

Salt & Light Sermon Reflection

By Amanda Cloud

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“You are the salt of the Earth...you are the light of the world.” Jesus assured his followers. One of Jesus's most famous sermons, the Sermon of the Mount essentially is Jesus' explanation of his “golden rule.” It tells us how to live a life dedicated and fulfilling to God.

Today we studying one of the many important aspects to the sermon, Jesus' reference to salt and light. Let's break this down a little bit. Jesus refers to his disciples as the “salt of the earth.” He is metaphorically telling them that they are needed. Salt is a vital compound that our body needs to function. Comprised of Sodium and Chlorine ions, they each regulate blood pressure and pH. Sodium is partly responsible for the functioning of the nervous system as well. While chlorine is responsible for the production of stomach acid. You could say these are definitely important. Without salt in our bodies we face a high risk of kidney failure and heart failure. So if there is no salt, bad things will happen. This is what Jesus is trying to get at. Without us, the followers, the sheep, who would spread the word of God? Think about it for a moment, who would?

The next thing he refers to is light. “You are the light of the world.” This one is much more self explanatory. We need light both physically and mentally. Just like salt, light will never not be needed. In earlier times, the sun and its light was used to tell the time of day. At night, sailors used the light of the stars to guide their way home. Sunlight is used in many chemical processes that we need, for example photosynthesis. Without photosynthesis, every plant on this earth would die, there would be less oxygen, a product, and more carbon dioxide, a reactant and a pollutant. Sure, we could develop a synthetic way to do photosynthesis, but would it ever be the same? Light also represents goodness and purity. We need goodness in this world. If you turn on the evening news now a days, all you see is bad things. Sometimes after I watch it, I feel awful as this is what our world has come to. But something as simple as

helping my mom fold laundry or joking around with caroline can turn that around. They are my light. Don't worry bella you are my light too. Didn't want to leave you out.

Anyway what I want you to take away from this reflection and this service is that "You are the salt of the Earth, You are the light of the world." No matter what is going on in your life, or the hardships you are facing, you will always be needed.

Salt and Light Reflection

By Mary Grace Styblo

March 31, 2019

Today's Gospel reading is a continuation of Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount*. In it, Jesus uses two metaphors to illustrate what his disciples are to do and be in this world: salt and light. Disciples are to be the *salt of the Earth* and the *light of the world*. What does it mean for Christians to be the salt and light?

Of the two metaphors light seems more familiar. As children in Sunday school, we sing "*This Little Light of Mine*". Light gives us a sense of joy and warmth. Light drives out darkness and gives us a sense of safety. Do you ever feel you are running around in circles for days on end then finally you see the *light* at the end of the tunnel? That light might be a person, a moment in your life, or scripture in the Bible. Light is where you can go when you are scared and need help. Light is a beacon of hope for those looking for safety.

The light we experience when we are lost is like the sight of a lighthouse for sailors who have been out at sea for days, lost or stranded, or simply looking for stable land to rest and feel safe. They are relieved and comforted, now safe from the dangers of the sea. The sight of that beaming light piercing the night sky is the light at the end of the tunnel giving us a sense of safety from the dangers of the roaring ocean.

Light gives us sight to know where we are going, and, the energy to take us there. In this way, when we follow the word of God, we have a path to follow, and our faith gives us confidence to go.

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world." We are called on to take Christ's light into the fearful places of our world where relief and hope are most needed. As the song says, "*This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,*" we need to let God's love shine as bright and as high as we can, so it can be the lighthouse in the midst of the storm.

Jesus' second metaphor, salt seems harder to understand. Today salt is cheap. That cardboard canister with the girl in the yellow raincoat and umbrella is only a dollar or so. How can it be valuable? Salt gets a bad rap now a days. We're told to watch our salt intake because it's bad for our health. So how can it be good for us?

In Matthew 5:13, it states, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot."

What does that mean? Well, salt is used to add flavor, saltiness. I like to add a pinch salt to my green beans. Or you might like to add a dash of salt to your steak. But what if you didn't do that? Would the flavor be less, not as strong?

Salt is used to add the little flavor to spice up life. Little things can make your life enjoyable -like a good deed that you did such as holding the door or helping someone carry their groceries. Or a little thing that happened to you such as your coffee was paid for you by the person in front of you in the line, or you read this really good book, and it made your day and left you in high spirits. By being kind and showing God's love to others, we are adding flavor to the lives of people.

When there were no refrigerators or any way to keep your food cold and fresh, you would have added salt to act as a preservative. It prevents food from spoiling. We as Christians can work to preserve this world from decay and rot.

Salt also melts ice. As the salt of the Earth, Christians can help to melt the icy resistance inside some people and open hearts and minds to the Lord.

Jesus has called upon his disciples – that's us now - to be the *Salt of the Earth* and the *Light of the world*, but how can we be? Simple things like a smile can make a difference even when we think not. Sharing our love from God is never useless. It might be the only light some people see. Here are other ways we can be the salt and light

- Be the friend you want to have. Show the meaning of true friendship
- Help others by being our best selves. Encourage others
- Smile, say & do nice things for people
- Appreciate others rather than criticize or gossip
- Use social media wisely and safely – bless others, spread happiness and do not engage in social media that makes people look or feel bad
- Decrease screen time and spend more face-to-face time with friends and family instead

In conclusion, let saltiness and the light lead you to safety and goodness to shine for others. Be the light and show the way for the sailors, the lonely, the sad, and scared. Be the leader in your peer group at school or amongst your work and social friends. Put down your phone and have real connections with your family, friends, and those around you. Take part in missions and community service.

This world is filled with worries, and places of deep pain and suffering that hurt many. Make it better. As you are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, you can add flavor to the ones who are a little bland and spread God's love and joy. Go searching for the light at the end of the tunnel. The demands of our time and resources are many but be the light and salt the world needs you to be. Jesus expects you to lead the way.

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 5:13-16

SALT & LIGHT YOUTH SERVICE 3/31/19

BY SAM TEMPLE

In reflecting on today's Gospel reading I was struck by the way Jesus chose his words. "You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world." There are plenty of places in the Bible with commands and requirements such as "You must be...." Or "Before you can be this, you must do this...." Jesus just makes it a fact, a true statement, a blessing on us, commissioning us. He makes it our way of being. We are the salt. We are the light.

Do you *know* that you are salt and light? Do you *believe* that you are salt and light? How could Jesus have meant *you*? How could Jesus have meant *me*? I have struggled with envisioning how Jesus meant me. I am far from perfect. I do not always do the right things. Sometimes I let other people down and let myself down. Sometimes I am just afraid of what others think and hide my light. Yet I realize after I have kicked myself with my doubts and my failings that it is not about me. I am the vehicle. God can and does use me. Everyday God reveals another opportunity for me to demonstrate my light and salt and reflect it back to Him. God needs me to do my part to reflect his love in the world so that all people may know Him. Light is not meant to be stored up, but to be shared. It is meant to warm and guide everyone.

We can believe the Good News in our hearts and minds, but living as salt and light is a faith lived out. Both salt and light get sprinkled and scattered around. We are called to reach out beyond ourselves, to be Jesus' disciples. The light from within me isn't meant to stay within me. Salt by itself doesn't do anything. It must be applied to have value. It is our purpose to be salty and let our light shine, to love God and extend his love to others.

Do you know you are salt and light? How will you use your saltiness and shine your light? How is God working through you today to reflect his love to a world that so desperately needs it?