

Kenmore Baptist Church Message Outline 9/8/15~ Thong Ng (AM)

Fruitfulness on the Frontline Part 5

Moulding Culture

Introduction

Culture is defined most simply as *“the way we do things around here”*. Culture has two parts: the visible and the invisible.

The INVISIBLE determines and drives the VISIBLE – the way we do things around is the visible.

BEHAVIOUR = CHARACTER + CULTURE

The iceberg is an excellent analogy: you have the visible and the invisible.

Behaviour – seen ~ visible

Values – good ~ invisible

Beliefs – true ~ invisible

Worldview – real ~ invisible

What is the culture in your frontline?

Most would say Selfish and Superficial – worldly – a closed system that excludes God.

Closed system – no God – no man and no God

Opened system – His Kingdom had come – man plus God

We tend to go with the flow and adopt the culture of our environment.

Romans 12, ² *Do not conform to the pattern of this world (Chair 2), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind (Chair 1)*

Jesus uses two metaphors to describe how we are to be culture moulders.

Matthew 5:13-16, ¹³ *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.”* ¹⁴ *“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.”* ¹⁵ *Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.* ¹⁶ *In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Jesus calls the disciples and did not ask them to do anything. He wanted them to know their identity first.

I) Who we are – our Identity vv 13-14 Beliefs and Values (invisible)

We mould our culture by knowing who we are first – the invisible. What we do comes later.

“You are the salt of the earth” Salt has three uses –

- *preserves meat* from decay
- *brings out the flavour of the food*
- *produces thirst* in people

Jesus is saying that by our very presence

- We stop our frontline from going downhill
- We bring out the best in our frontline
- We cause our frontline to want more?

“You are the light of the world” Light has two main uses –

- *Illuminates the darkness*
- *Lights up and reveals the path*

Jesus is saying

- You bring to light what was unseen
- You give a new perspective to solving a complex problem

Both salt and light are stable and they influence and change their environment. They are not changed by the environment.

Psalm 1:3, *That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.*

II) What we do – our Behaviour

Don't do what they do – go with the flow; compromise – salt losing its saltiness.

Matthew 5:13b, *It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.*

- *Thrown out* – no good to the mission of God
- *Trampled by men* – not respected by the people you try to please and not offend

Jesus has called us to be the salt of the earth – salt bites and stops decay.

Helmut Thielecke, *“We are not called to be the honeycomb of the earth but to be the salt of the earth.”*

Don't hide your light

Matthew 5:14b-15, *A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.*

As Salt and Light we are to penetrate our frontline.

John Stott said, *“When you see a house in darkness you don't blame the house, rather you ask where is the light? Similarly when you see a piece of meat decaying you don't blame the meat, but rather ask where is the salt?”*

Leif Hetland said something very similar, *“You don't say what has the world come to, but rather who has come into the world”.*

Salt penetrates and marinates

More passive – working inwardly

A small grain of salt can make a big difference – the smallest action can begin a culture change.

DL Moody said, *“There are many of us that are willing to do great things for the Lord, but few of us are willing to do little things”*.

Light penetrates and reveals what is unseen

More active – working externally.

In the darkness, our eyes are drawn to the light. God calls us to be His light to shine. We shine by doing good deeds.

Peter calls us: a peculiar people

Richard Mouw, President of Fuller, describes us as *“holy worldliness”*.

Jesus declares – you are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world.

Whatever we are called we are not inferior. We are of infinite worth and have great power to influence our environment.

Application

Identify the need in your frontline

Pray for Kingdom solution

Invest time and resources

Take home point: We are called to be the salt and the light to mould our culture – we look very ordinary but our impact is extraordinary

- Like leaven in a bread – slowly, quietly and naturally;
- Like a mustard seed it will grow with expanding impact – largest of trees
- Think big – Start small – and Go deep