

BLESS YOU! PART 4

“BLESS OTHERS BY BEING THE SALT & LIGHT”

1 SEPTEMBER 2019

1. INTRODUCTION:

MARC – CLASS 1 - STARTED THE SERIES

- What the word blessing means – **6 definitions** (in Old and New Testament)
- Took us back to Genesis where **God blessed Abram** and said that all people will be blessed because of him – SERMON SERIES KEY VERSE...

Genesis 12:2-3 New International Version (NIV)

² *“I will make you into a **great nation**,*

*and I will **bless you**;*

I will make your name great,

*and **you will be a blessing**.*

³ *I will bless those who bless you,*

and whoever curses you I will curse;

*and **all peoples on earth***

***will be blessed through you.**”*

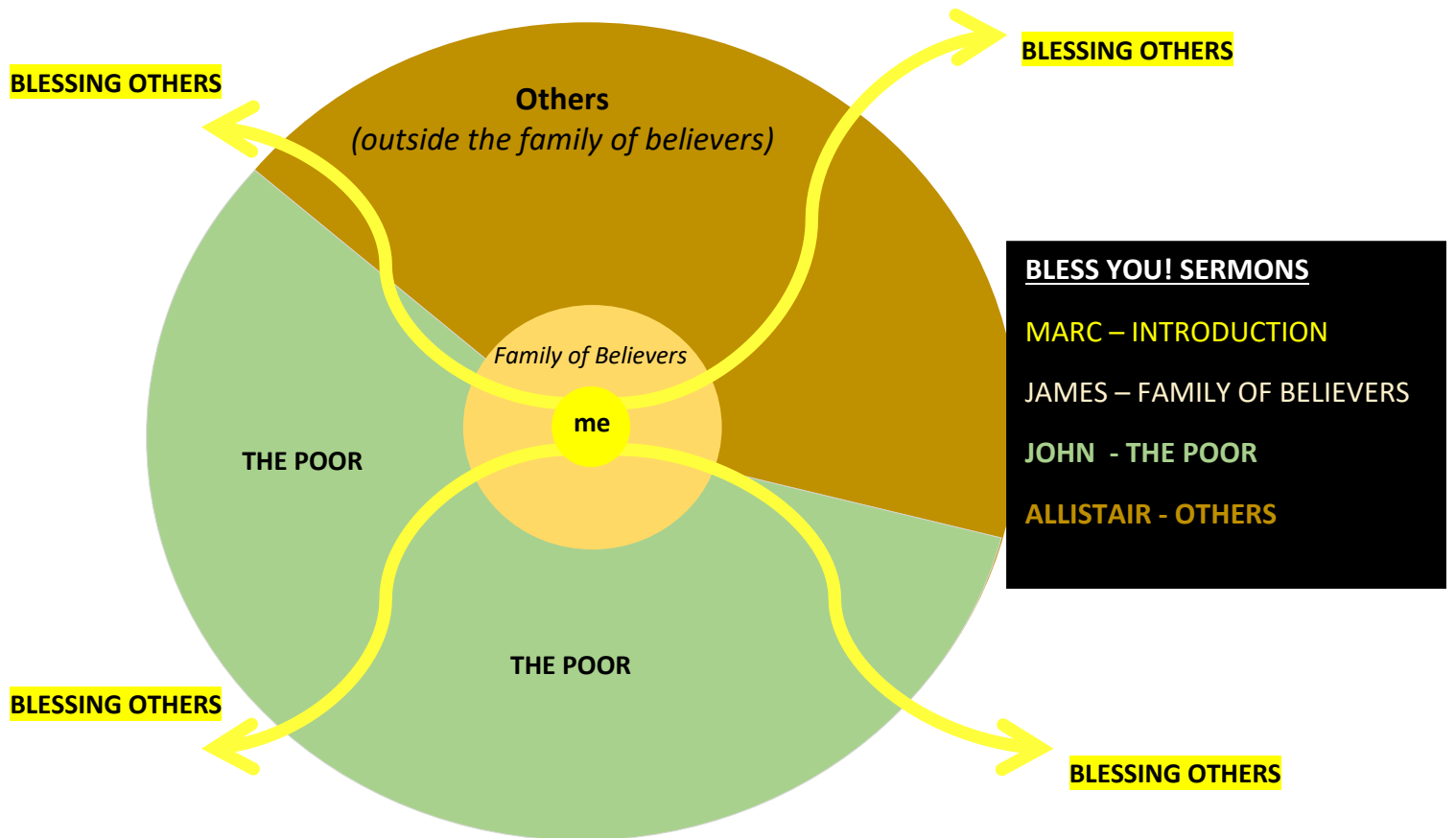
JAMES – CLASS 2

Focused on How we can be a blessing to the **Family of Believers** – INSIDE THE CHURCH.

- Brilliant illustrations showing how difficult it is to be a blessing to every single person in the church but we can start with our family groups.

JOHN – CLASS 3 (Last week)

- Shared how close the poor are to Gods heart and how we need to have pity on those less fortunate than ourselves –
- Using the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10 as the reference.



SUMMARY OF SERMON SERIES, THUS FAR. Briefly talk through the 3 previous messages.
 TODAY, I WOULD LIKE TO FOCUS ON HOW WE CAN BE **A BLESSING TO PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE FELLOWSHIP OF BELIEVERS/CHURCH**

2. PRAY

3. KEY SCRIPTURE

- The word Bless (in all its variations i.e. bless, blessing, blessed, etc) appears **522 times** (KJV)... (Various meanings as per Marc's class) –
- **QUES:** Where do I start?
ANS: With the Chapter where the word appears the most...
 Which is Matthew 5:3-11 (The Beatitudes, Jesus first sermon)
- The word "blessed" appears 8 times in 9 verses. Marc preached on some of these "Blessings" in our first class including being poor in spirit, a peacemaker, etc

But then I continued to read further and realized that this was only the introduction of Jesus sermon...

And I would actually like us to focus on the next 3 verses for this morning's message.

Matthew 5:12-16 New International Version (NIV)

¹² **Rejoice and be glad**, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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.

WE ARE BLESSED (IN THE BEATITUDES) TO BE A BLESSING!

- Jesus came to teach to be to SERVE and be SELFLESS. To Love others and be a blessing to them.
- Like the Prophets (who were persecuted for their faith) we too, are to be the SALT and the LIGHT – *Broadcasting Gods word and light to the world.*

1. SALT OF THE EARTH.

What are the uses of Salt?

- **As a Seasoning**
- Salt was used to **heal wounds** back in Napoleons day...
- Was also used for tanning, dyeing, bleaching and even soap and pottery
- **Here in Jesus day, it was mostly used mostly as a Preservative** (because they had no refrigeration).

Object Lesson: Salt

Sprinkle salt on the stage

- If I did this back in Jesus day the People would have thought I was crazy.
- If I had to throw all the salt into a refuse bag – I would have been taken to a mental institution.

WHY?

- Today a 1kg of salt cost about R15-R20 but back then it was very valuable!
- SALT was a **Currency** in ancient times
 - *In fact, the word 'Salary' comes from the Latin word "Salarium" which originally referred to the Roman soldier's being paid in Salt.*
 - *The Greek slave traders often bartered Salt for slaves, giving rise to the expression that someone was "you're not worth your salt"*

WHAT WAS JESUS SAYING?

Salt, in this context, was a Valuable commodity

- Like salt, we are Valuable
- And **We need to Preserve God's Values**
- Be Guardians of Gods plan (like the prophets) – Helping others know Him
- **To Expanding His Garden,**

HOW DO WE LOSE OUR SALTINESS?

I believe it happens when we **compromise**, with the World's standards.

EXAMPLE: *The most difficult thing to do is share the Gospel with someone who's seen you **compromise on your faith**. They start to see you as "Hypocritical" and your effectiveness is usually compromised.*

Don't misunderstand me - God saves (not us) and there's always hope but our effectiveness with that particular person/s is not going to be high.

2. LIGHT OF THE WORLD

PURPOSE OF LIGHT:

- To makes hidden things visible.

TYPES OF LIGHT

I work for an interior design company and there are literally 1000's of types, shapes and colour lights out there.

In this context JESUS is speaking of a specific type of light!

Object Lesson: Using a Torch

Different types of lights – We **ARE NOT** called to be...

- **Flashing Stope lights** – Blinking and confusing people – i.e. Compromising Disciples – on one day/off the next
- **An Interrogation lights** – shining into people eyes – "You are going to hell!" - Condemning people for their shortcomings; or
- **A spot light** – "Look at me! I'm better than you!" - Bringing attention to ourselves.

We are called to be a **LAMP**

- **Visible** (not hidden away),
- **Consistent** (not on and off)

- Shining in all directions (Not putting on an act when in front of people)
- A light beacon - Bringing Hope and Joy (not judgement)

An Eikon - Reflecting God - by being a BLESSING to everyone

(Do we still carry around our Eikon lights, as a reminder?)

This is what God called Abraham (and his descendants) to be, in Genesis...

Let's read:

Genesis 18:18-19 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁸ Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him. ¹⁹ For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him."

Notes:

- "all nations on earth will be blessed through him"
- "For" or Because, I (God) chose him
- "Direct" – influence, instruct, move in a Godly direction
- "keep" – or 'to preserve' the way of the Lord

How? Abraham preserved it by passing it on from **generation to generation...**

Good for Abraham and his descendants! But what if I'm not a direct descendant of Abraham?

Paul answers that for us...

Romans 4:16-17 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶ Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷ As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

We are grafted in by Faith; because we share Abrahams faith.

If someone didn't preserve the Garden or the expansion thereof, **we would not have been disciples today!**

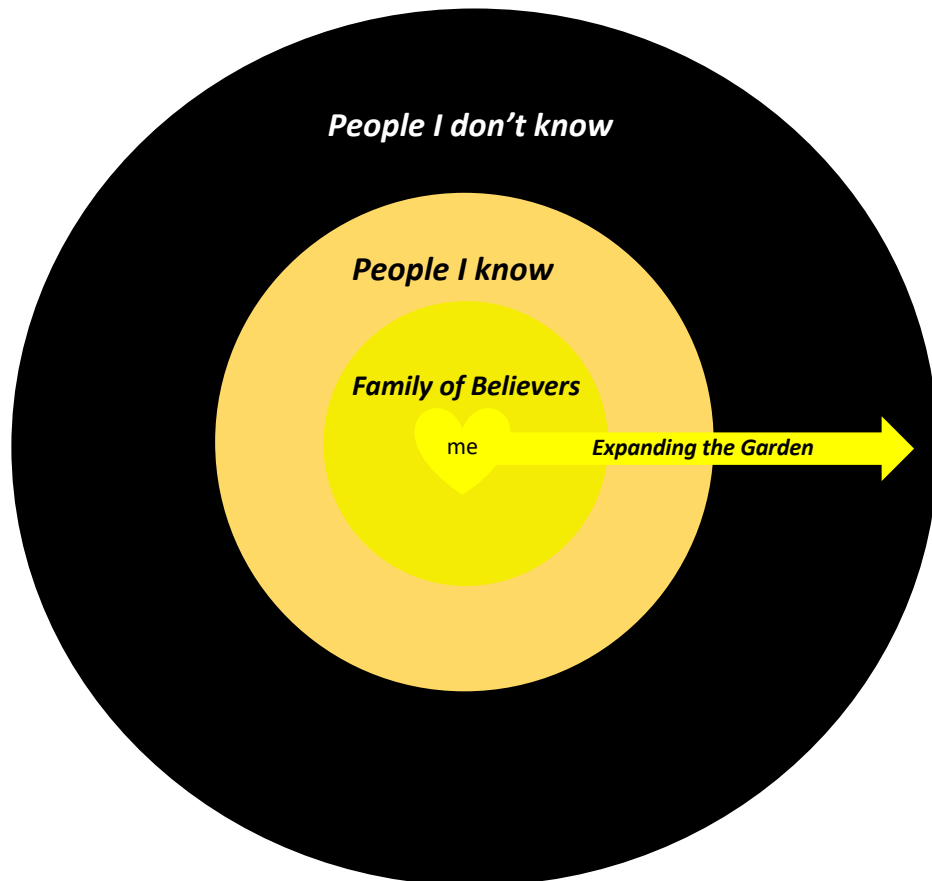
3. EXPANDING THE GARDEN

JESUS WANTS US TO FULLFILL GODS PLAN BY EXPANDING THE GOD!

Just as Adam & Eve, Noah and Abraham were called to do!

BUT HOW?

ANS: BY BEING THE SALT AND LIGHT



EXPANDING THE GARDEN

- Start **with the People we know** and expanding our circle to **people we don't know**, yet.
- It begins with the **HEART**, (HCP - Heart, Character, Plan)

Close off with 3 practical ways to expand the Garden:

A. BLESS WITH GOOD DEEDS

Good deeds – e.g. helping, showing kindness, showing mercy, praying.

Back to our key scripture, for this morning...

Matthew 5:16

*'In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your **good deeds** and glorify your Father in heaven'*

We were called to bless (serve others) – so that God can be glorified (*not to be spotlights*)

- John 13:1-17 – Jesus sets an example by washing his disciples' feet

NOT OPRAH – Good deeds but no glory to God – Spotlight

B. BLESS BY BEING FRIENDLY AND INTERESTED

Start with Kind Words – e.g. Encouraging someone, supporting words, make contact with someone...

Proverbs 16:24

"Kind Words are like honey, sweet to the soul and healthy to the body"

JUST BE FRIENDLY AND INTERESTED

No need to walk on water or overcomplicate things (which is my general personality) – just be interested...

- Share Quinton's story and how it influenced me to be more friendly.
- My experiment – greeting, introducing, chatting – expanding my circle.
- Helps to remember their names and even something they told you.
- Amazing how people need genuine friendships
- Without being "weird"

Jesus was the perfect example – He was concerned about the lost people and took pity on them.

Matthew 9:36-37 (NIV)

³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."

C. BLESS BY BEING MORE GIVING

Bless with your resources –

- Time,
- Energy,
- Finances/Possessions e.g. car, home, money

Paul quotes Jesus and says

ACTS 20:35

“It is more blessed to give than to receive”

A GOOD PLACE TO START IS OUR...

FULLER HOUSE CAMPAIGN - *Expanding the garden from your home (through one another relationships)*

INVITE PEOPLE INTO YOUR HOME

- Start by sitting with your spouse/flat mate/or just yourself and draw up a list:
 - Karen and I simply sat down and drew up a list of the people we know and want to invite. We already made the connections and now we are setting the dates.
 - Rugby parents,
 - New work colleagues,
 - Old friends (who have not been to our house yet)
 - Anyone you can think of.
 - Matthew started inviting some school friends.
 - We actually excited about it.
- And It's actually not as complicated as I thought.
 - We just inviting people over for a meal/braai to get to know them.

CONCLUSION

Being a blessing to others boils down to one thing – **Become less focused on yourself and being more focused on others.**

TWO QUOTES

“We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give”-

Sir Winston Churchill

“Don’t give to get but give to inspire others to give”

Simon Sinek

CLOSING PRAYER