



Welcome to the very first edition of **4th Point**! The plan is to print a new edition from time to time, each one containing thoughts and clippings about the Christian faith. I hope that each edition is filled with thought-provoking pieces.

Maybe you are wondering where the title **4th Point** came from. Well, many pastors try to have three points to their messages, and I frequently do, too. However, in my thinking and research for each message, there is often material that cannot be used either because of time or because it doesn't exactly fit (even though it may be related and interesting stuff). In fact, I bet sometimes there's enough material for an entire fourth point to the message. This newsletter will contain thoughts and clippings from here and there that (I hope!) would make interesting fourth points.

I hope you enjoy reading **4th Point**. Your feedback is always welcome!

...Stanley J. Groothof

I recently gave a couple messages based on the opening paragraphs of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Here are some things I picked up along the way.

Theme

Preacher E. Stanley Jones
on the **Beatitudes**:

At first sight, you felt they turned everything upside down. At second sight, you understand that they turn everything right side up. The first time you read them they are impossible. The second time you read them, nothing else is possible. The beatitudes are not a chart for Christian duty. They are a charter for Christian liberty."

 from www.esermons.com

Sodium + Chloride

Sodium is an extremely active element found naturally only in combined form; it always links itself to another element. Chlorine, on the other hand, is the poisonous gas that gives bleach its offensive odour. When

sodium and chlorine are combined, the result is sodium chloride – common table salt – the substance we use to preserve meat and bring out its flavour.

Love and truth can be like sodium and chlorine. Love without truth is flighty, sometimes blind, willing to combine with various doctrines. On the other hand, truth by itself can be offensive, sometimes even poisonous. Spoken without love, it can turn people away from the gospel. When truth and love are combined in an individual or a church, however, then we have what Jesus called "the salt of the earth," and we're able to preserve and bring out the beauty of our faith.



 David H. Johnson
www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/s/salt.htm

If the Devil Wrote the Beatitudes

If the devil wrote the beatitudes, they would probably go something like this...

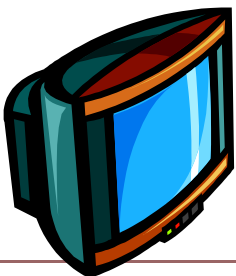
1. Blessed are those who are too tired, too busy, too distracted to spend an hour once a week with their fellow Christians – They are my best workers.
2. Blessed are those Christians who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked – I can use them.
3. Blessed are the touchy who stop going to church – They are my missionaries.
4. Blessed are the troublemakers – They shall be called my children.
5. Blessed are the complainers – I'm all ears to them.
6. Blessed are those who are bored with the minister's mannerisms and mistakes – They get nothing out of his sermons.
7. Blessed are the church members who expect to be invited to their own church – For they are part of the problem instead of the solution.
8. Blessed are those who gossip – For they shall cause strife and divisions that please me.
9. Blessed are those who are easily offended – For they will soon get angry and quit.
10. Blessed are those who do not give their offering to carry on God's work – They are my helpers.
11. Blessed are they who profess to love God but hate their brother and sister – For they shall live with me forever.
12. Blessed are you who, when you read this, think about other people and not yourself – I've got you, too!

✍ Paul Pousette,
in a devotion led at Classis British Columbia South-East, 5 Mar 2003.

Quote

“It's a very difficult time to be an actor in Hollywood. There are twice as many reality shows on TV now as there were last year, and there doesn't seem to be an end in sight. They're infinitely cheaper to produce, and they are geared to the sleazy, salacious and voyeuristic, a sad commentary on our culture and a constant rebuke, I must say, to America and American values. When Donald Trump – the great exemplar of the elevation of the material over the spiritual – becomes TV's biggest star, I think we have now officially bottomed out.”

✍ John Billingsley ("Dr. Phlox" on *Star Trek: Enterprise*)
trekweb.com/stories.php?aid=41dd6585db73a



Web Links

If you bookmark only one internet website, this one has got to be it:

www.biblegateway.com

This is the tool for reading and researching Scripture online with multiple translations, several languages, and advanced searching capabilities.