

THE CHRISTIAN AND OUR CULTURE

MATTHEW 5:13-16

What is the Christian's role in our culture? How should the Christian be involved in social programs? How should the Christian be involved in the political and legal process? These important questions were asked by you and deserve Biblical response. The Sermon on the Mount provides guidance for us in understanding our role in modern culture.

I. THE ROLE OF THE CHRISTIAN IN MODERN CULTURE.

A. The Analogy of Salt.

1. Salt restrains decay. Cp. 2 Thess. 2:6,7.
2. Salt enhances flavor. Cp. John 10:10.
3. Salt that has lost its saltiness is useless.

B. The Analogy of Light.

1. Light exposes problems. John 3:19,20.
2. Light provides guidance. Ps. 119:105.
3. Light that is covered is useless.

II. THE MAJOR AREAS OF APPLICATION.

A. Religious Discussion.

1. The responsibility. 1 Pet. 3:15.
2. The pitfalls.
 - a. The danger of enjoying the debate and failing to share the gospel.
 - b. The danger of attacking instead of discussing.
 - * Consider Paul's approach on Mars Hill as recorded in Acts 17. *

B. Social Programs.

1. The responsibility. Gal. 6:10; James 1:27; 1 John 3:17,18.
2. The dangers.
 - a. The danger of helping others for our benefit instead of those we help.
 - b. The danger of meeting physical needs and ignoring man's deepest needs.
 - * Jesus provided a model by feeding the 5000 and then speaking to them about the true bread of life. (John 6). *

C. Moral Matters.

1. The responsibilities.
 - a. The responsibility to address the moral issues of our day. Isa. 58:1.
 - b. The responsibility to influence our legal system. 2 Tim. 2:1-3.
 - "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is that good men do nothing." Burke.
2. The problems.
 - a. The problem of addressing behavior while ignoring the heart.
 - b. The problem of trusting political power instead of the power of God.

III. THE ULTIMATE PRIORITY.

A. Seeing God.

* As Christians we represent God in our culture (2Cor. 5:20). People form an impression of him through what they see in our lives. *

B. Serving God.

1. Man's deepest needs are met in a relationship with the living God.
2. Man coming to know God through Christ is the ultimate goal that we must never forget.

Graduates as well as every Christian who listens today must remember that you have a responsibility in your world. You are not just here to be assimilated into the culture, but to change the culture for man's good and God's glory.