

SERMON BASED CURRICULUM



Date & Sermon Series:

June 13/14, 2015; Salt & Light

Speaker:

Pastor Joel Schmidgall

Scripture Focus: Matthew 5:13-16

Note To Leaders:

This weekend we discussed how to be, as Jesus proclaimed, the salt of the world. These questions provide a framework to prompt or foster discussion. Don't feel you have to use all or any of these questions and you don't have to make it to the end! Use the questions that best fit your group and let discussion flow.

Icebreaker Suggestions: Pastor Joel shared how his kids are great April fool's day pranksters. Share a time when someone pulled a great prank on you.

Sermon Series Questions:

1. What thoughts are still resonating with you from the sermon?
2. What was most encouraging or challenging about this weekend's message?
3. To whom in your life do you need to act as the flavor agent?

Specific Questions:

1. When Jesus calls us the salt of the world he gives us infinite value and reminds us that our identity is in him. What changes when we recognize the reality that our identity is found in Jesus?
2. Salt is a healing agent, and when it begins to heal it stings. Is there a situation where you need to risk a bit of sting, to yourself or to someone else, in order to bring healing?
3. Salt is a catalyst; it sustains life and leads people to what they need. Who was a catalyst to you coming to faith? What distinct characteristics or qualities set them apart from other people in your life? Do you find yourself living out these same characteristics and qualities?

4. Salt is a preservative, and Pastor Joel shared how we must protect God's word and God's goodness in the world. What does this mean, and how do we do it?
Note for Leaders: This question may provoke discussions about politics, especially related to social issues. While these aren't bad discussions to have, we want to make sure that they remain healthy, productive, and positive, and we want to be careful that no one—especially people who may not currently be following Jesus—leaves thinking that to be a follower of Jesus you have to vote a certain way or believe something particular about a given issue.
5. Salt makes everything it touches more flavorful, yet it is not about the flavor of the salt. It's about extracting the flavor, or goodness, out of whatever the salt is seasoning. Salt makes steak taste more like steak. It doesn't make steak taste like chicken. We are not called to change who people are but to help them become the best they can be. What would it look like to help your spouse, friend, or co-worker become a better version of themselves? How can you practically come alongside someone this week for his or her improvement?
6. Pastor Joel talked about how in Jesus' day salt that had lost its usefulness was thrown out into the streets with animal feces, and he compared this to someone who listens to God but does not live out His commands. What do you think or feel about this comparison?
7. Pastor Joel shared that just as there are all kinds of salt, God made each one of us in a unique way, to minister as the salt in our spheres of influence. How can you be salt in your spheres of influence—be that at work, with your neighbors, in civic associations or sports teams, or anywhere else you find yourself with relationships?

Challenge:

Read & Pray: Read through Psalm 139. Reflect on the goodness of God and spend time praising Him.

Act: When Jesus calls us the salt of the world he isn't asking us to be salt or suggesting we be salt, He is calling out the reality of who we are in Him. As Pastor Joel shared, we have a responsibility as disciples of Jesus to proclaim his healing, protect goodness, bring the best out of others, and lead people to him as the giver and sustainer of life. Over the next week focus on one of these four principles of salt and live it out each day. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you, and journal your experiences.