4. The difference between Christian living and the ways of the world are so difference that true Christians greatly affect anything with whom they come into contact.

II. Light: Matthew 5:14-16

A. The value of light.

1. Shines to make a city visible, even beautiful.
2. Brings joy to those who are in the room.
3. Has a sense of glory.
4. Gives direction in dark places.

B. The Christian lamp.

1. Directs the hearts of men in the right direction.
2. Good in a world of evil.
3. Gives direction and clarity in a world of darkness.
4. It is a reflection of the light which Jesus brought to the world (John 8:12).

III. The Lost Sheep: Matthew 18:12-14; Luke 15:3-7

A. The love of a shepherd.

1. John 10:3: Knows his sheep by name, because each one is important.

2. Parables teaches the value God places on one sheep—enough to leave all others to go after the one.
3. In the context, Jesus was teaching us to have concern for others (see vs. 1, 15).

B. Christian love.

1. Teaches us the value of one soul.
2. The Shepherd loves His sheep.
3. That Shepherd commanded, “*As I have loved you, that you also love one another*” (John 15:12).
4. We are our brother’s keepers.
5. The souls of our brethren must hold great importance to us.

IV. The Good Samaritan: Luke 10:30-37

A. Who is my neighbor?

1. Location of dwelling had nothing to do with it.
2. The neighbor was simply one who had need.
3. The priest and the Levite were un-neighborly.
4. The Samaritan was the true neighbor.
5. As Jesus, we must “*go and do likewise.*”—Anyone who has need is our neighbor.

B. The Christian neighbor.

1. Neighbors are any who may have need.
2. Proximity of dwelling means nothing—all who are in need are neighbors.
3. Gal. 6:10: As Christ fulfilled our needs, so we must seek every opportunity to good to all.
4. “*Love your neighbor as yourself*” (Matt. 19:19).

Conclusion

1. Jesus taught us the need to consider others when He gave His life for the whole world.
2. As His disciples, Christians are privileged to be able to walk in His steps.
3. This includes their love and kindness toward the people around them.
4. Just as Christ gave His life for us, let us walk in His steps by learning to give our lives for our brethren (1 John 3:16).

*By David Phillips
April, 2007*