



SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

THE CIRCLE OF OUR IMPACT

KEY PASSAGE: Matthew 5:13-16 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Acts 7:54-60; 9:5

► SUMMARY

What is the purpose of your life?

In Matthew 5:13-16, God has told us: “You are the salt of the earth. ... You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ... Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” As believers in Christ, God has instructed us to live our lives in such a way that we have a lasting and purposeful impact for good on the people around us.

But you may have noticed that many today are living secluded lives, interested only in satisfying their own needs, hungers, and desires. They walk among people day by day with no thought or interest in influencing or impacting them for good. This is not the way the Father intended for us to live. In the passage above, Jesus didn’t suggest that we be salt and light—He told us that we *are* salt and light. And just as salt is used to season and alter whatever it touches—and light is used to dispel the darkness—we are commanded by Christ to “flavor” and “light” the lives of others around us by using our actions and our words to point them to the Father.

► SERMON POINTS

As you live your life for Christ, there are two kinds of impact you can have on the people around you: purposeful or passive.

■ **Purposeful impact is intentional.** When you determine to teach others from the example of your life that certain principles will influence them for good,

that’s purposeful impact. Whether it’s to help them understand the truth of Scripture, help them grow in their relationship with Christ, or help them live their lives in obedience to God, purposeful impact is planned intentionally and lived out relationally as an example of good before others.

■ **Passive impact is inactive or indifferent.** When you live your life with no thought or plan for where you’re going or how your actions affect the lives of others, that’s passive impact. You’re interested in satisfying your own selfish dreams and wishes, with no concern for what others around you think or how their lives may be impacted by the choices you make. And others may use your unintentional and passive example as an excuse to live their lives in the same way.

Where does your purposeful impact begin?

■ **At home**—One of the most important things you’ll ever do is live a godly life at home. As you deepen and grow in your relationship with Christ, you become a living example to your family of the faithfulness, love, and provision of God. And the spiritual treasures you leave with each of your family members will have an immeasurable and eternal impact that is both beneficial to them and pleasing to the Lord.

■ **At work**—In your conversations, with your conduct, and by your character, you reflect the Christ who lives in you. When you live with purposeful intention, you can light your workplace with the love of Christ in such a way that others are drawn to the Jesus they see being lived out in you.

■ **With your friends**—Friendships enrich your life and help you navigate the ups and downs found in each day. When you decide to live your life grounded in Christ, focused on fulfilling His calling, and resolved to living according to His instructions and commands, God will use your influence to have a profound impact on the lives of your friends.

How has God made it possible for you to impact and influence others for Christ?

■ **Through prayer**—Praying for others is one of the simplest and most important ways you can impact them for Christ. Prayer can touch anyone, at any time, anywhere in the world. When you offer up prayer on behalf of others, God uses your influence to ripple to the ends of the earth.

■ **Through speaking with and encouraging others**—When you share what the Lord is doing in your life, you encourage others in ways you cannot even imagine. God can use your testimony and your message of encouragement to make a difference in the life of someone you never knew was in need of an uplifting word.

■ **Through the fellowship of the church**—When you fellowship and minister within your church and give to the ministry efforts outside of your church, your testimony and witness for God travel beyond the walls of the church. How far does your testimony and witness go? You will never be able to measure all that the Lord will do with your faithful offerings to and for His church.

■ **Through the skills, abilities, gifts, and talents the Lord has given you**—God has entrusted each of us with certain skills, abilities, gifts, talents, and opportunities to impact the world for His kingdom. The more of these He's given to you, the more responsibility you have to use them for His glory—

and He intends for your circle of influence to be wide and far-reaching for Him.

Final Thoughts

You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world. God has given you an opportunity and has commanded you to impact this world for His glory. Just as a pebble tossed in a lake ripples outward in circles beyond what the eye can see, God wants the impact and influence of your life to ripple outward in waves that will circle the globe for the sake of the gospel. From your family and friends to your co-workers, neighbors, fellow church members, and others you encounter, it's the Father's desire that your circle of impact be far-reaching and bear much fruit for the kingdom of God.

Are you ready for Him to make you as salty and as bright as you can possibly be? Will you allow Him to make your circle of impact ripple outward beyond your wildest dreams? If so, never underestimate the influence you can have when you live your life for the glory of God. View each day as an opportunity to allow Jesus Christ to live His life in and through you. As you shine your light brightly for Him, do so in such a way that the people you encounter will want to know the source of your strength, the light of your life, and the joy of your heart, today and every day.

► RESPONSE

- How would you describe the strength of your salt and the brightness of your light?
- Are there things in your life that are causing your salt to be impure? Is there anything causing your light to be dim? If so, what steps can you take to correct this?
- Are you living intentionally for Christ? If not, what are some things you can implement today to help you have a purposeful and intentional impact on others?

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