

Matt. 5:13-16 - The Church's Role in the Culture War

INTRO – I'm not tech savvy or a social media butterfly - ?LOL. Was daughter sending love to me or just laughing at me? We're not here to talk about social media but the church's role in social decay. I am going to use an acronym to do it - LSL- Light, Salt, Love; or Love by Salt & Light – either way works

Last week we looked at the how the Bible address cultural sins (national/collective sins); and whether we as individuals are culpable for community sins. I called this view- Corrupt Cultural theory. CCt says that all cultures are corrupt but all cultures do not excel in the same corruptions. Just like individuals have unique proclivities/affinities; so too groups of sinners gravitate toward unique expressions of rebellion. Each culture establishes its own acceptable sins. Every society sanitizes certain sins and these sins flavor, season, permeate and make up, the culture. This plays out in: Family Culture; Church Culture, Group/Ethnic Culture & National Culture. Every person/culture is corrupt according to their own taste.

Today we tackle the church's responsibility in the culture war and how to address cultural rot. Beyond not embracing the acceptable sins of our society...how are we to battle against societal sins? LSL

WHAT IS THE CULTURE WAR?

1. A culture war is when a society fights over which sins will be acceptable
 - a. Every society puts its stamp of approval on certain sins – the war is over which sins get approved... what perversions are permissible... corruptions are cool...sin - stigma = CCt
 - i. Societies can forget how to blush – Jer. 6:15a
2. The cultural war in my lifetime has had many battles
 - a. Things that were once considered to be wrong/bad are now seen as good/right
 - i. Is. 5:20 -the culture war is the battle over this repositioning over what is proper
 - b. Present culture accepts certain things it used to reject & rejects things it used to accept
 - c. Someone defined Revolution as, “ what was once rejected is now celebrated; what was once celebrated is now rejected; those who don't celebrate this change are now rejected
3. Should the church be on the battlefield of this culture war?
 - a. Some say NO. the church should keep it confined and not confront the culture
 - b. Baptist pastor jailed in Canada -Tim Stephens – had to defend his public stance “It is not that the church is getting more political. The government is getting more religious.”
 - c. Scripture says, YES “...Your will be done on earth....”
 - d. We are to make God's will (and Word) known on the earth. How? LSL

LIGHT

- The church's role in a dark world is to be light Matt. 5:14-16a
 - Jesus is The Light but as His followers we share in His light John 8:12 1 John 1:5-6
 - The church should not walk in darkness. That is contrary to the nature of light
 - We shouldn't emulate the world. We need to illuminate the world
 - Don't adopt the darkness. Bring the brightness How? – *Exude* and *Expose*
- Exude- “Light” ought to emanate from our lives Matt. 5:16

- A dark world ought to notice the difference between them and the people of light
- When the church looks like the world, sound like the world, acts like the world we are not being a light in the world. Romans 13:12-14 Phil. 2:14-15
- The church loses credibility with the world when we are as corrupt/complain as the world
- Expose- light exposes what is in the dark Eph. 5:8-14
 - 5:9-10 light = goodness, righteousness, truth and learning what pleases God
 - 5:11-14 light exposes the evil
 - Euphemisms abound when sin is being re-defined murder is called choice
perversion called love greed is called good business stealing is called my fair share
covetousness is competition disrespect is independence laziness is stimulus lying
is my truth blasphemy is dialogue idolatry is plurality
 - sin is no more/erased and becomes the only 4 letter word not allowed
 - A. Rogers “the church is the conscience of society”
 - We speak to gov. as a prophet and make known Gods will in a dark world - light

SALT

1. Matt. 5:13 The church is not called to be sweet. The church is called to be savory
 - a. salt not sugar but pressured to change flavoring Is. 30:10-11- pleasant (sweet) words
2. Permeate - we are to season society by permeating society like salt
 - a. God has placed us throughout society to flavor it with the holy faith
 - i. You are where you are at for a reason. That reason is to season Col. 4:6
3. Preserve - salt is God’s natural preservative/anti-septic
 - a. sin corrupts everything and every society - it brings decay, destruction and death
 - i. the church is to delay the decay by being salt we combat the corruption
 - b. if the church does not do so it is worthless & culture left with no conscience Matt. 5:13
 - c. when the church surrenders to its sinful society it becomes tasteless and worthless

LOVE

- the church’s role in the culture war is to be Light, Salt and to Love
 - It is not loving to do nothing when a society is imploding
 - If you know a loved one is on a path to destruction it is loving to give warning /hindering
 - Loving your neighbor includes working for the betterment of your neighbor
 - Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people – Prov. 14:34
- Pray - 1 Tim. 2:1-2 pray for and work for societies good - Jer. 29:7
 - If exiles and slaves in foreign land were to seek/pray for the prosperity of their captors and cities in which they were enslaved... we should love our land enough to do the same
- How do we love our land and care for a corrupt society? LSL
 - Light, Salt, Love....orlove by being salt and light (either way ok)
 - Church, this is our calling when dealing with cultural corruption – role in culture war
 - Family culture Church culture Ethnic/Group culture or National culture
 - We love our corrupt culture enough to be the light and shine the light. Our reason is to season all of society to delay the decay. We want the best and sin is not the best. LSL