

HOPE FOR AMERICA

———— MATTHEW 5

MAIN TAKEAWAY

Christians are to act as the preserving influence and shining light in this dark and corrupt world.

INTRODUCTION

How would you explain why Americans celebrate the Fourth of July to someone from another country, especially in light of the 250th anniversary?

What comes to mind when you consider the freedoms we have in our country? As Pastor Greg shared, what kind of hope should we have for America?

UNDERSTANDING

READ MATTHEW 5:13-16

Sometimes Christians try to isolate. Why is this wrong, and what should we do instead? In what way are we all “influencers” (John 17:15-18)?

Others will embrace all that culture offers without reservation. Why is it important to realize we live in a dark and corrupt world? What happens if we don’t recognize this?

We must stand for truth, whether it is popular or not. In what areas might some Christians compromise truth? Why can’t we pick and choose parts of the Bible?

To reach our culture, we must use language people understand (1 Cor. 9:22-23). What are some Christian phrases you use that nonbelievers may not understand?

We need to bring the message of the gospel. But before we can effectively share it, we must first live it. What happens if Christians are not salty or bright?

Salt preserves and stimulates thirst. How are Christians the preserving influence in the world today? How can Christians cause others to thirst for God?

Light exposes darkness. How can our words and works show that there is a way out of darkness (John 8:12)?

APPLICATION

Why does the world need you to be salt and light? Is it hard for you to consider yourself as being the salt of the earth and the light of the world? How would you like to grow in your spiritual influence on others?

In what ways do you see the world getting darker? How can the gospel uniquely shine brighter and give hope in this context?

We were given three points of application in this week's message: infiltrate, pray, and preach the gospel. Which of these personally stands out to you when thinking about how you can make a difference as salt and light?

PRAYER

Praise God for the spiritual freedom you have in Christ, and for the privilege of sharing this message of freedom with others. Thank God for placing you in this exact time and place to bring Him glory. Ask God to give you the courage to speak and act as salt and light.