

Salt of the Earth and Light of the World
(Matthew 5:13-16)

Introduction:

1. In John 8:12 Jesus identified Himself as *"the light of the world."*
2. Jesus talked about this further in John 9:4-5.
 - a. He showed that He is *"the light of the world"* by doing the works that the Father gave Him to do.
 - b. He considered being *"the light of the world"* to be a lifelong commitment.
3. In Matthew 5:13-16 Jesus identified His followers as *"the salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world."*
 - a. We show that we are *"the salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world"* by doing the will of the Father.
 - b. The Lord also wants us to follow His example by making lifelong commitments to being *"the salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world."*
4. In our lesson we are studying the Lord's teaching in Matthew 5:13-16 as well as some additional passages.

Discussion:

- I. JESUS BEGAN IN VS.13 BY SAYING THAT CHRISTIANS ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH
 - A. People familiar with salt understand that it influences things that it contacts.
 1. It is used as a preservative in that it prevents spoilage.
 2. It is also used as a seasoning in that it enhances the flavor of foods.
 3. As a preservative and seasoning, salt is certainly valuable.
 - B. (vs.13a) Jesus compared His followers to salt to show that we are to have a positive influence upon the world.
 - C. (vs.13b) Jesus emphasized the need for having the right kind of influence.
 1. Salt that has lost its saltiness is good for nothing (see Luke 14:34-35).
 2. Jesus wants us to have the right kind of influence, and He wants us to maintain our influence for good.
- II. JESUS CONTINUED IN VS.14-16 BY SAYING THAT CHRISTIANS ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD
 - A. Light is similar to salt in that it is also very useful and influential.
 1. It dispels darkness.
 2. It causes plants to grow.
 3. Sunlight can change a person's disposition for the better.
 - B. Jesus also used this comparison to teach His followers to have a positive influence upon the world.
 - C. (vs.15-16) We must not hide our lights -- we must let them shine before men.
 1. This is accomplished by doing good works.
 2. Our good works will lead others to glorify God.
 - D. With the Lord's instructions in our minds, let us turn our attention to some . . .
- III. ADDITIONAL PASSAGES THAT RELATE TO "LIGHT"
 - A. Romans 13:11-14
 1. According to vs.11, now is not the time to sleep spiritually.
 2. Since this is the case, vs.12 teaches us to:
 - a. *"cast off the works of darkness"*
 - b. *"put on the armor of light."*
 3. Vs.13&14 show us what this involves.
 - B. Ephesians 5:8-10
 1. A person's condition before he becomes a Christian is described as *"darkness."*
 2. A Christian's condition is described as *"light in the Lord."*
 3. Christians are responsible for walking *"as children of light."*

4. Vs.9 mentions *"the fruit of the Spirit"* (Galatians 5:22-23).

C. Philippians 2:14-16

1. Christians are to *"shine as lights in the world."*

2. To accomplish this we must:

a. *"do all things without murmurings and disputings"*

b. hold *"forth the word of life."*

D. 1 John 1:5-7

1. Christians are to *"walk in the light as He [God] is in the light."*

2. A person who claims to have fellowship with God while walking in darkness is a liar.

3. Those who walk in the light as God is in the light:

a. have fellowship with God

b. are continually cleansed by the Lord's blood.

Conclusion:

1. In the beginning the world needed light, and God created it (Genesis 1:1-4a).

2. Years later the world needed a special kind of light, and God sent Jesus to provide it (John 12:46).

3. The world needs light today, and the Lord's people are responsible for reflecting His light by doing His will.

4. In Matthew 5:13-16 was Jesus talking to you?

5. When others observe you, can they identify you as *"the salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world?"*