

The Parables

#15: Matthew 5:13-16

"Salt and Light"

Newcomers' Lunch! (need a show of hands)

Dismiss Children

3-minute refreshments break

Acknowledge RFKC team visiting

Mat 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.

Mat 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Mat 5:15 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.

Mat 5:16 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.

We're going to teach about being "Salt and Light" in our world today, and we have an awesome model for this to start us off!

- **(next)** *Call up Cheryl, Debbie, Rachel, and Camille*
- **15 minute report**

Pray for Indonesia

Say: **"Salt and Light"** – that's our text today.

Let me start with giving the proper context:

- Matthew 5 begins the famous "Sermon on the Mount"
- The "mount" is located in the ancient city of Capernaum, but this exact location is unknown.
- In verse 13, Jesus says "YOU are the salt..." and in v15, "YOU are the light."
 - Who is YOU?
 - Let's start at the beginning... in v3, where Jesus begins this "sermon"

Mat 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 5:4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

- These first two are those who – for a time – need encouragement and comfort
- Notice how the beatitudes move from a place of being ministered to, to being ministers...

Mat 5:5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Mat 5:6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

- These next two are still the same as the first two, but now, having received encouragement and comfort, remain humble, but now their focus is to hunger and thirst for what is right and good in the eyes of God.

Mat 5:7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Mat 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Mat 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

- These next 3 are the rock stars in God's world – merciful, pure-in-heart, peacemakers being used by God to change the world.
 - The characteristics of being something (beggar, mourner, meek, hungry, thirsty) have now produced (merciful, purifier, peacemaker)

Mat 5:10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

- So cool! Same as the "poor in spirit" – those who are persecuted for this righteousness have the same encouragement: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- IOW, all of these characteristics are identifiers of the children of God
 - But notice how they move from a self-focus to a selfless-focus
 - From "it's about me right now" to "it's not about me anymore."

----- **now, notice the change in address** -----

Mat 5:11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account."

Mat 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

The "YOU" **are those blessed in the Beatitudes:**

- **READ: They are the humble, encouraged, image-of-God ministers and soldiers who GET IT *because* they have been encouraged, healed, strengthened, and poured out for God's intended purposes.**

Continuing with the target of YOU, Jesus says the only parable in the Sermon on the mount: comparing YOU – the Beatitude Believer – to two things. First...

Mat 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."

Last page of the book (some here like to read the last page of the book) – let me do that for this message:

- **Salt and Light are the everyday goals of those who are abandoned for Christ.**
 - **Abandoned = unrestricted, uninhibited, and uncontrolled by the trappings of this world.**
 - I LOVE this word!
 - I believe it is the best English word that can be ascribed to these Beatitudes.
 - **Salt and Light are the everyday goals of those who are abandoned for Christ.**
- Salt and Light are not the characteristics of the believer who remains in the "it's still about me" place.
 - Salt and Light are not the characteristics of those who constantly look for God to give them stuff
 - Or have a grocery-list prayer mentality
 - Or who see Jesus as an accessory to their lives as opposed to the SOURCE.
- Salt and Light are the characteristics of the ABANDONED.
 - The selfless.
 - The "it's not about me anymore" follower of Jesus into the great unknown
 - The "life is short" DOER of God's Word.
- This is what these beautiful 4 ladies went to do in Indonesia

- A selfless motivation to BE JESUS and partner with a family totally ABANDONED to the will of Christ for the glory of God to be recognized in Indonesia.

Salt:

- Fun fact: We get the word “salary” from salt
 - Roman soldiers were given an allowance in their wages specifically to buy salt – an expensive-yet-needed commodity in Jesus’ day.
 - I mention this because salt – back in the day before refineries – was a hot commodity.
- **Salt purifies, cleanses and heals**
 - Salt is an ingredient found in almost every purifying compound
 - **Salt makes its surroundings BETTER just by its presence.**
 - For purifying food, house cleaning, even your body – salt is likely an active ingredient in everything you’d use for that purpose.
 - And as a healing ingredient:
 - Gargling, teeth brushing, mouth washing, eye salve, foot-soothing, dry skin, bee stings, infections, it’s EVERYWHERE
 - And Jesus says YOU are the salt of the earth – to the world!
 - **If you and I are not asking God how we can be SALT in our world on a regular basis, we are missing the point of our entire life.**
 - YOU are a purifier! A cleanser! A healer!
 - The power of Christ lives in YOU, for the purpose of God’s glory.

Losing saltiness:

First, say this with me: **“This parable isn’t about losing saltiness.”**

That said, let me briefly address the concept, then move along...

- **(next)** In America, as in most places, scientists will confirm salt simply doesn’t lose its saltiness.
 - **NaCl is a chemical compound** known as “salt”
 - It is salty by nature – and **by itself**, doesn’t lose its flavor.
 - However, if NaCl dissolves in water and recrystallizes and is **mixed** with other chemicals, **it can and does lose its flavor** (saltiness).
- Secondly, the salt just half a day’s walk from where Jesus was speaking (Sermon on the Mount), was not NaCl.
 - It was salt located at the south end of the Dead Sea, and many scientists have traveled there to test that salt.
 - It has boron, magnesium, and bromides in it, and is indeed not flavorful.
- Trampled underfoot.
 - If salt was no longer good for purifying, cleansing, and healing, it was not just “trash”.
 - it corrupted the other ingredients around it.
 - So it had to be expelled from the house.
- Now, say it again, **“This parable isn’t about losing saltiness.”**
 - **This parable is about BEING SALT.**
 - It’s not God’s desire that you lose it, so DON’T.
 - That’s really all Christ-followers need to hear, right?
 - God doesn’t want me to be ineffective or an agent that corrupts. So don’t.
 - BE SALT, and don’t even entertain the idea of losing it.

Mat 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden."

Mat 5:15 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.

Light and darkness are interposed against one another throughout scripture – heck, throughout the history of mankind, not just in the Bible.

- Psa_18:28 For it is you who light my lamp; the LORD my God lightens my darkness.
- John the Baptist was purposed “to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” (Luke 1:79)
- Joh_1:5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- Joh_8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

And here, Jesus says YOU are the light of the world.

Like with SALT, Jesus commands light be USED according to its purpose.

- Not that you bring a light with you, but that you ARE the light.
- ***Some folks are just not that fun to be around.***
- Debbie-downers.
- **Complainers.**
- Grumblers.
- Fearful attitudes.
- Doubters of just about everything.
- **Those who look for the worst in people.**
- Saddest thing: Half of these folks don't even know they do this!
 - Because of upbringings and poor examples they choose to have as influences in their lives, they don't even recognize the darkness they cling to.
 - **Somebody mentions the Eeyore cloud** overhead, and they say “What cloud?”

This is what Jesus refers to when He speaks of hiding the light.

- **The light has been LIT.**
- God set it aflame.
- That light is Christ Jesus.
- And God promises over and over in his Word it will never be UNLIT.
 - Not by Him.
- However, you can hide it.
 - But that would be stupid.
 - Jesus says nobody lights a lamp and hides it. Nobody.
 - ***Just like the fact this parable isn't about losing saltiness, it's not about hiding your light.***

Conclusion:

Mat 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to you. (Oh – wait!...) ... to your Father who is in heaven.

Salt and Light for the glory of God.

- FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. NOT ME.
- Again, the **Salt and light are well defined in the Beatitudes:**

- **Humility**
- **Hungering for God**
- **Extending mercy**
- **Purity of heart**
- **Peacemaking**
 - The opposite of these things is FLAVORLESS and DARKNESS.
 - It is selfishness at its very core.

We are in a bad place when we start asking things like, **“What’s in it for me?”**

- How am I being ministered to at such-and-such gathering?
- That attitude is darkness. Lamp-shading. And salt-less.
- “What’s in it for me?” adds NOTHING to its surroundings. Rather, it takes.
- And nowhere is that a Biblical concept of living.

Famous phrase: “I’m just not being fed.”

- When I hear even borderline mature believers say this phrase about former churches, I get all cringy inside...
- The Christian church is the only place this is muttered.
- You know why it’s never used any place else?
 - Because it’s a very weird thing to say!!
 - **What are you? 9 months old??**
 - In a high chair??
 - Mommy feeding you with choo-choo sounds??
 - Boaz needs to be spoon-fed.
 - Adults pick up forks.
- There are all kinds of reasons to leave churches.
 - You’re not challenged.
 - You’re not being used well.
 - Theological differences.
 - Unbiblical leadership structures...
 - But unless you were part of a church that just never opened the Bible, “not being fed” is what happens to BABIES, not adults.
 - Don’t ever say that again. OK?
- ***And due to what the Bible teaches, it should be the LAST place it’s used.***
 - **YOU are the salt – YOU are the light – to the WORLD – for the GLORY of GOD.**
 - Bill Hybels has a great quote: “The local church is the hope of the world.”
 - The WHOLE of the body – being salt and light **WHEREVER YOU GO.**
 - Your salt shaker is always open.
 - Your lamp is never switched off.
 - Gotta run an errand? Salt and light.
 - Go to work? Salt and light.
 - School? Salt and light.
 - Home? Salt and light.
 - Indonesia? Salt and light.
 - Tucson? Salt and light.
 - Gonna have coffee with a friend? Salt and light.

- Pull into your driveway and the neighbor is watering their yard?
Salt and light.
- Got it?

Pray

Newcomers' Lunch – stick around!