

Salt of the Earth; Light of the World

Matthew 5:1-16

Key Verse: 5:13-14

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.”

1. Review Matthew 4:12-17. Describe the times when Jesus began his earthly ministry. Why did large crowds follow Jesus? Read 5:1-2. What did Jesus do when he saw the crowds? Why did Jesus do this?

2. How many times is the word “blessed” repeated in verses 3-12? What does it mean to be “blessed”? Read verse 3. What does “poor in spirit” mean? How does a person become poor in spirit? What does Jesus promise to those who are poor in spirit? What does this mean?

3. Read verse 4. When do people usually mourn? When and why did Jesus mourn? (Lk 19:41; Jn 11:33-35) Why and how must we mourn? (2 Co 7:10) What blessing is given to those who mourn? How is this related to being salt and light? (2 Co 1:3-6)

4. Read verse 5. Can you think of examples from the Bible of people who were meek? (Isa 53:2-3, 7; Num 12:1-13; 1Sa 24:1-15; 26:1-11; Ge 26:12-32; Dan 3:16-18) How did they experience the blessing of meekness? What can we learn here about being meek?

5. Read verse 6. What do “hunger and thirst” suggest? (Pro 16:26) What does it mean to hunger and thirst for righteousness? (Jn 6:27) What blessing is given them? (Jn 4:13-14; Jn 6:35) Read verse 7. What is mercy? (Mk 10:46-52; Lk 18:13-14; Eph 2:4-5) How does a person become merciful?

6. Read verse 8. What does “pure in heart” mean? (Isa 1:18; Dt 6:5) How can we be pure in heart? (1Jn 1:7; Ps 119:9-10) How can we see God? Read verse 9. In what sense was Jesus a peacemaker? (Ro 5:1) How can we be peacemakers? (2 Co 5:18-21) What blessing is given to peacemakers? What does this suggest about being salt and light?

7. Read verses 10-12. Why does persecution come to those who follow Jesus? How is persecution a blessing? How can we rejoice and be glad?

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8. Read verses 13-16. Who is the salt of the earth and the light of the world? What did Jesus mean by salt losing its saltiness? Where do we put a lamp? In view of the Beatitudes, how can we be salt and light in the world? When Jesus' disciples live as salt and light, what is the result?