

Seasoned with Salt; Colossians 4:6

I. Salt

A. Our concept of salt

1. A seasoning that we put on foods to make it taste better
2. Something we put on our sidewalks in winter to melt ice

B. A little history of salt

1. In 2200 BC, the Chinese emperor Hsia Yu levied one of the first known taxes. He taxed salt. In Tibet, Marco Polo noted that tiny cakes of salt were pressed with images of the Grand Khan and used as coins. Salt is still used as money among the nomads of Ethiopia's Danakil Plains.
2. Greek slave traders often bartered salt for slaves, giving rise to the expression that someone was "not worth his salt." Roman legionnaires were paid in salt—salarium, the Latin origin of the word "salary."
3. Merchants in 12th-Century Timbuktu, the gateway to the Sahara Desert and the seat of scholars, valued salt as highly as books and gold
4. In France, Charles of Anjou levied the "gabelle," a salt tax, in 1259 to finance his conquest of the Kingdom of Naples. Outrage over the gabelle fueled the French Revolution. Though the revolutionaries eliminated the tax shortly after Louis XIV fell, the Republic of France reestablished the gabelle in the early 19th Century; only in 1946 was it removed from the books
5. The Erie Canal, an engineering marvel that connected the Great Lakes to New York's Hudson River in 1825, was called "the ditch that salt built." Salt tax revenues paid for half the cost of construction of the canal
6. The British monarchy supported itself with high salt taxes, leading to a bustling black market for the white crystal. In 1785, the earl of Dundonald wrote that every year in England, 10,000 people were arrested for salt smuggling. Protesting British rule in 1930, Mahatma Gandhi led a 200-mile march to the Arabian Ocean to collect untaxed salt for India's poor
7. The website www.saltworks.us also tells us that salt is the origin of the word "salvation."
8. Salt was used as a preservative because of the lack of refrigeration

C. With this new understanding of salt let's reexamine some of the bible's text concerning salt and our speech

II. Known

A. Just as we season our words with salt, we are also known by our words

- B. Matthew 15:16–20; ¹⁶ And he said, "Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person. But to eat with unwashed hands does not defile anyone."

C. Our words define us, "what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart"

D. There is tremendous power in our speech, power to bless and power to curse

1. James 3:8–12; ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰ From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring pour forth

from the same opening both fresh and salt water? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

- E. When we use words to satisfy our own selfish desires
1. gossip, foolishness, adultery, lying, flattery, quick to speak
 2. But if words define us, then we should use them in a different manner
 3. Words of righteousness
 - a) Proverbs 10:11; ¹¹ The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
 4. Words of discerning
 - a) Proverbs 10:13; ¹³ On the lips of him who has understanding, wisdom is found, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks sense.
 5. Words of knowledge
 - a) Proverbs 20:15; ¹⁵ There is gold and abundance of costly stones, but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.
 6. Words of healing
 - a) Proverbs 15:4; ⁴ A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
 7. Words of a gentle answer
 - a) Proverbs 15:4; ⁴ A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
 8. Words of a pleasant answer
 - a) Proverbs 16:24; ²⁴ Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.
 9. Words of the wise
 - a) Proverbs 22:17–21; ¹⁷ Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge, ¹⁸ for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, if all of them are ready on your lips. ¹⁹ That your trust may be in the Lord, I have made them known to you today, even to you. ²⁰ Have I not written for you thirty sayings of counsel and knowledge, ²¹ to make you know what is right and true, that you may give a true answer to those who sent you?
- F. If our words have such an effect on us and on others, no wonder Jesus calls us the salt of the earth
1. Matthew 5:13; ¹³ “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.
 2. Mark 9:50; ⁵⁰ Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”
- G. I don’t think that Jesus is talking about taste here
1. Salt is a preservative
 2. The words we speak should provide preservation for those around us
 3. The message we give to those we come in contact with is a soothing balm, a salve for the ills of the world
- H. This is what we should be known for
- III. Judged
- A. We will be judged by our words
1. Matthew 12:33–37; ³³ “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴ You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵ The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil

person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. ³⁶ I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷ for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

B. Jesus is responding to the Pharisees saying that he is using the power of Beelzebub when in fact it was the Holy Spirit

C. The Pharisees words judged them

1. Matthew 12:31; ³¹ Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

IV. Seasoned

A. What words do we let come out of our mouths?

B. Are they a preservative for society?

C. We will be held accountable for our words