

Salt and Light

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[0 : 00] As we move into a new section of the Sermon on the Mount, we need to keep in mind that Matthew! chapters 5-7 are actually one continuous sermon, or at least a summary of one continuous sermon.

Sometimes that's hard to remember when verses 1-12 took us six weeks to cover, but verses 1-12 simply are the introduction for that sermon. You probably got tired of hearing the main idea for the Beatitudes every week. We stated that main idea a couple of different ways. The longer way was that Jesus expects every believer to demonstrate all attributes of character and conduct described in verses 3-12. The shorter way was that Jesus expects every believer to be like him. That idea carries over into the next section of the sermon in a different way. In verses 13-16, the main idea of the Beatitudes turns into even more of an expectation. Because true believers are to be like Christ, Jesus expects us to accomplish certain things as his earthly representatives.

verses 13-16 will show us what Jesus expects us to accomplish, so let's read those verses now.

Starting in verse 13, Jesus said, 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. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

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. 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.

[2 : 03] Here's the main idea for this section. Christians must use their influence to point people to Christ for the glory of God. Christians must use their influence to point people to Christ for the glory of God.

As we dig into the passage tonight, we'll see that even though the main idea is basic, Jesus goes very deep in just a few words. The main idea of the passage is simple to understand, but often difficult to do.

The main idea also challenges some believers' ideas about how Christians should interact with unbelievers. John MacArthur wrote, Now you can see where the influence part of the main idea came from.

As we go through the passage, we'll be reminded that the best way to influence unbelievers, and the only eternal way to influence them, is to point them to Christ. We'll break tonight's verses into three sections, starting with the people mentioned in the verses.

The people is your first section. In verses 13 through 16, Jesus references two different types of people. Those types are believers and unbelievers.

[3 : 41] The basic truth which lies behind these metaphors, and is common to them both, is that the church and the world are distinct communities. To keep from being too repetitive as we go through the verses, we'll first talk about whether each verse refers to believers or unbelievers.

Some verses refer to just believers, some refer only to unbelievers, and some refer to both. First, look at the beginning of verses 13 and 14.

In verse 13, Jesus says, You are the salt of the earth. Then in verse 14, Jesus says, You are the light of the world. In both cases, Jesus is speaking to believers.

We know that from what we covered in week one of the study. Look back at Matthew 5, verse 1, in the beginning of Matthew 5, 2. Those verses say, Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him, and he opened his mouth and taught them.

In this sermon, Jesus is teaching his disciples, the people who believed in him. In both verses 13 and 14, the Greek pronoun for you is emphatic.

[4 : 58] The idea is, You are the only salt of the earth, and you are the only light of the world. The you in both verses also is plural.

Jesus' whole body, the church, is what is called to be the world's salt and light. Each grain of salt has limited influence. Change will only happen as the church collectively is scattered into the world. Similarly, one ray of light will accomplish little, but when it joins with other rays, a great light is created. Think about this. The ordinary Christian may never have read any philosophy at all, but he knows and understands more about life than the greatest expert who is not a Christian.

Moving on to verse 15, the illustration in verse 15 applies to all people. That's because all people gathered around the physical light get some benefit from that light.

Verse 15 further explains the metaphor, and the spiritual application of that metaphor comes in verse 16. So we'll talk about the spiritual application of verse 16 later in the lesson.

[6 : 09] For now, let's consider the people referenced in that verse. When Jesus refers to your light in verse 16, he again is talking to believers or his disciples.

In verse 16, when Jesus refers to others and they, he's referring to both believers and unbelievers. And we'll discuss how the others and they refer to both believers and unbelievers when we get to the third section of the lesson.

We need to notice one more thing about the people who believe in Christ. Jesus tells his followers that they are the salt of the earth. They are the light of the world.

He doesn't say that they can become the salt of the earth or that they can become the light of the world. He says they already are those things. And the same thing applies to us as believers today. So now that we've considered the people that each verse references, we can move to the second part of the lesson. And that second part comes in verses 13 through 15.

[7 : 10] In those verses, we see the pictures. So the pictures is your next blank. Those pictures are metaphors that Jesus uses to describe believers and to describe the effects that believers have on the world.

Verse 13 has the first metaphor. In verse 13, Jesus compares believers to salt. And he said, 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. We know what salt is, but to better understand Jesus' comparison, we need to understand the particular significance of salt when Jesus originally said these words.

In Christ's day, salt was the most common of all preservatives. They couldn't just throw their food in the refrigerator or the deep freeze. They didn't have those yet. The Mediterranean world was largely tropical.

In such a climate as that, and in the face of such conditions, salt was used to keep things from going bad and becoming rotten, and that particularly applied to meat. We still see that in some foods today.

[8 : 27] Some of you may have heard of bitlong, and that's a dried meat of South Africa, similar to jerky. The meat is rubbed with coarse salt, and if properly cured, it will keep indefinitely.

Second, salt served as a disinfectant. The properties that allowed salt to function as a preservative also allowed it to be used as a disinfectant.

Salt helps kill bacteria in and around a wound, and salt water could be used to clean clothes, bedding, and other fabrics. The third use of salt still is very common to us today, and that is salt in Jesus' day was used as a food seasoning.

The fourth thing about salt is that salt makes people either thirsty or hungry. Conventional wisdom for years has said that eating salty foods makes a person thirsty.

More recent scientific studies seem to indicate that although eating salty foods make people drink more, the saltiness actually makes people hungrier instead of thirstier.

[9 : 30] And regardless of whether people feel hungry or thirsty after consuming salt, the salt leaves them wanting more. You know, if you think about it, today dieters search for things that make them want to eat or drink less, but in the climate and times of Jesus' day, food and water were less plentiful, so an appetite for food and water was essential for survival.

Fifth, for Jews, salt was an important part of their religion. Salt was required to be included in sacrifices. Listen to Leviticus 2, verse 13.

It says, You shall season all your grain offerings with salt. You shall not let the salt of the covenant with your God be missing from your grain offering. With all your offerings, you shall offer salt.

Salt was important in sacrifices because salt was used to form covenants with somebody else, and those covenants were even called salt covenants. Before the days of a notary public who could authenticate the legality of a document, when two men entered into a business agreement, they would haggle over the terms until they'd settled on an agreement.

Then they would eat salt or portions of food together, and eating salt bound them together in what they called the salt covenant, and this covenant once established was a contract that couldn't be broken.

[10:58] God referred to salt covenants in the Old Testament. In Numbers chapter 18, verse 19, God was speaking to Moses' brother Aaron, the priest, and he said, 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. Listen now to 2 Chronicles chapter 13, verses 4 and 5.

2 Chronicles 13, 4 and 5 say, Then Abijah stood up on Mount Zimariah, that is in the hill country of Ephraim, and said, Hear me, O Jeroboam and all Israel.

Ought you not to know the Lord God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel forever to David and his sons by a covenant of salt? So you can see how the Bible references salt covenants.

Salt's characteristics and uses made salt extremely important to ancient people, and ancient people knew that salt was valuable. Plato said that salt was a substance dear to the gods.

[12:11] Barbarous tribes have sometimes made a bag of salt worth more than a man, and in the form of salt cakes, salt served as money in ancient Ethiopia and Tibet.

Even the English term salary comes from salt. The English term salary formerly represented a soldier's money allowance to buy salt, and that was derived from the word solarium, the term that actually denoted the salt allotment that was paid to soldiers of the Roman army.

How many of you have heard the expression that a person is not worth his salt? That's actually where the expression comes from. That expression comes from the practice of Roman soldiers receiving the salt as part of their wages, and a soldier who failed to earn his wages was considered not worth his salt.

I wonder how many people today actually realize that that's a biblical expression when they say that. When Jesus said that those who followed him were the salt of the earth, he was teaching that the world apart from God is rotten because of sin.

Through Jesus' power, his disciples were able and actually obliged to have a preserving and purifying effect upon the world. The Christian is to be a preserving force in the world wherever God has placed him, and that means that Christians must be at work.

[13:36] They must be Christians when they're working. They must be Christians in politics. They must be Christians at home. And they must be Christians everywhere else that a normal life in our society takes them.

So Jesus is actually shattering two common beliefs here. One is that people are basically good. We know from the Bible and just from observing that that society is not basically good.

We see that things are continually getting worse and worse unless God intervenes. The second common belief that Jesus' teaching shatters is that believers must distance themselves from unbelievers.

Instead, we must go into the world to reach those unbelievers. For the sake of time, we won't spend time illustrating how the Bible and society disprove that people by their own nature are good.

I think most of you probably agree that that's not the case, but if you want to discuss that afterwards, feel free to come ask me about that. We do, however, need to consider how we go into the unsaved world without being contaminated by it.

[14:45] Listen to this quote from James Montgomery Boyce. He said, There is even a sense in which the salt must dissolve if the flavor is to be released. And for this reason, God sometimes shakes the salt shaker through persecutions so that the salt will fall out and let this happen.

Sometimes it will mean that we shall have to dissolve to our own interest, that we shall have to extend ourselves in areas of the world where we do not see many Christians. We shall feel lonely and even depressed, but that is where the salt is active.

Then he goes on to say, I should add a fact that is well known to the medical world. If a body does not give up salt through perspiration, what happens?

It retains water and becomes bloated. In the same way, the church will become bloated and desperately unhealthy if the salt is not dispersed in its work of preservation. In a sense, salt cannot really become unsalty, but contamination can cause it to lose its value as salt so that its saltiness no longer functions.

[15:55] Turn over to John chapter 17. We're going to take a little bit of time to look at John chapter 17. And this, of course, is Jesus' high priestly prayer.

We'll start with verses 14 through 18 of John chapter 17. And in these verses, Jesus is praying to God about believers.

Starting in verse 14 of John 17, Jesus prayed, I have given them your word and the world has hated them because they are not of the world just as I am not of the world.

I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth.

Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. Notice Jesus makes a point that he sends believers into the world.

[16:59] And then skip down to verses 20 and 21 of John 17. Jesus continues, I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they may also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

So Jesus sends believers into the world so that the world will eventually believe that God has sent Jesus. Believers are to be different.

We're to point the way to Christ. And we do that by being in the world, but not of the world. We learn that from 1 John 2, verses 15 through 17.

1 John 2, verses 15 through 17 are where John wrote, Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

[18:19] Here in that 1 John cross-reference, love signifies affection and devotion. God must have the first place in a Christian's life. The world in that verse is a reference to the invisible spiritual system of evil that's dominated by Satan and all that it offers in opposition to God.

It also offers a lot of things in opposition to God's word and his people. So keeping God in first place will help us properly reach out to unbelievers.

We can and should dislike certain behaviors of unbelievers, but we always should remember that unbelievers behaving in opposition to God simply are doing what comes naturally to them.

They're living out their job description, in other words. Think back to what Pastor Mike said on Sunday. Jesus denounced people's conduct, but he treated sinners with compassion and showed them a better way.

Jesus' use of salt as an illustration also shows that he expects believers to have contact with the world. Salt serves as a preservative and a disinfectant and a seasoning only if it makes contact with something.

[19:35] For those of you going out to eat later, suppose that when Ted gets his meal, he says, this food tastes bland. Please pass me the salt. So what would you think if he simply sat the salt shaker down beside his plate and said, there, that makes it taste better?

That's going to be counted with the water in the hot salt. Amen. Could be. We all know that for the food to benefit from the salt, the salt must be put on the food.

And we need to touch on one more characteristic of how salt applies to Christians. We've talked about how actual salt makes people hungry or thirsty for something more.

Similarly, Christians are to make unbelievers hungry or thirsty for something more. Here's another quote from James Montgomery Boyce. He said, the non-Christian tends to feel self-satisfied even if he is not.

And he naturally goes through life telling himself that circumstances are wonderful. But when a Christian comes into a sphere of vision, there should be that evidence of joy, satisfaction, and peace that makes him look up and say, that's what I want.

[20:49] What is what I want? I want to be like that. Can that be said of you, he says, do you make men desire Jesus Christ? Your responsibility is to point men to Jesus Christ.

If you do that, out of you will flow his life and character and others will see him and be satisfied. Look at all of verse 13 again. Jesus said, you are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?

It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. Some people incorrectly use the last part of verse 13 to argue that people can lose their salvation. We know that true believers never lose their salvation. However, true believers can lose their influence. We have to understand that true believers never lose their salvation, but they can lose their influence.

With great responsibility often comes great danger. We can't be an influence for purity in the world if we've contaminated and compromised our own purity.

[22 : 00] We can't sting the world's conscience if we continually go against our own. We can't stimulate hunger or thirst for righteousness if we've lost our own hunger and thirst for righteousness.

And we can't be used of God to retard the corruption of sin in the world if our own lives are corrupted by sin. To lose our saltiness is not to lose our salvation, but it is to lose our effectiveness and to become disqualified for God's service.

Paul wrote these words in 1 Corinthians 9, verse 27. He said, But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

Let's move to the second picture that Jesus uses in this section. Jesus said in verses 14 and 15, You are the light of the world.

A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, 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. The clear implication of Christ's words is that the world is in darkness concerning spiritual things.

[23 : 17] The tragedy of the situation is that men actually prefer darkness to God's light. Jesus Christ exposed the nature of the darkness in a way that had never been done previously, and of course, men hated him for that.

Some of you may be wondering whether Jesus is contradicting his words in the Gospel of John, because in John 8, 12, Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

And then here in Matthew 5, 14, he said, you are the light of the world. So in John 8, 12, he said, I am the light of the world. But here in Matthew, he said, you are the light of the world.

But rather than contradicting each other, the verses explain each other. Listen to Jesus' words in John 8, 12 again. He says, I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. So Jesus is the light of the world who passes the light to and then through his followers.

[24 : 24] Peter said this about believers in 1 Peter 2, 9. 1 Peter 2, 9 says, But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

The 1 Peter reference is one of several other biblical references to God's light, and we'll look at just a few now. Isaiah 2, 5 says, O house of Jacob, come let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Isaiah 9, 2 is a verse we hear a lot at Christmas time, and it says, The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them a light has shown.

Moving to the New Testament, listen to what Jesus said in John 12, verses 35 and 36. John 12, 35 and 36 say, So Jesus said to them, The light is among you for a little while longer.

Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.

[25 : 52] Then 1 John 1, verse 7 says, But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

The Christian can show forth light to the extent that he first receives light from the Lord Jesus Christ and then reflects that light to others. Similar to how the moon reflects the sun's light, true believers reflect the sun's light, and that second sun is S-O-N.

True believers reflect the father's sun. Consider three functions of light. First, light exposes things that were hidden by darkness.

Writing to believers, listen to what Paul said in Ephesians 5, verses 8-14. Ephesians 5, 8-14 say, For at one time you were in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

Walk as children of light, for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true, and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

[27 : 11] For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret, but when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible. For anything that becomes visible is light.

Therefore it says, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. True believers help to expose the evil and the darkness of this world.

Believers eliminate dishonest practice in business, they eliminate gossip, they eliminate loose talk and still looser morals at parties, corruption in politics, racial prejudice, greed, selfishness, and a list of other things.

Those things will appear darker even to non-Christians because of what believers reveal of the holy character of Jesus. A second function of light is that light promotes growth.

Believers also help grow the faith of other believers. Just as a plant will grow even in a dark cave if bright enough light is present in that cave, friends and family should grow in the Christian life because of what you know and what you've learned about Jesus.

[28 : 26] A third function of light is that light illuminates the path to safety. God's word lights up the path to eternal life. We all know Psalm 119 verse 105 that verse says your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Believers should see men and women turn to Jesus through our testimony. The apostle Paul taught this using an illustration from the Old Testament. When Moses was with God in the mountain his face shone with transferred glory because of being with God.

And the glory was so bright that when Moses came down from the mountain he had to cover his face so that the light on it would not dazzle the people too much. Using this theme Paul argues in 2 Corinthians chapters 3 and 4 that we also should shine with the same glory because of spending time with Christ.

Others should be able to see him as he is reflected by us. Listen to 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 6. 2 Corinthians 4 verse 6 says for God who said let light shine out of darkness has shown in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

J.B. Phillips paraphrased this verse like this he said God who first ordered light to shine in darkness has flooded our hearts with his light we now can enlighten men only because we can give them knowledge of the glory of God as we see it in the face of Jesus Christ.

[30 : 06] Going back to tonight's text in the last part of verse 14 of Matthew 5 Jesus said a city set on a hill cannot be hidden. That illustration is easy to understand the lights from a city on a hill make the city visible to everyone.

The light from believers should make Christ visible to everyone. Jesus expanded on that theme in verse 15 when he said 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.

The typical lamp in a Jewish home was fairly small and it was placed on a stand to give maximum light. Hiding the lamp would defeat its purpose.

As followers of Jesus we never should conceal the truth we know or the truth of what we are. We should never pretend to be other than what we are but be willing for our Christianity to be visible to everybody.

A community of Jesus which seeks to hide itself has ceased to follow Jesus. We are to be our true Christian selves openly living the life described in the Beatitudes and never ashamed of Christ.

[31 : 23] So now you can see how this section fits with the Beatitudes that we've been looking at. The Beatitudes and living them out enable us to be the type of people Jesus wants us to be.

Before we leave this section consider how the salt and light metaphors complement each other.

The effects of salt are largely negative or preventive. We talked about how salt guards against decay or infection and how salt promotes a desire for something more.

Light has a negative side because it illuminates things that are previously hidden but light also illuminates the path to something better. Salt makes us want something more.

Light shines the way to something more and in spiritual terms that light is the light of the world so that something more is Jesus. So far we've talked about the people and the pictures in this

passage.

Verse 16 has our third and final section. In verse 16 we see the purpose. So the purpose is your last blank. Jesus has used these pictures to better explain the purpose of believers.

[32 : 40] In verse 15 Jesus talked about maximizing a lamp's light and in verse 16 he said 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.

The word for good that Jesus uses here emphasizes attractiveness or beautiful appearance more than quality. Letting our light shine before men allows them to see our good works and to see the beauty that the Lord has worked in us.

To see good works by us is to see Christ in us and that is why Jesus says let your light shine. It is something that we allow him to do through us.

It's God's light. Our choice is to whether to hide it or to let it shine. Consider what some of those good works are. Believing, confessing, and teaching the truth are good works which give evidence of our regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

But we can't limit our good works to these. Good works are works of love as well as faith. They express not only our loyalty to God but our care for our fellows as well.

[33 : 57] Indeed, the primary meaning of works must be practical, visible deeds of compassion. When people see these, Jesus said, they will glorify God because the good works embody the good news of Jesus' love which we proclaim.

Without them, our gospel loses its credibility and our God loses his honor. Consider that last sentence again. When people see our good works, Jesus said, they will glorify God because those good works embody the good news of his love which we proclaim.

And then without them, our gospel loses its credibility and our God loses his honor. A godly life gives convincing testimony to the saving power of God.

That, of course, brings God glory. People will see us in our good works and seeing us do those good works will glorify God. People inevitably will recognize that it is by the grace of God that we are what we are, that our light is God's light and our works are God's works done in us and through us.

So it's the light they will praise, not the lamp which bears it. Our Father in heaven is whom they will glorify, not the children he has begotten and whose children exhibits a certain family likeness.

[35 : 21] Of course, the ultimate good work is leading some to salvation. Jesus also envisions us as the agents through whom others will come to acknowledge God as Savior.

Our witness may often bring hateful opposition, but by God's grace, it may also bring salvation to others. Peter expanded on this theme in 1 Peter 2, verse 12.

1 Peter 2, 12 says, Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation. Usually in the New Testament, visitation indicates blessing and redemption, and because of observation of Christian virtue and good works in the lives of believers, some will be privileged to glorify God when he visits them with salvation, and they also will glorify Christ when he returns. And of course, the only ones who can truly glorify Christ when he returns are believers. So, that verse is telling us that when we keep our conduct among the Gentiles honorable, some of those Gentiles will turn into believers, and they will glorify God with us.

[36 : 44] If we're tempted to think too much of ourselves because of our good works, that's when we need to remember Ephesians chapter 2 verse 10. Ephesians chapter 2 verse 10 says, For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

So, even our good works are prepared for us by God. Remember the main idea of this section. Christians must use their influence to point people to Christ for the glory of God.

The world's corruption will never be slowed, nor its darkness lightened, unless God's people are its salt and light. The very ones who are despised by the world and persecuted by the world are the world's only hope.

So, now you see why it comes immediately after the beatitude on persecution. He's reminding us that even though we may be persecuted, we really are the world's only hope.

hope. Earlier we mentioned what Pastor Mike said on Sunday about needing to show compassion for other believers. Hear how Martin Lloyd Jones expanded on that theme when he talked about

verse 16.

[38 : 01] This quote summarizes how Christians should feel about unbelievers, and it also summarizes how Christians should live. Martin Lloyd Jones said, because we are truly Christian, we are to have great sorrow in our hearts for those other people.

We are to realize that they are in darkness and in a state of pollution. In other words, the more we draw our life from Christ, the more we shall become like him, and he had a great compassion for the people.

He saw them as sheep without a shepherd. He had great sorrow for them in his heart, and it was that which determined his conduct and behavior. He was not concerned about himself.

He had compassion for the multitude. That is the way in which you and I are to live and to regard these matters. In other words, in all our work in Christian living, these three things should always be the uppermost.

And here are the three things that he mentioned. He said, we should always do them, and that's our work in living, for his sake and for his glory. Secondly, we shall lead men to him and to glorify him.

[39 : 15] And finally, all will be based upon a love for them and a compassion for them in their lost condition. For us as believers, that quote should challenge us.

So here are some questions to think about. Do we really have sorrow in our hearts for unsaved people? Are we truly interested in sharing the gospel with them?

We know better than anyone else what fate awaits unbelievers if they fail to repent. We as believers also should feel compelled to live the way that Jesus expects.

Until there's transformation in our daily conduct, we will never be salt, and apart from the word of God, we can never be light. God calls us from a world from which we were saved to a new kind of life so that we can be salt to others that are still in that world.

He delivered the word to us so that we can be light to men and women who are lost. We are to live in such a way that as men and women look at us, we should become a problem to them.

[40 : 24] They will ask, what is it? Why are these people so different in every way? Different in their conduct and behavior, and different in their reactions? We want unbelievers to say there's something different about them which we do not understand.

We cannot explain it. And they will be driven to the only real explanation, which is that we are the people of God, children of God, heirs of God, and as the Bible says, joint heirs with Christ.

So how do we make a difference? And how do we make people see the difference in us? Well, we already know the answer. That answer is to live out the characteristics described in the Beatitudes. And when we live out those characteristics, we are salt and we are light. And that is why Jesus can already say, you are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this challenging reminder of how you expect Christians to live and work and play and interact with others in this world.

[41 : 33] Help us overcome the natural tendency to want to distance ourselves from unbelievers. Help us be more willing to share the gospel with those unbelievers and help us go out more and more to spread that gospel throughout the world.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.