

Salt and Light
(Matthew 5:13-16)

Introduction:

1. Jesus began His Sermon on the Mount by giving 7 special Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-9).
 - a. These Beatitudes contain 7 traits that the Lord wants His followers to possess.
 - b. Those who possess these traits will enjoy tremendous blessings.
2. As a result of developing and practicing these traits we can expect 2 reactions.
 - a. In the 8th Beatitude (vs.10-12), Jesus showed how practicing righteousness might result in persecution.
 - b. According to vs.13-16, some will be led to glorify God when we do the Lord's will.
3. We need to practice the Beatitudes for 2 reasons:
 - a. so we can receive blessings from the Lord
 - b. so we can have a positive influence upon other people [Jesus used "salt and light" to illustrate this point].

Discussion:

- I. (vs.13) CHRISTIANS ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH
 - A. Salt influences things that it contacts.
 1. It is used as a preservative [it prevents spoilage].
 2. It is used as a seasoning [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 how 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.
 2. (See Luke 14:34-35) If we hear what Jesus said, we realize that a Christian without proper influence is of no benefit to His kingdom.
 3. We can influence others for good if we will practice the Beatitudes.
- II. (vs.14-16) CHRISTIANS ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD
 - A. Light 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 light -- we must let it shine before men.
 1. This is accomplished by doing good works.
 2. Our good works will lead others to glorify God.
 - D. (Luke 11:33-36) The Lord warns us to make sure that the light in us is not darkness.
 - E. God's people are also taught in Philippians 2:12-16 to "*shine as lights in the world.*"
- III. SPECIFIC AREAS WHERE OUR INFLUENCE MUST BE SEEN
 - A. We influence our associates at work and school, our neighbors, and our friends.
 1. We must conduct ourselves as the Lord teaches so we will not be a hindrance to anyone.
 - a. Our speech must be pure (Colossians 4:6).
 - b. Our dress must be decent and modest.
 - c. Our habits must be wholesome.
 2. We need to speak positively about the church and its work.
 - B. We influence our family members.
 1. Parents have a special influence upon their children.
 2. Children often form their attitudes toward the Lord, the Bible, and the church because of what they see in their parents.
 3. Fathers have tremendous responsibilities in this regard (Ephesians 6:4).
 - C. We influence other members of the church through our priorities.