

Salt and Light | Matthew 5:13-16 | 11/20/16

- Introduction
 - After the Beatitudes, Jesus then uses a word picture to refer to Christian. He says that they are both salt and light.
 - He uses this to give us an understanding of the big picture for what Christians are to represent in the world.
 - These Beatitudes weren't just a suggestion, but what Jesus expects us to live our lives by.
 - Christians should embrace the holy character traits and go into the world, to shine the light of Christ for all to see.
 - To live out the Christian life that is pure and holy, to share the Gospel and prevent the decay of the lost souls.
- You are to be the salt of the earth
 - When Jesus says that we are salt, for us to try to comprehend what this means we need to look at what salt does. Why did God create it, what is its purpose?
 - God created salt for many useful purposes.
 - Used to enhance the flavor of food.
 - It is used as a preservative.
 - There were no refrigerators in their day, but salt could be used to preserve food.
 - It is used as a purifier.
 - It is used as a cleanser.
 - It was used to clean newborn babies.
 - As salt is useful and beneficial to the world, so must the Christian.
 - God created salt and it serves a purpose to help humanity.
 - With salt its many purposes and intended uses it was to benefit mankind, God created it for a purpose.
 - When used properly it is a great and wonderful thing.
 - As the Christian when used properly will benefit humanity by proclaiming and being a witness for the Gospel.
 - Christians will enhance "life".
 - They will bring out the truth of life, through the proclamation of the Gospel.
 - Christians are not called so be one of the million grains of sand that simply do nothing that have not purifying or preservative qualities.
 - Christians are to make a difference.
 - Christians are called to purify and to be a preservative.
 - **When salt is used in Scripture both in the Old Testament and the new, it frequently signifies the purification and preservation properties of salt.**
 - In the Old Testament, it was required in all the sacrifices and was used to sanctify offerings made to God. It was also used to purify water by the Lord.
 - Leviticus 2:13
 - "You are to season each of your grain offerings with salt; you must not omit from your grain offering the salt of the covenant with your God. You are to present salt with each of your offerings."
 - Exodus 30:35-36
 - "Prepare expertly blended incense from these; it is to be seasoned with salt, pure and holy. Grind some of it into a fine powder and put some in front of the testimony in the tent of meeting, where I will meet with you. It must be especially holy to you."

- 2 Kings 2:19-22
- The preservative or eternal attribute of salt is considered when it references salt with a covenant.
 - Numbers 18:19
 - “All the holy contributions that the people of Israel present to the LORD I give to you, and to your sons and daughters with you, as a perpetual due. **It is a covenant of salt forever** before the LORD for you and for your offspring with you.”
- **Christians should be purifiers and be a preservative of God’s truth and morality in a world of evil and darkness.**
 - Christians can bring purification to a corrupt and evil world through our actions and by proclaiming the Gospel.
 - **By living out the Christian life and by being obedient to God, we seek to prevent the decay of humanity by speaking and teaching the Gospel message.**
 - **The world is set to decay and to die because of their sins.**
 - Christians proclaim the remedy for this decay through the cross of Christ.
 - **In this way, the Christian is to be the salt of preservation by proclaiming His glory and preventing the decay of the lost.**
 - **Christians must be sprinkled out into the world and bring out the Gospel to enhance its truth and teachings for the world to hear and to see in our actions.**
- A Christian who is no longer pure and loses their saltiness, is not useful.
 - Jesus then gives us a warning in how important it is that we retain our saltiness and purity.
 - **The pure salt is effective in everything that it was created and designed to do, but the salt that is no longer pure is useless.**
 - Not all salt is equal, the salt found by the dead sea was contaminated with other minerals and therefore it was unusable for purification or for preservation.
 - The only thing it was then good for was to be thrown on the ground and used to keep the vegetation from growing on a walking path.
 - This salt lacked all the good qualities that the pure salt retained - flavor enhancement, purification and preservation.
 - In the Gospel of Luke, an even harsher response from Jesus is recorded.
 - Luke 14:35
 - “It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”
 - Jesus has a plan and a purpose for our lives, He desires that we retain His truth and live it out daily.
 - Mark 9:50b
 - “...Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another”
- If we do this, then we are effective to glorify Him and to build up the kingdom.
- **But if we let ourselves become contaminated with our sins, then we become useless.**
 - Just as the useless salt is thrown to prevent the growth of vegetation, so does the Christian who contaminates their lives with sin prevent spiritual growth in others.
 - **There is no fruit growing in the path of this Christian, the Gospel message is drowned out and all that is seen is the sin.**
 - This is not what Christ wants from us.

- If we become diluted and we no longer retain the pure properties, we are no longer “different” or stand out from the millions of grains of sand that are lost.
 - How would you describe “being the salt of the world” in your own life? What does this look like?
 - How is it that we could lose our saltiness? What are the causes?
- We are to be the light of the world.
 - So not only is the Christian supposed to be pure salt, but they are also called to be the light of the world.
 - Jesus says we are to be as light, so tell me what is the purpose of light? What is the main reasons someone would use or seek it?
 - Light a dark path to show the right way to go. To light a dark room which will overcome the darkness. To be a beacon as a lighthouse.
 - Light versus darkness
 - Light is biblical truth, while darkness is anything that is false and the lies of Satan.
 - Light is holy and pure, while darkness is sin and wrongdoing.
 - **Jesus has called us to be light in a world of darkness, not the other way around.**
 - To be a light is to shine the light of truth upon the lies of darkness.
 - It is our responsibility as Christians to shine like stars or lights in the world.
 - Philippians 2:15
 - “that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,”
 - Jesus did not save us and give us the great commission to hide it and to look no different than the world.
 - Jesus did not give us His Holy Spirit to blend in with the lost and sinful world.
 - **The light of the truth, the light of Christ SHOULD radiate from within us. It should be obvious as a city on a hill that Christ lives within us.**
 - The character of Christ and His truth should shine so brightly from within us, **that the world cannot help but to take notice of us.**
 - To be blameless and innocent will stand out, this is not the way of the world.
 - **The Spirit of God and His character is what the world see’s shining so brightly from within us.**
 - Christians all too often suppress the light
 - Unfortunately, Christians all too often instead of shining their light bright, they hide it and intentionally cover it up.
 - Unfortunately, Christianity is sometimes like fight club.
 - Where the first rule about Christianity is to not talk about Christianity.
 - We come to our secret club on Sundays and do secret things.
 - Christians seem to hide their light intentionally.
 - **Perhaps they hide it because the light is so dim?**
 - Instead of being a beacon of truth, they just blend in with the darkness of the world.
 - **You couldn’t pick out this Christian on the darkest of nights.**
 - This is NOT what Christ has called us to do.
 - **Why do Christians suppress the light of Christ that is within them?**

- If we shine the light of God’s truth, it will always overcome the darkness.
 - One thing is for certain, that the truth of God’s Word cannot be overcome by Satan’s darkness.
 - 1 John 1:5
 - “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”
 - **If you go into a room and you make it as dark as possible, what happens when you light a small candle?**
 - **Why does the light always prevail?**
 - **No matter how much Satan may try to prevent the Gospel message from being proclaimed, he cannot overcome it.**
 - This should give us great encouragement as Christians, especially if we feel discouraged about either living our Christian life publically, or with sharing the Gospel.
- To be a light unto the world is to stand out as a **lighthouse** of truth.
 - There are many paths that the world provides, there are many different religions and ways for self-fulfillment or enlightenment.
 - But Christians are called to be a light and a beacon to show the true path and the way out of the maze of life. They are called to be a lighthouse.
 - Psalms 119:105
 - “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”
 - We must shine this light of truth so that the world does not lose its way and stumble into the forever darkness of being eternally separated from God.
 - **If we are truly shining the light of Christ, the world cannot help but be drawn to us.**
 - Isaiah 60:1-3
 - One thing that is certain about light is that it attracts.
 - If a Christian is truly shining their light, those who are lost in the darkness will seek them out.
 - Kind of like a bug zapper!! 😊
 - There is something about the truth of Christ that people are drawn to, their hearts tell them there is something to this person.
 - **The love and truth of God being proclaimed in the obedient Christian will draw the lost to Him.**
 - **Take a moment and examine yourself, do you “attract” the lost to Christ? Or are you a repellent?**
- Others will give glory to God, when we are the light of the world.
 - Jesus says that by the Christian simply being a witness for Christ through living their lives in obedience by being a light.
 - That those in the world will give glory to God.
 - God will draw the lost in by using Christians who live their lives as He has called them to.