

Salt and Light

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Preacher: Stephen Murray

[0 : 0 0] I wasn't with you guys last week. I was up in Durban celebrating my mother's 70th birthday.

I was actually back at my old home church. They were the first foolish bunch of people who allowed me to get behind a pulpit. I was back with them. They still welcomed me back there.

But I have it on good authority that the preacher who preached last week made some disparaging comments about my dress code. And so I was tempted to dress down even more today just to try to balance things out a little bit.

Matthew chapter 5. And we're in verse 13. Actually, what I want to do is I want to actually read from a little bit earlier on. Let's read from verse 3.

This is Jesus preaching in his famous Sermon on the Mount. This is how the sermon starts. Verse 3 of Matthew chapter 5. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[1 : 0 3] Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven. For in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world.

A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

[2 : 1 5] This is the word of the Lord. Let's ask for God's help as we study together. My gracious God, won't you teach us this morning? Won't you open your word to us?

We thank you that we have this incredible privilege. of having the words of our creator God in our hands and in this Bible. And so we want to know it.

We want to understand it. We want to see deeply into it. And we want to be changed by what we see. And so we pray your Spirit would do that special work in us this morning. Show us Christ and the beauty and the glory of Christ.

And change us, we ask. For Christ's sake. Amen. So two weeks ago we were at the very end of the Sermon on the Mount.

We looked at the sort of closing image or closing metaphor that Jesus uses of the wise and the foolish builder. That was a sort of a one-off sermon.

[3 : 14] We're going to pick up our series in Acts in two weeks' time. So I know you guys are holding on. We'll get there. I promise. But we'll carry on in Acts in two weeks' time. But I thought what I'll do in this week just in between is go back to the very beginning of the Sermon on the Mount.

And look at the image that Jesus actually starts off. His whole discussion about what life inside the kingdom looks like. There's a sermon, a famous sermon. He preaches on the side of a mountain. Initially to his disciples.

Although by the end of the sermon there are a whole bunch of people who have started to gather around and listen to him. And he's telling them what life inside this new kingdom that he's bringing looks like. Some of the commentators look at these verses we just looked at now.

Particularly verse 13 and 16 that I want to focus on. And they say these are actually the key verses in this whole sermon. If you understand these verses then you really understand the burden of what Jesus is getting at. And it's a passage that like many parts of the sermon uses metaphors.

And these are metaphors that you're possibly familiar with. If you've been in church or around church circles you've probably heard these sorts of metaphors there before. Salt and light.

[4 : 17] Church circles you might have heard somebody say something in a conversation like we're supposed to be salt and light in the world. Now I wonder though as familiar as we might be with that sort of terminology if we actually understand what that person means.

If we've actually said it and we've understood what we mean when we say it. Do we really understand them? And so here's what I want to do this morning. I want to first try and understand what exactly salt and light means. And then I want us to just look at two ideas that come out of our understanding of these metaphors.

So let's try and figure out this salt and light first. Have a look down. Keep your Bibles open. Verse 13. So Jesus says, Now maybe you've used those words before in language.

Maybe you've said, We Christians should be salt and light. I wonder what you meant when you said it. What are you trying to convey to the person? Traditionally, people have looked at this and they've looked at the salt and they've said something like, Well, you know, salt's a preservative.

It's what we use salt for. It's how we get built on. Salt's a preservative. It keeps things from rotting. It keeps things from decaying. So what Jesus means here is we're to be a preservative in the culture.

[5 : 50] Kind of by Christians, by our holy presence in the broader culture. We go some way to keeping the broader culture from rotting and decaying socially and morally. We're to preserve the society.

And in the light, well, the light shines into the darkness. And so what Jesus is talking about here, he must be talking about evangelism. We go out and we let our light shine. This is the light of mine.

I'm going to let it shine. We've got to tell people about Jesus. We've got to let this light shine out into the darkness and come into their lives. That's the traditional way this passage has often been understood. I've heard several sermons and Bible studies teach it that way.

And there are certainly some truths in those points. And there are other verses in the Bible that I think back up some of those ideas. But the longer that you stare at this passage, and the more you actually put it within the context of the whole of the Sermon on the Mount, the less persuasive, I think, that particular interpretation becomes.

So take salt, for example. In the Bible, in the ancient New Eastern culture at the time, salt appears numerous times, and it can be a reference to all sorts of different things.

[6 : 56] So it can be used to add flavor, like we generally use it today. Salt is sometimes used as a currency or to pay tax in ancient cultures.

Salt, here's a pretty weird one. Salt was rubbed all over newborn babies to symbolically drive away evil spirits. That's even in the Bible. There's an obscure reference to it in Ezekiel 16. Salt was used to destroy people's lands.

So you want to curse your neighbor, you take a whole bunch of salt and you throw it on their crops. And so it was a symbol of cursing. Salt was used as an antiseptic in animal feed. I'm told that we still do that today, apparently.

Salt was used in fertilizer. I'm not sure how that works because you also throw it on people's land to destroy their crops, but apparently it also works in fertilizer. Salt was used as a symbol of friendship.

And the list kind of goes on. There are more things here. So when you come to this passage and you're like, well, how do I know which one he's talking about? Which one does Jesus have in mind when he says, you be the salt of the earth?

[7 : 55] It's almost impossible to know, isn't it? The only way I think we can know is by trying to figure it out within the context of the broader passage and what he's teaching, what he's saying. So you notice there are actually three metaphors or pictures that Jesus uses here.

Salt, light, and a city on a hill. There's also a lamp as well, but that's kind of in reference to the city. Salt, light, and a city. Now is he saying three different things?

Or is he saying one thing in three different ways? I think it's the latter. And let me try and show you why. In the ancient world, salt was not the refined salt that we have.

Like those white plastic cans of the little boy throwing salt at the poor creature. I don't know why there's a little boy throwing salt at a poor creature on the front of our white salt cans. Have you ever wondered that? Ever sat eating your breakfast one morning, looked at it, closed it, and gone, why is that on the front of our most reputable, well, our most common salt brand in the country?

Salt's not like that refined white salt that we have. It was mixed in with a whole bunch of impurities, a whole bunch of dirt. And so it often actually just looked like a pound of dirt in your hand if you were holding it.

[9 : 04] Jesus says if your salt loses its saltiness, then it's useless and it should be trampled underfoot. Now I am not a scientist, but I have it on good authority that technically that is not true.

Salt cannot strictly lose its saltiness. Salt is salt and it is salty and it will always be salty. It cannot become non-salt, but it can get adulterated with all the dirt and all the impurities.

Salt is not a piece of dirt, especially back in those days, to the point that it basically becomes a pile of dirt. And it's no longer useful for flavoring or preserving or anything else really, and it should be thrown on the ground and then trampled on like he says.

You see, I think what Jesus is highlighting is distinctiveness. The distinctiveness of the salt among the dirt. It's the distinctiveness that he's concerned with.

It's the sticking out. It's the distinguishing from the dirt. It's the same with the light. You bring any sort of light into a dark environment and immediately there's a distinctive change to that particular environment that you're in.

[10 : 07] The light stands out. That's why it's pointless to put anything over the light and cover the light. It's pointless to cover the light because in the lights of no value to you, the distinctive nature of the light is useless to you.

In the ancient world, cities were a great beacon of light. We don't quite understand this because in our modern sprawling cities, you've got lights all over the place, so we don't really notice city lights that much.

But in the ancient world, or even today, if you're like really out in the sticks somewhere, it gets really, really, really, really dark. Especially if there's some cloud cover. Then it's really dark. You can't even see your hand in front of your face.

I remember several years ago being part of a missions team driving in a very isolated rural part of Mozambique and just realizing, like, if I turn the car lights off, it's just completely pitch dark here.

The ancient world nighttime was really, really dark. And if there's a city somewhere, you start to see it from miles off as you're traveling in that direction because you've got this collection of lights together all reflecting up onto the clouds.

[11 : 17] And so all of a sudden, there's a beacon. There's something for you to aim for. There's something for you to go towards. Something that stands out against the pitch darkness. And that's what Jesus is on about. Standing out.

Distinctiveness. The distinctiveness of kingdom living. When he calls us to be salt and light, he's calling us to be distinct in the way that we live and interact with this world. And verse 16, at the very end, actually clarifies us even more.

So look what he says in verse 16. In the same way, let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. See your good deeds.

Distinctive living characterized by good deeds. That's life inside the kingdom that he's going to spend the rest of his sermon speaking about. You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. You are to be a person living out the distinct nature of the kingdom through your good deeds.

That's what those metaphors mean. That's what they mean. Now you can say it with confidence to your friend next time. Now notice two things that come out of this with me. Number one, notice the need for distinctiveness.

[12 : 23] And notice the goal of distinctiveness. The need and the goal. Here's the first one. I think it's fairly apparent by the way that Jesus speaks about salt and light that this world needs distinctiveness.

So he talks about you are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. As in the earth needs this. The world needs this. The world needs someone or something to stick out. Without salt and light all we're left with is dirt and darkness.

See really I think what Jesus wants is he wants a picture of a new humanity here. That the world can kind of look at and aspire to. They can see it.

Stands up like that city on a hill and aspire to it. People are constantly, constantly looking around for a vision of what we the human race could be. There's I think a general acceptance in most cultures, religious or non-religious cultures, that people are not as good as they should be.

As Christians we've got categories for that. But generally I think even outside of the Christian world we're all looking around going, society is not what it should be. We're not as good as we should be. At least it's not as good as we'd like to be.

[13 : 26] And so there's desire to change. Ever since time immemorial there has been this kind of looking for a city on a hill. How do we find this change? How do we find a new vision of who we're supposed to be?

And historically we've tried all sorts of things to build this utopia. To build a new humanity. The perfect society where everybody gets on with each other. I think you probably have to get rid of social media for that to happen.

Where everyone has the right morality. Everybody has the right ethics. Everyone cooperates perfectly. That's where you get all of the isms in life from. Communism, liberalism, socialism, capitalism, libertarianism.

All the isms are basically different attempts throughout history to say we're dissatisfied. We're dissatisfied with the way things are.

With the way we're living. We're dissatisfied with our behavior. We don't want to be this way. The world is not working. We don't want it to be this way. We need to change it. We need to cast a vision for a new world. And then we need to try to go out and get that.

[14 : 24] And then you get an ism. And there have been different levels I think of optimism and pessimism about how well we can do here. How much we can actually achieve collectively.

Today I think there's a bit of a mix of pessimism and optimism depending on your sort of social location in the world. So in certain quarters I think we're quite pessimistic and cynical about each other.

For some of us we expect pretty much everybody to be a crook. We expect politicians to be corrupt. We expect elite businessmen to have dodgy dealings going on. We expect clergy to not be that far from another scandal.

Somewhere down the line there's a sort of basic cynicism in society. One of the older books that really captures this sort of cynical view is a book you might have had to read in school.

I had to read it in school. William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies*. Written in 1954. It's a long time ago now. But a basic story is a bunch of school kids end up as the only survivors from a plane crash on a remote island.

[15 : 30] They're on this island. And on the island they get a chance to basically start over. And the whole intrigue around the story that drives the plot is what are they going to build? What are they going to develop?

As they're left there to their own devices, there's no adults around, what are they going to build? And what essentially happens is they turn into a bunch of savages. They devolve into killing each other, engaging in all sorts of primitive behavior.

And that was Golding's take on what would happen if we are just basically left to our carnal desires. Very cynical, very pessimistic. Now what a lot of people don't actually know is that almost 100 years earlier, in 1857, there was another book written by R.M. Ballantyne called *The Coral Island*.

And it basically has a reverse story of *The Lord of the Flies*. So a bunch of kids are stranded on an island and they do really, really well for themselves. They build up the island. They, to quote, introduce civilization to the Polynesian tribes.

It's written in the middle of the 19th century. They rid the island of pirates and they just do really, really well. They build this flourishing little civilization. And Golding actually read that book. He read the book and he really liked it. He enjoyed the book, but he said that's not how the world works.

[16 : 43] And so he wrote *Lord of the Flies* in some ways as a response. He doesn't think that that's what people will really be like. Now that book, *The Coral Island*, was written at the peak of what we might call enlightenment thinking, where everybody was extremely positive.

Positive about the human project and what we're going to achieve together as a human race. Everyone looked at the world and they said, well, look how fantastic we are as human beings. We've thrown off the shackles of religion and superstition.

We're growing in our science. We're growing in our understanding of medicine. We're growing in our overall knowledge. We're basically unstoppable. We're going to create utopia here on earth. Perfect society.

And then, if you know your history, you know what happened next. Two world wars came along. And the fruit of that was William Golding's book. So we swung from sort of extreme optimism to extreme pessimism.

And there are actually examples today in current society of a slight swing back taking place in some circles. So there's popular writers. You might have come across people like Harvard psychology professor Stephen Pinker.

[17 : 53] Or there's a Dutch historian, Rutger Bergman, who's written a lot of articles and books pushing back the other way. Pushing back against the pessimism. Pushing back against the cynicism. Painting a much more positive vision of human achievement.

Saying, actually, you know, things are getting better. We are getting better. We are actually building. We're on track. It looks very similar to that sort of pre-enlightenment or pre-World War I enlightenment vision. The interesting thing, though, and you can do whatever you want with this information.

But the interesting thing, though, is those authors tend to all be in really wealthy privileged societies where they write that stuff from. You make of that what you will. But either way, what you've got is you've got this back and forth that keeps happening in society.

Back and forth, back and forth in terms of our pessimism or our cynicism regarding human achievement and what we can do. How we can become the new humanity. Now, into this mix, Jesus comes along.

And he says, To those who want to live in the kingdom, You can be that picture. You can actually be that picture of the new humanity.

[18 : 52] You can be the city on a hill. It's clear that the world desperately needs this. They're lost. They're stumbling around. They're bumbling around. They're swinging on a pendulum all the time. You can be it. Forget pessimism.

Forget optimism. You can be what people look to and go, Wow, that's what we should be. Imagine what the world would be like if we were all like that. That's what we should be. Now, as you read these verses this morning, and as I read these verses, I think there's a bunch of different responses that can come out of you.

One of the responses should at least be this, and this is something of a response I have when I read this, is this is exciting. This is very exciting. Forget about all the hard work that's going to come later, but just at the initial stage, this is really exciting.

The invitation to be a city on a hill to this world, to bring light where there is darkness, to bring hope where there is despair. That is exciting. All those things that we read when we read the longer section of the Beatitudes, to be people who are about righteousness, people who are about justice, in a world that's full of corruption and injustice, to be people who are about mercy in a world full of condemnation, to be people who are about making peace in a world full of conflict.

For me, there's something incredibly exciting, incredibly thrilling about that invitation that Jesus puts before us. It's almost like the invitation to be a superhero, right? Who doesn't want to be a superhero?

[20 : 19] In 2011, HBO had a documentary called Superheroes, tracks the real-life adventures of real-life superheroes.

And I don't mean like doctors or NGOs, I mean NGO workers, I mean like real superheroes. So these are people who really think that they are superheroes. And they go out at night, it's always at night, and they do all sorts of superhero stuff at night.

One of the guys' names is Mr. Extreme, so they've got very creative names and costumes. And I was fascinated watching this documentary, because apparently this real-life superhero thing is a phenomenon that's catching on.

People are into it, and they're doing it, and they have groups that they get together around. And it also coincides with this glut of superhero movies and TV that we have from kind of the early 2000s.

Now why this fascination? Why this fascination with superheroes? Marvel and DC have basically monopolized movie and TV in the last 20 years. What's the attraction of the superheroes?

[21 : 24] Why are we fixated with people who wear their underwear on the outside? I think, and there's actually been some opinion piece writing on this by people who are much smarter than me, but I think we're fascinated with superheroes because there's a little part of us that wants to be a superhero.

We want to aspire to a better humanity. A heroic humanity. Tom Taylor is a guy who's written comics for both DC and Marvel, and he says this.

He says, We're getting more and more jaded by politicians, people in power, and businesses. We want to have an ideal that we can actually look up to, and I think that's why everybody's flocking to see all these Marvel movies about people wanting to help.

Now coming back to the real world, Jesus is extending the invitation to us to be the people we aspire to be.

He's saying, Come be a real life hero for the cause of righteousness in this world, for the cause of the kingdom. Be salt, be light, be a city on a hill, give humanity a picture of what they could be.

[22 : 35] Now I guess the pushback comes, and the critique is going to come, of what Jesus is saying here. It's going to go something like this, Well how do we know this is not just another version of a coral island?

Some sort of overly optimistic, triumphalist view of human existence. What makes Jesus and his kingdom any different from all the other isms that are out there?

Why won't this one fail like the others? Why won't it lose its saltiness? Why won't the light grow faint? Here's why. This is John chapter 1, the beginning of the Gospel of John.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made, without him nothing was made that has been made.

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

[23 : 45] You see, ultimately it's not our light that makes a difference. It's not your light, it's not my light that makes the difference. The light has already come. The here has already come.

Jesus has already come. 2,000 years ago in history, Jesus has already come. He has already come, and he's already shone his light everywhere. So you want real life superhero? You want to move away from reading DC and Marvel comics?

You want real super life hero stories? Go to the Gospels. Read Matthew. Read Mark. Read Luke. Read John. People are healed. Demons are cast out. Storms are stilled.

People are raised from the dead. And like every single classic superhero story, the hero Jesus comes face to face with his arch enemy, Satan, his nemesis.

And just when it looks like Satan's got the upper hand, Jesus is there on the cross bleeding, dying, exhausted. Just when it looks like the enemy has won, Jesus says it's finished.

[24 : 48] He gives up his life. And in that moment, he defeats Satan. He defeats death. He defeats sin. He defeats evil. He defeats evil by taking upon himself the sin of humanity and putting it in the grave as God pours his holy, righteous judgment upon it against all injustice and all unrighteousness.

Christ seals that darkness in the grave forever. He closes the stone, leaves it there. And then he rises from the grave to clear and complete victory. Over the enemy. That's the light of the world.

And insofar as we are united with him through simple faith, faith in his death and his resurrection on our behalf, we begin to become that light of the world.

And so friends, our optimism this morning, it isn't blind optimism. It isn't the pastor standing up here going, rah, rah, we can be better people and make everybody impressed by the life that we live together. It is not that.

Because our optimism is not based in our capabilities. It's not based in my ability to go out there and be salt and light. It's not based in my confidence on you to go out there and be salt and light.

[25 : 58] Our optimism is based upon the superhero who truly is salt and light, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ. He's already accomplished the defeat of evil and death and buried it in the grave.

We don't hope that people are just going to get better by themselves. We hope in the one who has already made things better by himself.

So you're being distinctive in this world. You're standing out in righteousness. It's not based primarily on your ability to be distinctive, but on the extent that you, by faith, reflect the light that Christ has already begun to shine.

The world needs that. The world desperately needs that. Now quickly, second point here. The goal of distinctiveness. I wonder if that last verse in our passage strikes you as a little bit strange as you read it.

Jesus is talking here about the topic of being salt and light and the great need for it. You'd have thought he would have said this. You would have thought he would have said, Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds, and logically, I would have thought he would have said, that they would see your good deeds and they would emulate them, right?

[27 : 12] Copy them. Do likewise. Then we'd have this great society. Then we'd have the utopia that we're all after. Father, you live in his example to all those people around you, but doing good deeds, they see your good deeds, they live like you.

Fantastic society. Peace on earth. But that's not what he says. Jesus says, Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds, and glorify your Father in heaven.

See, your salty living, your light shining, is not there primarily to model to this world how to live. It is there in part to that. But it's supposed to be more than that.

It's supposed to be the signpost. The signpost to ultimate reality. The reality of God, the worship of God. Your life is supposed to point beyond morality to the presence, and to the power, and the perfection of the God who created us all.

It's supposed to evoke praise for our perfect God. It's what you looked at last week, right? It's what it says in the very first question of the Westminster Shorter Catechism.

[28 : 20] What is the chief end of man? And the answer, you should all know it after last week, man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. God is not just in the business of kind of moral rejuvenation for the sake of moral rejuvenation.

He's not just there to make us behave a little bit better. He's here to bring us into this brand new reality of glory. Worshiping Him. Praising Him.

He's here to bring us into intimate relationship with Himself through His Son. He's here to get us to see that what we need more than anything else is not just to behave a little bit better, but rather we need a deep encounter with divine glory itself.

That's what C.S. Lewis says in his very famous sermon, *The Weight of Glory*. He describes this divine glory as a beauty. And he says this, he says, We want so much more, something the books on aesthetics take little notice of, but the poets and the mythologies know all about.

We do not want merely to see beauty, though God knows even that is bounty enough. We want something else, which can hardly be put into words. To be united with the beauty we see.

[29 : 36] To pass into it, to receive it, into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. But divine glory is the goal of our distinctiveness.

That's what Jesus says. Worshiping God in all His glory is the goal. Our hearts, your heart, will not be fully satisfied in anything less than divine glory.

Our lives, our salty living, our light living, light-filled living, points to that reality. Signposts to that reality, Jesus says. They point beyond dreams of utopia, beyond optimism, to something so deep, so powerful, so glorious, and that is the worship of God.

Friends, what a privilege. What a privilege to be invited to be part of that. Not because you earned it, but because God in His grace has come and joined.

What a joy. And so my question to you this morning is, are you part of that? Are you united to Christ by faith? Has His light shone into your heart?

[30 : 46] Is it starting to shine out of you to others? Is there a distinctive saltiness to your life? Does your life prompt others to worship God or to taste something of the divine?

You know, we spent our whole existence as human beings trying to figure out how to get ourselves to higher states of human glory. How to overcome inherent sin, evil, our corruption, our failures.

All of our isms are those sort of attempts to increase human glory. I fear, friends, that if we fixate on our own glory, our experience in the end will be the same as that of Ralph, the main character in *The Lord of the Flies*.

So towards the very end of the book, with the boys all sort of devolving into depravity, Ralph's friend, Piggy, is murdered.

Spoiler alert, sorry. Jack, the leader of this depraved band of boys, orders them to hunt down Ralph. And so they chase him down.

[31 : 56] They hunt him down like a wild pig. They set light to the forest around them on the island. It starts burning. And Ralph runs and he runs and he runs and he runs and he runs. And just when you think the hunters are going to catch him, he bumps into a naval officer who's been sent to rescue them.

An adult in full uniform. And William Golding closes the book with these words. Ralph looked at him dumbly. For a moment he had a fleeting picture of the strange glamour that had once invested the beaches.

But the island was scorched up like dead wood. Simon was dead. And Jack had... The tears began to flow. Sobs shook him.

He gave himself up to them now for the first time on the island. Great shuddering spasms of grief that seemed to wrench his whole body. His voice rose under the black smoke before the burning wreckage of the island.

And infected by that emotion, the other little boys began to shake and sob too. And in the middle of them, with filthy body, matted hair and unwiped nose, Ralph wept for the end of innocence.

[33 : 08] The darkness of man's heart. And the fall through the air of the true wise friend called Piggy. He bursts into tears at the abject failure of humanity at that point.

And he sees it in himself. If we seek after human glory, if you seek after human glory, I fear that it's going to end in tears in exactly the same way.

Our goal is not human glory. It's not human progress. It's not utopia. It's not just building the suburban lifestyle or whatever it is you're chasing. Our goal is God's glory. Aim for anything less and you will be tragically disappointed.

And I mean that on a macro level for all of humanity and that's also true on a personal level for you. Aim at your own glory. Aim at personal advancement. Aim at creating your own personal utopia and you will end up sobbing like Ralph.

To use the metaphor that Jesus used. You'll be tossed out and trampled underfoot. Aim at the glory of God. Aim at his kingdom.

[34 : 19] His righteousness. And according to the Beatitudes, you will inherit the world itself. Jesus says. So C.S. Lewis says in another part of that same sermon.

He says the promise of glory is the promise almost incredible and only possible by the work of Christ that some of us shall find approval.

Shall please God. To please God. To be a real ingredient in the divine happiness. To be loved by God. Not merely pitied but delighted in.

As an artist delights in his work. Or as a father in his son. It seems impossible. A weight or burden of glory which our thoughts can hardly sustain. But so it is.

Friends, because of Jesus this morning, so it is. You can worship God and enjoy that divine glory. Won't you embrace Christ by faith this morning?

[35 : 19] Let's pray.