

100 days with Jesus

Group Study No: 6

Matthew 5:13-15

Introduction

Since when did Britain become such a foodie nation? Who was the first person to put great, modern food on the telly? Was it the baby-faced Jamie, foul-mouthed Gordon or delectable Nigella? Speaking as non-chefs, most people probably hold an old-fashioned view that salt is for taste. Food should taste good and a bit of salt brings up the taste.

As for light, who wants to live in a world with no candles? These days, people can't attend a pop concert, remember an old friend or even have a bath without lighting a few. So when Jesus talks here about salt and light, he is scratching where we itch.

Discussion

1. What are the different qualities that salt has?
2. Why would salt have been even more important in Jesus' day than it is now?
3. Why do you think it is so difficult to be salt-like?
4. Can you think of an occasion when God has asked you to be salt?
5. Can you remember an occasion when you were in the dark and were scared?
6. In what ways can we shine for Jesus?
7. How do we turn our brightness up? Where does our light come from?

Salt and light are equally about lifestyle and character as well as words and images. They are about who we are, what we do and how we speak. Later on in his sermon, Jesus takes this double image or metaphor, and applies it to our anger management (v21) and marital faithfulness (v27), to divorce (v31), personal

honesty (v33), generosity (v38) and love for our enemies (v43).

These are all real-life issues, not just for our Sunday mornings in church, but seven days a week, out in the world issues. Are we saltily flavoursome in our financial generosity, or are we tasteless and tight-fisted? Are our relationships characterised by a lightsome smile, or are they grey and full of shadows?

Prayer

Lord Jesus,
You truly were the light of the world
And the salt of the earth.
Help me become like you,
That I might never lose my saltiness
Or hide my light,
And that the place where I live
Might be a better home.
Amen.