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Crossroads Community Church

Sunday January 25th, 2015

The cold morning did not deter us from coming into the Lord's presence to praise and worship Him. Pastor Don greeted everyone with a warm smile , shared announcements and prayed,? Dear Father God, we humbly come before You to ask for your guidance through Your Holy Spirit, with His help let us understand your Word and Your Will for us, In Jesus Name, Amen.?

How many of us like to take trips? Well the next 5 weeks we will journey through the teachings of Jesus and learn from his sermon on the mount on how to be his followers and grow into a closer relationship with Him. We will discover what is truly important in God's Kingdom and what He expects from us as His followers. Jesus says,? You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless,? Matthew 5:13. This means that we are to live a life of good influence on the world around us just like salt adds good flavour to food. We do not want to be like the Pharisees and have a negative influence which is compared to yeast; you only need a little to puff up a whole batch of dough, however just a little salt slows down the yeast, (Matthew 16:6). So as followers we can positively slow down the negative evil in our world.

Salt is also a preservative, it prevents foods from going bad, so Jesus comparing us to salt means we are to prevent the decaying of our society by keeping morality intact, speaking up against injustices and maintain a social conscience, (1 John 2:17). A few examples of how Christians have done this are establishing Food banks, abolishing slavery, fight against human trafficking and send relief and funds to countries suffering after devastation strikes. God's will for us is to make a positive difference in the world, as Bob taught on holiness last week, God set us apart for His good purposes, (1 Peter 2:9).

Jesus is this same sermon called us the light of the World, (Matthew 514-16). Light removes darkness, it reveals danger, it clears the path, it helps us find what we seek. That light is Jesus so we need to allow Him to shine through us guiding those who seek to find Him, (John 1:3-5). When we invited Jesus to reside in our hearts, he changed our lives, He took us out of the darkness and brought us into His light so our testimony should be reflected in not only our words but in our actions so people can see the difference Jesus can make for them, (Ephesians 5:8-9).

People want to see a sermon before they listen to one, like the old saying goes, ?Preach at all times, use words when necessary.? Another point Jesus addressed in His sermon was anger. Jesus came to show us how to live, to be loving and kind, anger certainly doesn't reflect that. Anger is serious and Jesus didn't take it lightly so He took it a little farther when He said that if you are angry with someone you will receive the same judgement as a murderer, (Matthew 5:21-22). The apostle Paul even reminded us to not go to bed angry or else the devil can get a hold of you, (Ephesians 4:26-27). And John the disciple also repeated Jesus' teaching when he said if you hate your sister or brother you are a murderer in your heart, (1 John 3:15). You see Jesus didn't deal only with the act of murder but the attitude behind it, and when we follow Jesus it is not an attitude we should keep, we need to let Jesus change it. If we remain angry or if someone is angry with us, it can interfere with our relationship with God. So before we come to worship we ought to forgive any grievances we may have with one another, (Matthew 5:23-24). Jesus' teachings also tell us that if hatred is in our hearts than we cannot claim to love God, it makes us a liar, for with Jesus in us it becomes second nature to love and forgive, (1 John 4:20-21). When we stay angry we remain captive to that anger, to the situation and we cannot have peace much less love, so settling issues with each other will set us free.

Beloved Jesus is more interested in the attitude and condition of our hearts and if we allow Him to change our hearts then it will become easier overtime to obey the commands of God, this is why he calls us to a higher standard than simply not doing something sinful but he wants to remove the attitude behind the sin. Jesus said Anger equates to murder, that lusting equates to adultery, coveting leads to stealing etc. Perhaps this is why Jesus said that if you your right hand causes you to sin cut it off, figuratively speaking it was the attitude behind the sin he was referring to, the thing that causes us to fall into sin. Jesus was tempted in every way we are today and he never sinned so we can absolutely trust him to transform our attitudes to reflect Him, to purify our hearts and minds, to resist the temptations of our enemy, Jesus is our High priest, our helper, our friend and His desire is to see us live in love and harmony, He wants to give us His righteousness, his goodness and to see us free from the evil one, so we ought to make every effort to come close to Jesus and He will come close to us! Asherey Shalom!

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