

SERMON NOTES Sunday 15th October

sunnysidechurch

Being Salt and Light: a vision of the Kingdom

Bible passages: Matthew 5.1-16; James 1.19-25

Introduction

- Sermon on the Mount: Jesus's vision for a fully human life lived out under divine rule
- Jesus primarily teaching the 12 disciples in a period of teaching summarised by Matthew in Chapters 5-7
- Sets out how being a follower of Jesus should make a difference to how we live: our relationships, our priorities, our attitudes, our focus
- Often mean different choices to those around us but will have positive impact on the world

Beatitudes

- Set of 'blessed attitudes' (Pytches): qualities and characteristics of Jesus' followers
- Each attitude brings blessing (favour and approval from God)

Salt and Light

- Not just about us being blessed, but God's way of blessing the world
- Salt prevents decay and Light illumines the darkness

Conclusion

- Holy Spirit at work in us to transform our attitudes and empower our actions
- Good news: we will be blessed; the world will be blessed through us; God will be glorified

Some questions for discussion

1. "You Christians look after a document containing enough dynamite to blow all civilisation to pieces, turn the world upside down and bring peace to a battle-torn planet. But you treat it as though it is nothing more than a piece of literature." (Gandhi) How do you respond to this comment?
2. Read Matthew 5.1-16. What do you notice?
3. What might it look like for you to develop these 'blessed attitudes' more fully?
4. What do you see in the connection between the attitudes and blessings that follow? The Message version of the passage might help you (see below)
5. Salt prevents decay and light illumines darkness. How might you be salt and light this week?
6. Where do you see the Good News in this passage?
7. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through these passages? It might be something to pray about, something to think more about, something he wants you to talk to someone about or something he wants you to do. Make a note of it so you don't forget!

let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
(Matthew 5.16)

Why not spend some time glorifying God and ask him to help you be more salty and shine more brightly in the days ahead?

Revd Rebecca Fardell

The Message 5.3-10

“You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

“You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

“You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are—no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.

“You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. He’s food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.

“You’re blessed when you care. At the moment of being ‘care-full,’ you find yourselves cared for.

“You’re blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

“You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.

“You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.