

Salt and Light; Matthew 5:13-16

I. Blessed

- A. The Poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who desire righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who are persecuted for righteousness's sake
- B. "Blessed are you" verse 11

II. Salt

- A. Matthew 5:13; "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.
- B. Elmer W. Maurer was a research chemist for the USDA
- C. He wrote a book titled, "The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe" in 1955
 - 1. "Salt was accepted and collected as taxes by the Romans from the people of the Holy Land. One of the main sources of salt for Palestinians, of course, was the Dead Sea, or Salt Sea. So oppressive were these taxes that the people adulterated the salt with sand or other earthy material (the salt to begin with was not our nice pure table salt). The government purified the salt by spreading it in big vats or tanks, filling them with water and drawing off the concentrated salt solution or brine. All that remained was the earthy, insoluble material. Indeed, the salt had lost its savor because it was no longer salt. It was fit to be trodden underfoot."
 - 2. "It was the custom to store vast amounts of this salt in houses that had earthen floors. In time, the salt next to the ground spoiled because of the dampness. Since it would be harmful to fertile land because of its salt content, no man would allow it to be thrown on his field. The only place left was the street, where it was trodden under foot of man. Thus the Bible was proved scientifically accurate, even in its many small details - for this was just a lone example." Elmer W. Maurer, research chemist with the USDA"
 - 3. Salt keeps food from being tasteless and preserves it from corruption
 - 4. A little more "salt" would have preserved Sodom and Gamorrah (Abram and God had come to an agreement, if there were 10 righteous then God would not destroy the cities)
 - 5. Genesis 18:32-33; 32 Then he said, "Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak again but this once. Suppose ten are found there." He answered, "For the sake of ten I will not destroy it." 33 And the Lord went his way, when he had finished speaking to Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.
- D. If we are salt, then we cannot allow the world to "adulterate" us
 - 1. We must remain pure
 - 2. James 1:27; Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.
 - 3. Colossians 4:5-6; 5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
- E. Not only do we need to remain pure, but we must promote what is good and right and expose what is not
 - 1. Ephesians 5:1-11
 - 2. And this starts in our communities
 - 3. Who needs a little more "salt" in their workplace, or on their block?

4. What “salt” is not - Ephesians 4:25–31; 25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.
5. What “salt” is - Colossians 3:10–17; 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. 11 Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. 12 Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

F. We cannot lose our “saltiness”

G. Because we are not only salt, but lights as well

III. Light

- A. Matthew 5:14–16; 14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
- B. Physical light is a metaphor for truth and righteousness - Ephesians 5:7–14; 7 Therefore do not become partners with them; 8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”
- C. Darkness is a metaphor for falsehood and wickedness
 1. Romans 1:21; For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.
 2. Ephesians 4:17–20; 17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!—
- D. Truth and righteousness must shine forth like a light does

- E. The truth of God must be a beacon of righteousness in a world full of wickedness
- F. We are that beacon
 - 1. We are the vehicle that God chose to get His truth to the farthest corner of the world
 - 2. He has even written it down and compiled it together into one book to make it easier for us
 - 3. Jesus tells His apostles, “you will be my witnesses... to the end of the earth” Acts 1:8
 - 4. Again, He tells His apostles, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.” Mark 16:15
 - 5. Paul says someone has to be sent
 - 6. Romans 10:14–15; 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”
 - 7. 2 Timothy 2:2; and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
 - 8. “Entrust” - To put in the care or protection of someone; it has its roots in the meaning of placing food and drink before someone

IV. We Are Salt and Light

- A. There is no option here
- B. Jesus does not say you have the opportunity to be salt and light
- C. He says we are salt and light
- D. The preservation of Society
- E. The beacon of truth and righteousness