

## Parable of the Salt and the Light

Matthew 5:13 – 16

**Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.**

**<sup>14</sup> Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.**

**<sup>16</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

Jesus takes the natural element “salt” to use as a comparison to believers who have followed the steps outlined in the Beatitudes.

**Salt** – life has evolved to depend on salt. Used to preserve food and season it. Was very valuable and considered a form of currency by some people.

So what **Jesus is saying is believers are as valuable as salt. They improve and help preserve life.** We have a special purpose and considerable value to the Kingdom. We need to understand how important we are in God’s eyes.

**Lost savour = means if the salt has lost its strength and flavor, it cannot do what it was meant for.** Salt that no longer has the power to preserve or make things taste better is worthless. It is good for nothing and can be thrown away and walked on.

Class Note: Salt also can be useless if it becomes impure. It can have impurities from the world.

The **application is clearer now as to the role we have as believers.** We are the salt of the earth which means **we are equipped and purposed to help to preserve and improve** the taste and flavor to what is taken inside. Christians are called to help to preserve life and improve the taste (help support abundant life) of what we have to intake daily. **If we do not fulfill this role, then we will be found to be ineffective.**

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**Light** – chases away darkness and allows you to see well. It illuminates and shines, provides guidance and reveals.

So now Jesus compares believers to a light that allows the world to shine or to be able to see in the midst of darkness. So where is this light? The light is Christ and he dwells within us. We radiate this light as we are a reflection of Jesus. **Question:** what step in the seven-step process could this be (receiving the light)?

Class Observation: Note in Genesis, God says let there be light!! From the very beginning the light to man has been His plan.

Cities, reveal a tremendous amount of light so the comparison is if you can see what the city reveals when set on a hill, then **when Christians are elevated their light cannot be hid and will be seen by others.**

Jesus uses the example of a candle. **People do not light a candle and then hide it. That defeats the purpose of lighting the candle in the first place.** It doesn't make sense!!! The whole purpose and idea for lighting the candle is to allow others around to receive light and enjoy the benefits of the light produced from the candle.

Jesus summarizes by telling us to let the light in us...**our light, shine in such a way, that the world will see the good works we do and recognize that this power and light and revelation comes from God, and they would turn and follow the light of God.** They would recognize God as the light and give Him glory.

**Question:** What step in the seven-step process would letting your light be seen?

Note: The sequence appears to be receiving the light, and letting that light guide you to do good works. Good works are things that glorify God. They are things that point others to His light so through your works, they see Him. **Question:** Using this definition, can you do good works in darkness without the light?

So, the purpose of salt is to preserve and help food be more enjoyable. The purpose of light is to reveal. Therefore, **it appears Jesus is saying part of the fundamental purpose of Christians is to share the light and understanding we have of Christ.** This light **will show men the way to eternal life (preservation) and provide a more abundant life on earth (more enjoyable flavor).** As a result, **we have considerable value....you are valuable to the Kingdom.**

**Are Christians really needed still in the world today?** The answer is yes because people are still perishing and spoiled, and people are still walking in darkness without hope.

Application – Jesus didn't redeem us to simply sit around or just to have church. **We are saved to serve,** and we will never truly be complete in our purpose and work in the Kingdom unless we are used in the lives of others as light and salt.

Special note for verse 15: The example is that a person lights a candle on purpose. The purpose or intent for lighting the candle is so that the light can be used to shine for others to see.

Therefore, I see a process at work here:

- God must want to light us up. He must want to set us on fire on purpose.
- One of the symbols of the Holy Spirit is fire or igniting inside us. The Spirit is a free gift that God gives us on purpose.

- God's purpose of lighting us is so **we can be used and placed in a position** (candlestick) where we can benefit others.
- **Process – we can't be a light until we receive His light.** Until we receive His light, we should not try to enlighten others; once we receive His light....we must enlighten others.
- **What is the process that God uses to light us up?**
  - The seed from the first parable we studied or His word. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.
  - We must humbly seek God and receive the word.
  - We must repent – turn from trusting in our own light, turn from self-centeredness and fear, etc.
  - We must place our hope and trust in the risen Christ who lives in us.
  - We must be led by the Holy Spirit and let Him guide us and teach us and show us how to use and apply the word for the glory of God.
  - Now after these four steps, we are ready to share the light and what the Spirit has revealed through us and through this understanding, we share His grace and mercy through the word and our experience in the word (testimony) to show others the light.

“The text says that the candle gives light to all that are in the house. Some professors give light only to a part of the house. I have known women very good to all but their husbands, and these they nag from night to night, so that they give no light to them. I have known husbands so often out at meetings that they neglect home, and thus their wives miss the light.” (Spurgeon)

“The object of our shining is not that men may see how good we are, nor even see us at all, but that they may see grace in us and God in us, and cry, ‘What a Father these people must have.’

Questions:

- How have you shared the light of Christ which he gave you, with others?
- How has the light you shared helped to preserve others and/or helped them more easily handle the problems and burdens on their plate?

Key point – while it is called our light, we received it from God. God is the power source, not us. **He gives us this power....His power, to invest in others.** This sounds similar to the parable of the talents.

See **John 1:1-14**

Light is defined in the life of Christ and His life now lives in us. Jesus is the light.

Psalm 119:105 – Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path. See also, 2 Corinthians 3:18.

See Jesus' prayer of intercession, **John 17** and notice what he prays for us that is still applicable today, especially verses 3-4, 10-12, 14- 26. “...that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.”