

Salty Mat 5:13-16

Announcements, alter, worship

Last time I was up here, we talked about Fear and how we cannot let it take over our lives. That as long as we remain in God, He will take our fears. He will strengthen us through them, and together we will grow.

Today we are talking about salt and light. What is the purpose of the church? Disciples. How do we do that? Sharing the good news with others, Witnessing, Living it, right? If you are a citizen of heaven, then there are a few things that Jesus says about you. You are salt and light

In those times, salt was vital. They did not have refrigerators, the youth have a hard time picturing that one, about as hard as in our time the phone was mounted to the wall and mobile meant you had a 9-foot cord. So anyway, they would pack fresh meat and fish they caught in salt to transport it to the market. It was used as we do today to flavor food as well. All I can think of would be salting a country ham; if it was packed in salt, how much more salt could it need? Salt was so important that sometimes Roman soldiers were paid with it. Probably a good reason Jesus used it to make His point.

So, what does salt do? It preserves and amplifies the flavor of whatever it is used on. So, Jesus is saying that we are supposed to do the same. We are to help preserve the good in people and keep them from spoiling. As citizens of heaven, we are to put His word into practice in our lives. We should be honest, kind, and loving, helpful, compassionate, and truthful. We should be free of the chains that used to bind us.

The thing is, does salt do its job if it is still in its container? No, it must come in contact with whatever it is supposed to preserve. To be effective, we must be involved everywhere. At home, at work, at school, the store, the ball game.

Light. The other part we are to do is live it. Glorifying God will not work if we are always telling others how they are doing it wrong and then living any way we please. If you want to be a control freak, then you at least have to live right. We are to live what we are telling others about. And we should not have to tell others about it for them to see it.

-The world around us, for the most part, hates us. Here in the south, we do not have near as much opposition as other places.

-For example, I can talk to someone at work who knows who I am but really does not know me...

-I am a morning person...

Please stand as we read Mat 5: 13-16, Pray

Our points for today are **Preserve**, **Project**, and **Point**

**Preserve**

13 Jesus uses 2 things that have strong effects on things around them. This 1<sup>st</sup> one, salt, as we talked about earlier, is used to preserve and flavor.

-Jesus was surely talking about the preservation qualities of salt. What happens if something goes bad? It spoils everything around it. Society has the same ability; it will influence and corrupt everything it comes in contact with.

-In today's society, many people are influenced by athletes, actors, political figures, and even YouTubers. They have a way of making us think and feel certain ways. I am by no means saying they are all bad, but I'm sure they are not all good.

-Now, I want you to think about someone who influenced you. Most likely someone you knew, who spent time with you, cared about you. . . loved, pointed towards Jesus

-So how do we preserve the good and stop the spoiling? We show the love of Christ, true unconditional love. We do things without worrying about repayment, help those in need...

-For us to be salt, we must be 2 things. Close to people and different than people... what does salt do if you get a lot of it? Makes you thirsty, so as we are being Salt to the world, we aim to make them thirsty for the Lord.

- How would salt lose its saltiness? In those days, the salt they used was not refined. It had a lot of impurities in it, and it could actually lose its taste.

-The same thing happens to us as we let impurities in. The more we allow the world's ways to creep into our lives, the more we lose our saltiness....

-Salt that was no longer fit for sale or to use in a storehouse was spread on wet ground at the temple on stairs or slopes so the priests would not slip. Or used to kill vegetation in a pathway. Either way, it is walked on, used for something other than what it was intended.

-Basically, if we are not being influenced by the way God called us to be, we are losing our influence on the world. And for that, we will be walked on by a spoiled and corrupt society.

1<sup>st</sup> point **Preserve**, next point is **Project**

14. 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:5 says, "This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is Light: in Him there is no darkness at all."

-In John 8:12, it says, "When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said. **"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."**

-And now Jesus tells His disciples that they are the light of the world! That's us too! And wow, that sounds cool, huh.

-So, what is this light, and Where does it come from? How does it work?

-In Eph 5:8, it says, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord" So we understand that there is a change when we ask Jesus to take control of our lives. Paul didn't say that now you are a little brighter, or you are not as dark as before.

-Also, notice he didn't say that you lived "IN" darkness like you could just move out and be ok. No, he said you "WERE" darkness. Everything in you was darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

-What about being set on a hill? If we claim to be Christians, we are building our town on a hill, and everyone around will see our light...(house on a hill in Rogersville). We cannot hide it. How do people look at you when you tell them you go to church but then see you act like the world? I can tell you how people talk about people who say they are Christians but live like the world.

-God and Jesus are the ultimate examples of THE LIGHT; we really must watch how we act on top of the hill that we are now building on. We have to shine for the that surrounds us.

-Well, let's break that down a little bit. There is a huge responsibility that comes with this being the LIGHT.

1. We cannot have any filthy talk or language. 2. Morally just. 3. Must not have any impurity or greed.

-We must aim at personal holiness, to reflect Jesus in every way possible. But not only that, we must understand that we will touch people's lives, we impact them in ways that carry a huge weight. The way that may decide where they spend eternity. We may be the closet thing to Christ they encounter.

**15** Normally, the lamp that would have been used here was a small clay bowl with a hole in the top to pour oil in and a smaller hole to put a wick in. These lamps did not put off a lot of light, so they would be placed upon a stand so the light could fill the entire room. Most homes of the time were modest 1 room homes, so 1 could light the entire space for everyone.

-It talks about putting the lamp under a bowl; this is how they would extinguish the lamp. So what is Jesus saying here? If we try to hide it or if we are embarrassed by it or maybe just too lazy to put it to work that we will eventually put out or fire for God.

1<sup>st</sup> point **PRESERVE**, 2<sup>nd</sup> point **PROJECT**, 3<sup>rd</sup> point **POINT**

**16** -It is scary to teach about good deeds because we oftentimes will get caught up in deeds and lose sight of the reason for the deeds.

-We do good deeds because we love God and want to serve Him. We are not saved by works, but because we were saved, we work.

For us to shine our light before others, they have to see our good deeds. This does not mean that we put on some carnival show for people to see, but that we live a life where our good deeds show through.

-Here is an example. Let's say you are witnessing to people at work...

1. dishonest to our employer

2. This may cause tension between nonbelievers.

3. shame on the name of Christ because we are enthusiastic about evangelism but a slacker at our actual job.

There is a time and place, and I am by no means telling you that you can not talk to others about God at work, but it cannot interfere with your regular job.

-There is another big concern with good deeds. Sooner or later, people are going to notice if you are doing all you can for Christ. Inevitably they will most likely compliment you for your efforts.

-As humans, we like to be told we are doing a good job, and it is OK to be told that. It is how we respond to it that reflects our heart. If we accept it and talk about how hard we worked at it or brag about how we did it all alone, then who are we really point at?

-If we try to take credit for all that God does through us in our lives, do you really think He will continue to use us?

-We must give credit to the one who really makes all of it possible; without His never-ending love, we would not be able to do any of it.

-All of the Glory goes to our father in heaven. When those around us see that we trust in God for everything we need and do, it points the light directly to where it belongs.

As we play the invitation, I want you to think about how salty you are, and are you being a light for Christ that He has called you to be? If you are not sure that you are part of the town on a hill, maybe today is the day that you allow Jesus in so you can become the salt and light of the world.

Pray