



SHIFT | From By-standing to Change Making | Week 4 | September 28 & 29

Matthew 5:13-16

These study guides are designed for individual or group study but highly encouraged to be experienced in community with a small group or other friends on the journey with Jesus.

Opening: We have been talking about our need to “SHIFT” our focus in life. God understands the essential shifts human beings need to make in order to live into life’s full potential. Do we? We looked at the move from dabbling to discipleship, from securing self to seeking the good of others, from demanding justice to extending mercy, and now from by-standing to change making.

- Which of the weeks, reviewed above, have been most impactful for you? Share or journal your answers.
- What weeks did you miss and plan on going back to catch up on? Don’t forget you can catch up or listen again through Christ Church’s media page: Media.ChristChurch.us.

Setting: Seeking the John 10:10 abundant life we have looked at Vision and Intention of SHIFTING and contrasted various Means by which we might SHIFT our attitudes and motivations in living. Our culture centers on the entertainment we watch, the political debates we observe and the endless news stream we can’t seem to escape.

- Think about your past week. How many hours did you spend watching?
- Were you engaged in any way? How did it all effect you?

Swirling Critique: How often do we find ourselves passively observing and critiquing. Our culture is strong on critical thinking—how could I make that better. We also live with an onslaught of analysis from the talking heads on TV telling us what was wrong in this political proposal or that tweet.

- Journal or talk with your group about an experience this week where you moved past critique to collaborate on a positive solution. How did you feel about the result?

Get out of the seats—get onto the Field: Read Matthew 5:13-14. Pastor Dan Meyer makes a point of how familiar these two metaphors are as descriptors of the Christian life.

- As you read them now what comes to mind?
- Pastor Dan goes on to say salt and light “are distinct from their surroundings.” What does this metaphor mean to you? Put it in your own words.
- In vs.14 Pastor Dan describes, “a place of light and hope that stands out against a darkening sky.” What do we need to do to be this kind of salt and light?



The Heart of God: The Sermon on the Mount, which contains this parable of salt and light, Jesus uses the comparison, “You have heard it said” “But I say to you.” Look at Matthew 5 and find an incidence of this comparison.

- What is Jesus saying in these comparisons?
- In the same way then, what is Jesus saying about salt and light? What is the SHIFT?

Preserve your Distinctiveness: Pastor Dan talked about the chemistry of table salt. We use a refined, stable, pure sodium chloride. The crystals last a long time. He contrasts that with the crude evaporative salt mixture that was used in Jesus’ time.

- How do you “lose your saltiness” in everyday life?
- Pastor Dan makes this statement, “Jesus is acknowledging that most of us are not pure compounds. If we’re not careful, our Christian commitment and character can be leached away. Eventually, we’ll only appear to be Christian, but no longer function as salt in the world.”
- Journal or share with the group what comes up in you as you read this statement. What would you say is the difference between “being Christian” and “functioning as salt”?

Penetrate your Environment: Pastor Dan said: Sometimes we think, ‘I’m different because I go to church.’

- How do you respond to that statement? What is the purpose of “church” in your life?
- Salt preserves when it penetrates. How is your Christian “saltiness” penetrating your Monday relationships? Journal or talk about how you might have a chance to be “salty” this week.

YOU are my witnesses: Jesus left us here in this world, Pastor Dan says, because salt and light bring about change. We are here to be **change makers**. “You don’t become mere saltshakers living privately pious lives.” The salt has to come out and become a taste-giving, decay stopping force in our world.

- What one thing can you do this week that opens a conversation in a “taste giving” way?
- Consider a darkening sky that needs light and hope. What person’s darkening sky can you speak into? Ask God to give you that opportunity this week.

Practice of the Week: Write out Matthew 5:16. Stick it on your desk or your computer or the back of your phone—someplace you will see it often. The word translated “good” in good works is a Greek word meaning winsome, attractive—a good thing, but more. It draws people to it, it’s desirable, it’s beautiful. Look for opportunities to practice attractive good works so people will see and be curious about your light and you can reflect them to the Father. Thank God for every opportunity you have this week.

We’d love to hear from you!

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you or your small group, please let us know.

We also enjoy hearing how God is using these study guides in your lives.

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