

July 3, 2022



**"DO YOU INFLUENCE OR FOLLOW?"**

**John Greene, Senior Pastor**

### **MATTHEW 5:13-16 (ESV)**

**TRUTH:** America's founding fathers believed that apart from adherence to Holy Scriptures and the God of the Holy Scriptures, the freedom they sought would never last.

#### **I. REAL FREEDOM IS GIVEN BY GOD.** Galatians 5:13, "You were called to freedom, brothers..."

**TRUTH:** God's intention for every man and woman is that they live free (Genesis 2:15).

**INSIGHT:** The source of our freedom isn't government but God, and His tool is a government guided by His laws.

**INSIGHT:** Our founding fathers understood what we must teach our generation: FREEDOM IS A GIFT OF GOD, and the key to maintaining personal and national freedom is: Trust God and obey His laws.

**INSIGHT:** Our greatest national leaders of the past understood when God is rejected / ignored by a nation or people, freedom cannot be maintained.

#### **II. THE GREATEST THREAT TO CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA**

**\*INSIGHT:** The greatest threat to Christianity is Christians trying to sneak into heaven without ever sharing their faith.

**TRUTH:** Only followers of Jesus can make more followers of Christ.

**INSIGHT:** We must become people who value people, connect to people, and serve people, the way Jesus did.

**TRUTH:** No political party can change the American heart.

**KEY TAKE-AWAY:** We can make this world better and brighter if we follow the leader.

#### **III. CHRIST'S TWO STEPS TO INFLUENCE**

1. Be like Jesus: different, not weird. Matthew 5:13, "You are the salt of the earth..."

**JESUS' MESSAGE TRUTH:** When you are with other people, they should taste the godly difference in your life!

**INSIGHT:** The purpose of Life Groups, one of our primary outreach tools, isn't only church members but the "empty chair" of influencing one more for Christ.

**TRUTH:** The greatest tragedy of our day isn't that bakers are persecuted for not making cakes for gay weddings, but that the Christian faith is otherwise ignored as irrelevant.

2. Shine a godly light where you go. Matthew 5:14, "You are the light of the world..."

**INSIGHT:** Light has one purpose: to banish darkness.

**TRUTH:** The neighborhood where you live, the office where you work, and the school where you play on a team is where God has planted you to shine.

**INSIGHT:** The only way to save America is not politics but Jesus. Lives are changed by how we live and also by relationships through Life Groups.