

# DOES YOUR BUSINESS REFLECT THE GLORY OF GOD?

## Session 1



Dr. Tony Evans

- A lot of time, money, and effort has and is being spent to fix cracks (personal cracks, family cracks, social cracks, even crack cracks).
- Great, sincere effort was put at fixing cracks only to discover the foundation was still expanding and contracting and there was no long-term effectiveness. Our challenge is to make sure our foundation is solid.
- The bigger the building you want to erect, the deeper the hole you've got to drill. The greater the superstructure you want to develop in your life, or in your business, the higher up that ladder you want to go, the deeper down must be the foundation.
- It is easy to look like a Christian, to look like you're running a Christian business. You get all the plaques in the right place, have the prayer time. You can give the impression "This is a Christian institution" without necessarily having drilled the deep foundation.
- Our world is in desperate need of men and women in the marketplace, who are both technically excellent (who do what they do well) and are spiritually mature, who do it on the proper foundation.
- Jesus Christ uses two very simple analogies in Matthew 5 to describe the believer's presence in a secular society, what it looks like when Christians are in the world, the marketplace, and they're doing it right.
- The two simple analogies layout for us what it looks like when Christians are functioning in the marketplace in a theocentric way, a God-centered way. He says in his first analogy, *"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty again, it is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."*
- His first analogy is salt, "You are the salt of the earth." You're not the salt of the shaker, you're the salt of the earth.
- Salt was/is a preservative (it still may be used by folks out in the country today in the same way). Back then it was a staple of preservation.
- Roman soldiers were paid in salt. They would get money, but they would also get bags of salt to take home to the wife who would salt down food in order to preserve it.
- The earth here is postured as a decaying piece of meat that needs to be preserved or "salted down." Salt acts as an anti-bacterial agent, as a repellent, to bacteria's attempt to get inside the meat and bring about decay.
- It is in the midst of this Jesus tells His disciples, "You, not the government, not the secular society (in the Greek, You is in the emphatic position, it literally reads --"You and nobody else, you alone, you're it, you are the salt of this decay."
- You represent the salt of the business world. In a world where ethics don't mean anything, integrity is not high on the list, when money is the measure of all things, you are the salt of the decay.
- Your job is to leave the shaker and enter the meat. Salt in the shaker is good until it gets to performing its purpose, which is to leave the shaker and integrate into that which can potentially decay and extend its life. You are the salt of the earth.
- The challenge that you face in the marketplace is this... to have a kind of Christocentric orientation, God-centered perspective in business that you demonstrate it is possible to be righteous, and to be a kingdom representative in a secular society. You are the salt of the earth.



- There was a businessman who lived in the Old Testament in two pretty bad places to do business. His name was Lot. His companies were located in a place called Sodom and Gomorrah.

- He had a personal Christian orientation. The New Testament says, “His righteous soul was vexed.” He was not pleased with the unrighteous of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- God looked down at Sodom and Gomorrah and said, “I’ve got to destroy this place. I’ve got to get rid of these places, because this is an evil society.”
- “Why were Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed?” They weren’t destroyed just because sinners were sinning. They were destroyed because saints were nowhere to be found.
- Lot suffered from the disease of personal peace and affluence. He was okay. He was a good guy, personally. But he didn’t understand his calling. His calling was not simply to have a personal, religious ethic and a successful business.
- His calling was to extend righteousness in an unrighteous environment.
- But he was so into “my profits and my expansion and what I am about” that he missed his broader calling. He wasn’t the salt of the earth, he was just personally successful. And his financial statement proved it.
- When the righteous are nowhere to be found, when Christianity has been privatized in the culture, the culture is in trouble because God will accept the righteous as a down payment against the unrighteous. You are the salt of the earth. It’s not merely about your success, although there is a place for that.
- It is also about your influence. You are the salt of the earth. What God wants is for you to leave the shaker and enter the meat, to do business in such a way that demonstrates in a secular society what it looks like when salt comes in and achieves its goal of being in the meat without becoming a part of the meat in order that it might be a preserver for the meat. You are the salt of the earth.
- Salt creates thirst. Your job of being salt in a secular society is to create enough thirst for your employees and your customers, so they not only want your product, but also want to find out a little bit more about your living water, your relationship with Jesus Christ.
- The rest of the verse says, “... but if the salt has become tasteless, how would it be made salty again, it is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” Jesus Raises the possibility of salt-less salt (if the salt becomes tasteless). That’s an impossibility. You can’t have salt-less salt and still have salt. If you have salt-less salt, you don’t have salt, you have no salt.
- Salt is a solid compound. The only thing that makes salt, salt, is the sodium chloride in salt. If you take the sodium chloride out of salt you don’t have salt, that’s all salt is. Yet Jesus comes along and says, “But if the salt becomes tasteless...” Meaning, according to Him, you can lose it. How can that be? He explains the last line. He says, “It shall be trodden underfoot by men.”
- Jesus says, “When My disciples get so mixed up with a secular way of operating, a secular way of functioning, when the bitterness of this world order begins to define your practice and your principles, then you become a good-for-nothing Christian and, if you’re in business, a good-for-nothing businessman/woman... except, good for one thing, to be walked on, to not be taken seriously, to have, yourself be trodden over.”
- You are the salt of the earth. God doesn’t expect you to do business like everybody else does business because you are not like everybody else, You are the salt of the earth.



## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What understanding have you had prior to today’s teaching about the statement Jesus made, “You are the salt of the earth”? Has it had any impact on your life?
2. Dr. Evans says the story in Genesis 18-19 indicates that Sodom and Gomorrah weren’t destroyed solely because the sinners were sinning, but also because no righteous could be found there. Had you realized that before? Explain.
3. Dr. Evans says that Lot missed his calling. His calling wasn’t just to have a personal religious ethic and a successful business. His calling was to extend righteousness in an unrighteous environment. Is this your calling as well? Discuss this with the group.
4. The final point in this session indicates that another purpose of “salt” is to create thirst. In what way can you influence others to “want” to know Jesus Christ?

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## Session 2



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- You are the light of the world. Light has only one responsibility ... to illuminate darkness so that darkness no longer dominates the environment.
- The light wants the opportunity to express itself to the furthest possible degree. Whoever has the light - runs the show.
- How can God use me and what I do to impact as many as possible because I am the light of the world?
- When you know where the light switch is, you don't need to spend a great deal of time discussing the darkness. You ARE the switch. You are the light of the world. Your job is to send out the beam. Your job is to illustrate the truth in the realm God has given you.
- <sup>16</sup>*In the same way, let your light shine before others,*  
Public light - A clear testimony - A lack of ambiguity - Don't hide the fact of where you stand.
- Remove the ambiguity. If you are a Christian, BE THAT! Don't be ashamed to let others know you are a Christian. Let your light go public.
- What are good works? --- Good works are not good things or good deeds. Sinners can do good things, good deeds. **Sinners CAN'T do good works.** Eph. 2:8-10
- Good works are divinely orchestrated goals achieved by divinely authorized means.
- Good works are divinely authorized goals achieved by divinely authorized means. So that the methodology that is used to reach the goal is as Godly as the goal you are trying to reach. **God wants to be Lord over both means and ends.**
- In business, God wants you to do good works.  
-- Methodology -- Quality -- Depth -- Commitment -- The presence of God through the process.
- Righteous goals reached by righteous methods done by righteous people.
- The principles for all the good works God has called us to do are in the Scriptures. God not only gives the means, He gives the processes to benefit people and glorify God.
- When you are salt and light and people see it, they will see your good works, and then they will talk about your Father. When things happen that are outside man's ability to control or influence or understand, all of a sudden God becomes an important person on the cultural landscape.
- Glorify means to show off, put on display, highlight, advertise. Our job is to "put make-up on God" so that the invisible God becomes visible through the good works we do.
- Consider the parts of the Lord's Prayer - it's all about Him!
- He has called you. Let your presence change the environment where you live. Let your presence take what is "up there" and bring it "down here." Live out your ultimate identity by changing your "clothes."
- Take off your secular way of thinking, your secular way of operating, your secular way of doing business.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Provide some practical answers to the question, “How can God use me and what I do to impact as many as possible because I am the light of the world?”
2. Last week, how many times did you speak about Jesus (by name) in your workplace (not counting any prayers you may have offered)? Why is this so?
3. Have you ever before considered the difference between “good works” done by believers and the same “good works” done by non-believers (e.g., feeding the poor, helping the challenged)? Discuss what Dr. Evans says about this. In what ways do you “give God the glory” for the good works you do? If they are all done “in the natural” how would the world know God was involved in any way?
4. Dr. Evans says that the principles for all the good works God has called us to do are contained in the Scriptures. How could this fact provide guidance to you before, during and after you do a “good work”?

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## APPLICATION & COMMITMENT

James 1:22-25 *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it-- he will be blessed in what he does.”* (NIV)

Prayerfully consider what was taught in the lesson and how you could best be used for God’s purposes as you apply what you have learned. Select one change in your behavior as a result of your prayer time.

Date Series Began: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Series Ended: \_\_\_\_\_  
Participant’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A Biblical truth (principle) I learned from the lessons was: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I intend to apply this truth (principle): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

With the help of the Holy Spirit, I will begin applying this truth immediately. I ask and expect my group to hold me accountable for this and to check with me periodically to determine if I am doing so. Please ask me: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

