

**Belmont Exeter House Group Notes**  
**w/c 6<sup>th</sup> October 2024**  
**Matthew 5: 13 – 20 Salt, Light and Law**

The Sermon on the Mount contains probably the most well-known words of Jesus'. It has influenced our culture whether or not people are followers and believers in the Lord Jesus. We've recently looked at the book of Malachi where the Lord calls the people to repent and be renewed. The patterns of life to which we are called are given vivid reality here in the Sermon on the Mount.

This year we've had a focus on living a life of true worship. Romans 12:1 describes the right response to the gospel as offering out bodies as living sacrifices. This is our true worship. The Sermon on the Mount gives us plenty of details what a righteous, fulfilled life looks like and how to go about living it. This contrasts with false worship of idols such as power, identity, ambition, status, wealth, control.

There are two talks covered by this study. If people weren't at the services, then do encourage them to catch up online ahead of the study via the talks page on the Belmont Exeter website.

<https://belmontexeter.church/talks/>

This outline gives plenty of questions for studying the text, as well as exploring the outworking of these ideas in our everyday lives. There's more than you'll need for a single study so please do edit to a focus that is helpful to your group / study.

### **Resources**

This year, the Bible Project has produced a wealth of resources for studying the Sermon on the Mount. You may find it helpful to use this overview at the start of the series.

<https://bibleproject.com/guides/introduction-to-the-sermon-on-the-mount/> This video gives one helpful structure of the sermon <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/matthew-5-7-sermon-overview/> and then follow links for many other resources.

The following books are thorough and accessible commentaries.

The Message of the Sermon on the Mount – John Stott

Sermon on the Mount - Scot McKnight

**BIG IDEA:** Christians are to be a positive influence in the world and draw others to follow Jesus.

**WAY IN:** In what ways have Christians had a positive influence on society, in Exeter, in our neighbourhood?

**READ:** Matthew 5:13 – 16

### **DIG IN:**

- 1) Which part of the text (or sermon if you were able to listen to it) had the greatest impact on you? What puzzled you? Did you learn anything new about God? Jesus? You?
  
- 2) Jesus says that the people who are blessed are salt and light. What do these pictures tell us about Jesus expectations of his followers?
  
- 3) How do salt and light exercise their influence? What role does this give to Christians in

workplaces, community and homes today? What are the differences between these two pictures?

- 4) What limits and opportunities are appropriate for Christians living in a multi-faith / pluralist society?
- 5) Light illuminates and reveals. How is this a blessing to those around us?

### **LIVE IT OUT**

- 6) How are we to maintain our saltiness? What sort of things could cause us to lose our saltiness?
- 7) What do 'Salt and Light' people look like in everyday life? Take a look back at those who are blessed and consider how this works out on your frontline.

In case Jesus' hearers think he is removing the Old Testament laws, Jesus makes it clear that he is fulfilling / completing the law, showing how when it is loved in fulness then it is indeed good news.

**READ:** Matthew 5:17 – 20

- 8) What are the main elements of the 'Law and the Prophets'? How has Jesus fulfilled these? Take a look at Deuteronomy 6v1 – 3; Jeremiah 1v4 - 8, 1 Peter 1v10,11;
- 9) How does our attitude to the Old Testament match up with Jesus'?
- 10) How does Jesus describe greatness in the kingdom of God? What is difference between the righteousness of the Pharisees and the righteousness Jesus offers us? Read Romans 2v25 – 29; Romans 3v21-31 to see how Paul describes this

### **LIVE IT OUT:**

- 11) How can our righteousness exceed that of the Pharisees?
- 12) Is there a 'salt & light' activity you could do together to live out the righteousness that Jesus describes?

### **PRAY IT THROUGH**

Break into smaller groups to pray about how you can be salt and light, fulfilling the law of Christ on your frontlines