

Salt & Light

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[0 : 0 0] So the text is actually, we're going to start at verse 12 and it will be 12 to 16 unless I've prepared a sermon on the wrong text. It's definitely 12 to 16. Sorry, we're going to start at verse 11. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and other all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad for your award is great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?

It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. So far this is God's holy word.

Let's pray together. Our Lord and God we ask as we look at your text, your word, your revelation to us for a few moments that you would be with us by the Spirit and give us illuminated eyes to see the truth. We ask for this in Jesus' name. Amen.

So we're in our series on the Beatitudes and this is our third look. I want you to begin by coming back with me to the Beatitudes themselves, sorry on the Sermon on the Mount, to the Beatitudes themselves. We're looking at the phrases today, you are the salt of the earth, you are the light of the world, but I want to say that this passage actually begins in verse 11.

Okay, the last Beatitude is where we have to go to understand what Jesus is doing with the metaphors of salt and light. Look at, look again what it says in verse 11. Blessed are you or blessed you are when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of things against you, falsely on my account, rejoice and be glad for your word is great in heaven for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

[2 : 20] So Jesus ends the Beatitudes with a promise and a pledge that if you live the beautiful blessed life that we've been talking about the past couple weeks, you're going to get persecuted. You're going to get reviled. The world by what we mean that public space that exists as culture outside of the walls of the church is going to see you as a dispensable commodity, right? They can throw you out. And we've seen that throughout the history of the scriptures and throughout the history of the Christian church's relationship to the world. You're dispensable. Now the question that we're coming to tonight when we approach the subject of salt and light is this, in the background Jesus is tackling this question, what do you do when that happens? What does the church do when it gets reviled and persecuted, when you become a dispensable commodity? Now one response is quite easy. It's compromise, right? You relate to the institutions that are outside of the church walls by just being like them. You relate to the culture in such a way that you might be called secular, like the term that we use for normal society. But the point of this text is that Jesus has already presented the beatitudes. He's already presented to us what the blessed life looks like, what the beautiful life looks like. And so his presumption is this, look, if you're pursuing the beatitudes as a Christian, as a believer in the resurrected Christ, then compromise isn't an option. So what are the other options then? What are the other options? And I think the option that Jesus is really trying to tackle for us tonight is actually the total opposite of compromise. What's the basic response that human beings have when they're made fun of? What's the basic response that people have when they are considered by others to be a loser of sorts? What do you do in your work environment when that particular group of colleagues who are the obvious leaders of the social context keep speaking in a way that degrades women, that has jokes of Jesus as the target, and they know it bothers you.

They know it bothers you because you're just the token Christian, right? What do you do? And one of the opposite responses of compromise often that we're tempted towards is isolation.

It's to do the total opposite thing of compromise, and that's to run away, right? You go to work, you do your job, and you get out of there, right? You don't interact with public spaces.

You don't consider yourself to be a part of that culture in that world, right? This is where you make your friendships. This place is where you do everything, and your life is about getting to this context, right? And so the thing that Jesus is addressing here is that the right approach? Is isolation the right approach? Is the monastic life to run away or to just be totally separate the right approach? When we do things like that, then the outside world becomes a place that we tolerate, that we pray for perhaps, that we live in, that we work in because we have to, but it's not one that we enjoy or participate in or make friendships in or engage or know anything about the culture or any of that.

And for a lot of us, what that ends up looking like is something like we vote on occasion, and our cultural interactions are mostly just watching Netflix at night in our bed, right?

[6 : 13] Is that the response that the church should have to the culture? That's the question that Jesus is getting at tonight. So we have compromise on the one hand and isolation of the other. Now this was an issue in Jesus on Day. There were two groups in the first century that were acting like this. One were the zealots. They were both groups that tended toward different types of isolation. The zealots were political and social activists, all right? They wanted to reform the whole order of things, the Roman order, the white Judaism related to Roman, all these things. And so they were not, they were prone to even things like murder. I mean it was a total religious activism of sorts, but what they did was they lived in an utter isolation from the normal community and would make religious attacks upon it, okay? This type of activism obviously is not in comport with the Beatitudes, right? But there was another group also called the Essians. And the Essians did something similar. They moved to the Dead Sea, to the shores of the Dead Sea and just stayed there and never saw society at all, right? So it was an extreme monastic attitude, a total separations. And what Jesus is getting at in this passage is that none of these options make sense for the blessed life. How are you going to be a peacemaker in an isolated situation like that or in an activist situation like that? So the question that he's exploring is this, you're not a compromiser. You don't look like the world. You're distinct. You live the life of the attitudes because of Jesus Christ. But you also don't completely separate yourself from the culture in the world. You don't get away from its institutions. You don't stop caring about what's happening out there, right? So what are you? And here's the first thing.

You are the salt of the earth. You are the salt of the earth. Now what's this mean? Everybody in here knows something about salt, right? You probably have had some salt today.

There's salt in your body right now. If there's not, you're not going to make it much longer. Salt is a preserving agent in the ancient world. It's a flavoring agent, right? So this fairly common... Salt, it was used in past centuries to preserve things, especially to preserve things like meat and other things. So one of the things that Jesus is getting at by saying that you're a salt of the earth is that the Christian church's mission as an organism, as individuals which leave this building and go out into that world in daily Monday to Saturday and gauge with the institutions of public space, of culture, of society is to be a preserving agent. Now in theology, one of the ways we categorize this as we call this doctrine of common grace. In other words, it's one of our missions as the church to go out and be the hands and feet of God at preserving the decay that happens in the public space, right? We all as human beings are on the path of entropy, decay, both spiritually and physically. Our bodies are going that route, but also it's the natural state of our hearts to go that route. And so what we mean when we talk about common grace is that

God says in His Scriptures that He shines the sun upon the just and the unjust, upon those that are saved by grace and those that aren't saved by grace. He brings the rain to fall upon the land, no matter if it's the Christian's form or the non-Christian's form, right? Look, in the Garden of Eden, when Adam and Eve fell, if God would have done exactly what should have happened and what He said was going to happen, then Adam and Eve in the whole world would have just died. That was the promise. But instead what He does immediately, instead of killing everything, instead of taking back creation, is He curses it. And even that curse was an act of common grace, you see? It was an act of looking upon the whole of the cosmos and saying, you don't deserve to exist anymore, but by my grace, I'm going to let you. I'm going to send my rain. I'm going to send my son. I'm going to send Noah. I'm going to send the covenant, right? I'm going to preserve this world. And so one of the missions of us is being salt is to be agents of preservation in the world, of upholding the moral order for the best of our ability, of being engaged with the public space so that it maintains some semblance of universal justice. Okay, so that's the first thing, agents of common grace. It's also, if you look at the text with me, verse 13, it's you are the salt of the earth, of the earth. Actually, the word there is probably better said to be ground. You're the salt of the ground. Now, what does He mean by that?

Well, there's a number of ways we could take that, but I think one of the ways is this. Ever since the Garden of Eden, the Hebrew writer there, Moses, used the word ground all the time, all over the place. It was human's mission to till the ground, right? Whenever Adam and Eve fall, it's the ground that gets cursed to bear up thorns and thistles, right?

[11 : 46] In other words, what he's saying is the whole cosmos, the ground, literally, the natural environment around us, all those things are subject to what happened at the fall. So when he says you are the salt of the ground, you are the salt of the ground, you're the salt of the earth, he's saying this, look, it's not only the public people that's your mission of preservation, but it's also a connection to the actual world. That this physical material space is going to be renewed and restored to be God's kingdom in the new heavens, in the new earth, and we ought to care about it. I'm not going to flesh out what that means because that would bring us into all sorts of crazy politics stuff and that's not our place to do that here. But it's at least to say this, that the scope of redemption includes questions about physical material space, about ecology and all those things and those are questions that I think this text is pointing us to wrestle with. Now, those are the two,

I think, most obvious things about what it means to be the salt of the earth, but there's also a third and this one's not as well recognized. In the ancient world, salt also performed another function, not just preservation and flavor, right? But in the Old Testament actually five times, salt is used in a different way. Listen to how it's used here in 2 Kings chapter 2. Now, the men of the city said to Elisha, behold, the situation of the city is pleasant as my Lord sees it, but the water is bad. People were dying from drinking the water here in this context. This is a very typical crisis, ones that many nations are facing today and the land is unfruitful. So Elisha said, bring me a bowl and put salt in it so they brought it to him. Then he went to the spring of water and threw salt in the bowl and said, thus says the Lord, I have cleansed and healed this water. From now on, neither death nor miscarriage shall come from it. In other words, salt doesn't only flavor and preserve in the ancient Near East, but it purifies and cleanses. It purifies and cleanses.

So we could say this, our role is not only to preserve, to protect, but also to purify and cleanse and give life to the world that is tending towards decay. It's not to be an activist. It's not to be in isolation, but it's to seek for its peace and its prosperity and its transformation at times. Now look, this is not an ethic that says you go out in the world and you do justice and you do mercy and you do peace and you're going to see everything change and all of a sudden we're going to have a true Christian monarch or anything like that. No, not at all. Jesus promises us that we will be persecuted. That's not going to happen. But nonetheless, it's a call to a particular ethic, right? An ethic that lives out the beatitudes in public space that hopes, that hopes in a transformation that will mimic in the smallest of ways the life of the new heavens and the new earth that's coming in Christ. Listen to what Jeremiah says or to what God says to Jeremiah about how to treat public spaces, about how to treat cities and architecture and water and health and all these things. He says to Jeremiah, seek the peace and the prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord your God for it because if it prospers, you too will prosper. In other words, this is our home. The world is our home, but it's been perverted and diluted and ruined by sin. And that Jesus Christ came on a mission of restoration and says, one day I will make this the place new. I will make all things new. But for now, your mission is to be salt, is to preserve from decay and to cleanse that were at wherever possible. I've carried you into the city into Edinburgh to seek its peace and prosperity. Pray to the Lord for it because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

If you come back with me to verse 13, let's look at the question he asked. You were the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?

It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. This is what he means by question 13. If you're ten toward compromise or you ten toward isolation, then what use are you? In other words, what use is the blessed and beautiful life if it's not being put on display outside of the walls of the church? That's like throwing salt on the ground and walking on it. It doesn't make any sense, right? If you're a parent, you might have had this experience. My two-year-old, two-and-a-half-year-old Ethan, because we put salt on the table, always wants to have a ton of salt on his food, right? It's just there. So any spice or condiment that sits on the table, it doesn't matter what it is, he wants it on his food, right? So he asks one by one, now it's time for ketchup, now it's time for salt, not time for pepper or whatever. So we give it to him, right? But what do we do? What do you think we do? We take the salt and we open it just a bit and we pretend and we shake it, but we actually shake it onto the table of the ground right next to his plate, right? We don't give it to him. We just pour it on the ground and he's very satisfied. He thinks it's all over his food. He has no idea, right? Maybe if he listens to this, he'll figure me out. I don't know. Look, that's the type of thing that's being described here. Now in our situation, it's actually wisdom. But what God's saying, what Jesus is saying here by his word actually, if you look down when he says it's no longer good for anything, it's actually much stronger than that there. The words he actually uses are more like, it's very dumb when, it's very dumb when you pour salt onto the ground or trample it under your foot. That's the type of connotation. That's what he's saying is when you take the beautiful, blessed life of the Beatitude, the life that you've been saved towards living, of pursuing peace and justice and mercy, of hungering and thirsting for righteousness and putting that on display for the world, you're going to get persecuted.

[18 : 40] So don't compromise and don't put yourself in isolation or you're going to be useless salt. It's just going to be salt that you walk and tread upon on the ground that's useless. So far from being a command to isolate from culture, it's a command to get stuck into it, to dive in without being like it, being distinct from it, having a theological vision for it, but being very much engaged. Secondly, the second metaphor, you are the light of the world. Now, these are in parallel. So he means much of the same things when he comes to this second one. You are the light of the world. You're a city, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand. And it gives light to all in the house. You are the light of the world. So just like the world in sin tends toward decay and salt is that metaphor by which he pushes back against that decay. So the world tends towards darkness and light is that metaphor by which we push back against the darkness. Now, one of the things I think the light metaphor teaches us that the salt doesn't is this. Look, he says that if you light a lamp and you put it under a basket, again, it's the same thing as the salt, right? It makes no sense. Why?

Because it's light's nature to diffuse, right? We all know this intuitively. When you turn a light on, right, it does one thing very fast and that's travels and diffuses and spreads and fills up space, fills up the whole room. And any darkness that was in the path of that ray is exposed, right? It's made, it's come to light. It's neither the nature of salt to be put on the ground and walked upon, nor is it the nature of light to be put under a basket, right? It's the nature of it to diffuse, to spread out, to be an organism that enters into that public space. Everywhere it goes, it can be seen. Why? How? Not because it's seeking to be seen, but because it's living a blessed life, a life of beatitude, a very distinct life. Now, look, this actually would have hit a lot harder to the Jesus listeners than it does to us, right? Because they would have heard something a little bit different about putting a light under a basket than we do, right? If I had a lamp up here and I lit it and I put it under a basket, well, so what? It's not that big of a deal, right? We have lights, we have all sorts of things. But in the pre-modern world, life was structured very differently, right? Why? Because they don't have electricity. And so normally a normal routine in the pre-modern world, if we can just get our minds around this, is people don't live off of clocks. They live off of natural light. And so when you're living in a Gararian lifestyle, a lifestyle of farming and all those sorts of things and bringing your food to the local markets, when darkness hits, darkness hits and you go to bed, right? And normally, maybe not even in the first century, but in other times throughout history, what's happened is that they've burned oil lamps. But this is so expensive for the average person that normally it's best just to go to sleep at darkness. And what they would typically do is they would get up in the middle of the night, a lot of them, maybe around midnight or one, and take almost a sleep break and light that lamp for one hour and write letters or hang out with their family or do whatever, right? There's an economic aspect to this that we don't see as people in 2015. Look, what Jesus is saying here would have been an abusive use of resource. It would be wrong against both the nature of light and the economy, right? It would be abusive. The discomfort that Jesus is garnering here and as listeners is that in both cases, salt and light, things are being used in discord with their intrinsic nature. So, he's saying this, it's not the nature of a disciple to be isolated from the public sphere, from the culture, from the world. It's not, it's the nature of a disciple to diffuse into the world, to leave the church building and to go out into the public and to not be bland or dark but to be salt and light. One of the main reasons for this is that the world has always been a place that was supposed to be

God's kingdom, okay? That's an important theological truth to stick in, that the world has always been a place that was supposed to be and is going to be once again God's kingdom. His mission, Adam and Eve's mission was to not be still or static but to take the garden and to spread it. Their mission was to be gardeners, to till the land, to extend the fence, to take it to the whole earth, to encapsulate the cosmos and say, this is all of God.

And so Jesus is coming and saying that his mission in restoration is to say once again, this is all of mine. I am putting my enemies under my feet. I am making them a footstool by resurrection and renewal and redemption. And so what we're being called to is to wrap ourselves up in this great commission, this great commission to see ourselves in an ethic of the attitude that's participating in a future that is a new heaven and a new earth and to live like it now, to live like we're already in some ways in the not yet, knowing that persecution will come, knowing that they will never, the world and all things will never be fully converted or fully evangelized, fully transformed, that the government and the politics and global health and all those things are never going to become what they will one day become in Christ, but that for now we have an ethic of pursuit. We have an ethic to display before that world the beautiful life, the blessed life, the life that Jesus has called us to.

Now, last thing, last section. This is all salt, light, these are metaphors. Talking about engagement and interaction, not isolation, all these things, they're good and they're right, but they're abstract, right? So let's get a bit more specific and go from metaphor to an actual how then should we live? What does this mean on the ground? What does this mean for us on the ground? The first thing is this. It's a call to live with a definite purpose for both you and the world. Okay, it's a call to live with both a definite purpose, with a definite purpose. By living the blessed life, you do one main thing and it's found in verse 16. In the same way, let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works. That's the beatitude life and give glory to your father who is in heaven. In other words, the thing that Jesus is calling you is to participate in a mission that has always been on tap and that's the mission of God's glory. Our catechism tells us in the confession that we confess that we exist for the glory of God, to enjoy him and glorify him forever. Look, the whole point of existence is God's glory. God's mission is his glory and it's our mission in the Great Commission to be called unto the participation in and for his glory. The call to engage in that world is a call to put on display the glory of God. If nothing else, it's simply living what we were made to live for. Living for the glory of God. By the blessed life, you not only glorify

[27 : 13] God but you uplift others, this text says, into seeing and knowing the glory of God themselves. In other words, from Paul, you are the temple. There's no longer a temple in Jerusalem by which we go to worship. You are the temple. Believers in Christ, where the Holy Spirit dwells bodily on this earth, is you, is Christians. We are the temple of God and we are the vehicles of the display of God. There are millions of people out there that are not going to crack a Bible and they're especially not going to do it until they see a beatitude life. Sometimes that is the pre-Avangelistic method of getting someone to the point of talking about Jesus Christ. You're a temple. You're God's vehicle of manifestation for many. It's also a call in that light to seek the common good. It's not only a call to evangelism and to putting on a beatitude life for others to glorify God, it's a call to seek the common good of the public square. In other words, we've got to, as Christians, be known as people who care about universal justice, who care about seeing things done well and right, who care about doing our jobs well and having others know that we did our jobs well and people wondering why. It's saying that guy is distinct, right? Caring about things even as far and as extensive as architecture and culture and media and all these things and literature and being fully engaged in some of that stuff and understanding and caring about it. It's a call also to seek the common good of the public square. When we seek the common good of the public square, like I said, sometimes this will be the best method to do evangelism, to talk to people about the gospel, to develop friendship, to have people over for dinner, to do the community that Saint Seas is so good at doing, right? It's a call to extend that out beyond our walls. Now, let's get even a little bit more specific, and this will be the last thing. What we can't do tonight in this is to talk about some general mathematical formula for how this works and what this looks like. Because every single one of you are in distinct places and distinct spheres of the public in life. The key is this, that we take small bites in small contexts, small bites in small contexts for a big goal.

Every single one of you are going to have a particular relationship to the public sphere that's different from the one I have. Actually, the one I have and the one somebody like Derek has is going to be much less than most of you because we are really different from the one Derek has is going to be much less than most of you because we are wrapped up in the on-going of this particular church, this local institution. This is our day-to-day life, right? We're not actually engaged with as many non-Christians, with as many people in the public squares. Most of you are. You have to think about, very specifically, through a biblical theological vision of what it looks like to do justice and mercy and love in your own particular small sphere of life. Small spaces with small and minor involvement for a huge global vision of the kingdom of God. This is going to be really simple for many of us. It's going to be not leaving right after things at work and talking to our neighbors there and becoming a leader in that social space. It's going to be inviting that guy over for dinner that you've been sitting next to at your workspace for 10 years and all you do is say hi in the morning. Those are some of the small things and small bites that we're talking about here. Now what I want to do to conclude then is just give you three illustrations because again it's hard to give prescriptions for what this looks like, what this type of engagement looks like. We know for sure that it looks like living the beatitude life of grounding yourself in these texts and prayer and scripture. But I just want to unfold for you a little bit of a picture of images of metaphors and illustrations, just three briefly and they'll get more and more specific and closer and closer to home.

The first will be the least close to home for some of you, but we've got to do it because we live in Edinburgh and that's Harry Potter illustration. This is the city of JK Rowling and I don't think I've ever done a Harry Potter illustration so it's time. Don't worry if you haven't seen the books or seen the movies or reading the books, this will make sense.

The Goblet of Fire, many of you, most of you that have seen the movies or read the books will remember that they're having this tournament between all these three schools. There's a French Academy there, a group of French girls and the headmistress, Fleur Delacour, she looks out at Hogwarts, the Hogwarts is the school that's competing, and she looks at Dumbledore and basically says, look this place is a mess. You've got the Weasley Twins riding around and messing everything up and you've got all sorts of anarchy and then you've got people that she's heard of like Hagrid, the giant who has done all sorts of things that are illegal but has been let back in. You remember he got fired multiple times and let back in. You've got a teacher, one of the professors who was previously a death eater, he was evil. He was part of the camp that Rowling's metaphorically symbolizing as one of Satan's people. But he's repented and he's being let back in and she looks at Dumbledore and she says, what is going on here? Hogwarts is supposed to be this fine institution, right?

It's supposed to be like Fettes or whatever the other one is, Stuart, I can't remember the name, but these really nice school institutions that are known for prestige and perfection.

[33 : 37] You're cultivating these perfect students, right? What's going on? Sometimes in the books, you'll remember this, Hogwarts is a place of strict, strict discipline. The Scottish voice in the whole series of novels, Professor McGonagall is that voice of strict, strict discipline, pinching boys by the ears and all these things, right? But sometimes there's this juxtaposition with unruly, loose, just craziness and also mercy, right? There's this beautiful scene that Rowling paints later in the books when Dumbledore is talking with Harry and Harry is curious about this place, Hogwarts. Harry says basically exactly what I just said, what's so distinctive about this place and Dumbledore answers, Harry, it's just the way of love. In other words, to bring it out of Harry Potter and into the real world, the way of love, the way of beatitude finds the right combination of justice and mercy, of loving your neighbor and at the same time seeking justice, punishment, law, all these things as aspects of the common good. The way of love finds the balance between those.

That's the life of the beatitudes, the peacemaker that doesn't underwrite law and justice. That's one way we can seek the common good. A second one that might hit a little bit closer to home. This is about a CEO that I know of where I come from in Mississippi. He had a very large company with thousands of employees and he had many, many, many workers who were very frustrated with the current situations of the company. Maybe some of you tonight are in situations like this. The man was a Christian and so he decided that instead of staying in his tower, he was going to come and try to have lunch throughout the year with as many of the employees in his company as he could. He does just that. He sits there day after day and he listens to their frustrations. He lets them tell him how much they hate him and how frustrated they are with how he's run the company in this direction and that direction and he defends himself and he tries to tell them this is why I did this, this is why I did that. But look, I'm here for you. I'm glad you could tell me this. I'm glad that you told me. After he does this for you sometime later, he gets a letter in the mail from one of these employees and the letter says, dear sir, I want you to know that a year ago I bought a gun and every single night I get it out and I put it on the table and

I put it up to my head. And you know why? Because I hated this company. I hated working here but I couldn't leave because I wouldn't have any money and I had nowhere else to go and he was completely alone and he was so frustrated with his work environment that every single night while he ate dinner he thought about it and he said every single night I got closer, I got closer, I got closer and he said but when you came and I got that email and you invited me to lunch, the CEO of a company of thousands of employees, the man that I have always hated in my head and we sat down and we had dinner together and you let me yell at you and you let me tell you how much I hated you and you responded to me not with pure justice, not with saying you deserve to be fired but with mercy. You showed me the way of love. The next day I took the gun and I went back and I sold it at a pawn shop and now I'm getting counseling. That's one example of engaging the public sphere with a life of beatitude. And the last one is this and this is a quote from the early church and we're going to close with this. It's a beautiful quote and I've read it once before down in the hall but it's worth repeating. This is from a letter from a disciple to a guy named Dionytus in the early church who was persecuting and very upset about Christianity spreading across the lands and this is what he said, this is how Mothaites defends the

Christians. Christians are indistinguishable from other men either by nationality, language or custom. They do not inhabit separate cities, in other words they don't isolate themselves or speak a strange dialect or follow some outlandish way of life. With regard to dress, food and manner of life in general they follow the customs of whatever city they happen to live in whether it's Greek or something else. Yet, yet there is something extraordinary about their lives. They live in their own countries as though they were only passing through. They play their role as citizens. They're the best citizens but they labor under all the disabilities of aliens being persecuted. Any country in the world can be their homeland but for them their homeland wherever it may be is a foreign country because they know their home is in heaven. Like others they marry and they have children but they don't expose them. What he means by that phrase if I can just pause we're almost done with the quote I know it's long but it's really good. What he means by that is when they have children they don't sacrifice them to other gods and what he means by marriage is that they don't share their spouses with one another and that in itself was transforming the culture of Rome. I can assure you they share their meals with one another but not their wives.

He says they live in the flesh obedient to the laws yet they live on a level that transcends the law. They do even more than required of them. Christians love all men while all men persecute them. Condemned because they are not understood they are put to death but they know they will be raised to life. They live in poverty but they are rich. They are totally destitute and poor but they possess an abundance of everything. They suffer dishonor and that is a glory. They are defamed but vindicated for the good they do receive for the good they do they receive punishment of malifactors but even then they rejoice as though they were receiving the gift of life. They are attacked by Jews and by Greeks yet no one can explain the reason why people hate them. Is the principle by which you walk out of the morning grounded in the fact that the resurrected Jesus Christ has called you to a life of beatitude to be salt and light to a world that is decaying and dark. That's the question

[41 : 04] I'll leave you with. Let's pray. Our Lord and God we ask that you would make us people who long to be salt and light Father it's so hard. We wake up in the morning and we think about a million other things and so we ask Lord that you would change our hearts to be people who are obsessed of living the Christian life with an ethic of beatitude, of peacemaking, of justice, of mercy, of the way of love while all the time looking to pronounce Jesus Christ as the true Lord as the ultimate truth by never compromising but never being isolated. We ask God that you would make us into people like that and we pray for that in Jesus' name. Amen.