

Speaker: Associate Pastor David Seah
Title: Our Purpose In The World
Text: Matthew 5

Instead of asking - "What on earth are you doing?", someone blurted - "What are you doing, on earth?"

Matthew 5:13-16 (Msg) - ¹³"Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.

¹⁴⁻¹⁶"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine!

Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven."

1. The metaphor of the salt

Salt was highly valued in the ancient world. It gives flavor to food. Just as salt must get into the food in order to be useful, Christians must be involved in the world in order to fulfill their destiny.

John 17:15 -18 - I'm not asking that you take them out of the world. But that you guard them from the Evil One. They are no more defined by the world. Than I am defined by the world. Make them holy—consecrated—with the truth; Your word is consecrating truth. In the same way that you gave me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world.

Our mission is to ensure that our sodium chloride compound makes a difference in the world. What salt is to the food, meaning is to life. Without salt, the food would taste bland.

Without meaning, life would be without hope.

People lose hope primarily because they can't find meaning. When meaning is absent, hopelessness abounds.

Our mission is to bring meaning & hope.

In John 4 - The Samaritan woman had no hope. There was no hope in her relationships. Through her conversation with Jesus, Jesus marinated the woman's insipid life with meaning. He then revealed Himself as the Messiah.

John 4:25-26 – The woman said "I don't know about that. I do know that the Messiah is coming. When he arrives, we'll get the whole story." "I am he," said Jesus. "You don't have to wait any longer or look any further."

The woman found meaning & had hope. Hope caused the woman to share with others.

Matthew 5: 13b- If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.

Jesus' intention was not to throw caution, but rather to highlight an impossibility - Salt is extremely stable and it is unlikely to lose its flavour.

Jesus was stating an impossibility in order to draw an awareness - the awareness that believers cannot lose their saltiness. They are intrinsically salty by nature. They carry with them life's ultimate meaning, who is Jesus Christ.

And what they have is meant to bring hope to a dying world.

2. The metaphor of the light

14-16"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine!

Just as light must be placed at the right place, our lives must be strategically lived.

Strategy is everything.

Jesus was a strategist on:

- i. His recruits
- ii. The platforms He spoke on
- iii. Timing to reveal himself

We need to be strategic in :-

- Choosing who is influencing us
- Choosing whom we are influencing
- Using our resources – time, relationships & skills

Vs 15 – 16 - I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven."

Jesus, the Great Strategist is the One that puts us. Where we are - in our family, within our neighbourhood, among our friends & colleagues, in this nation, is a divine placement. We are in a blessed state.

Matthew 5: 3- 5 says ³"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule. ⁴"You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you. ⁵"You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

The early Church directed its energy & resources strategically towards transforming society. Historians would describe Christians as practitioners of kindness & love that would bring hope. The Church was salt & light – **bringing hope through strategic involvement.**

Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven."