

Salt and Light

Mat 5:13-16 (NIV) "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. [14] "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. [15] Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. [16] In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

What does it mean when Jesus commands His disciples to be SALT... to be LIGHT

- **DOES IT MEAN...**
 - **BE A GOOD WITNESS??**
 - TELL PEOPLE ABOUT JESUS
 - **BE A GOOD EXAMPLE**
 - "ACT RIGHT"
 - LIVE A GODLY LIFE IN FRONT OF OTHER PEOPLE
- **CLEARLY, THIS PASSAGE IS TALKING ABOUT**
 - WHAT WE SAY...
 - WHAT WE DO...
- **THE GOAL IS..**
 - "LET PEOPLE HEAR WHAT YOU SAY"
 - "LET PEOPLE SEE WHAT YOU DO..."
 - SOOOOO.. THAT GOD WILL BE GLORIFIED ON THE EARTH THROUGH YOU

TODAY, I WOULD LIKE TO DO A DEEP DIVE INTO SCRIPTURE ABOUT WHAT THIS MEANS

- I WANT TO SET ASIDE OUR PRECONCIEVED "CHURCH" IDEAS OF BEING SALT AND LIGHT
- INSTEAD
 - I WANT TO LOOK AT THE TEACHING AND EXAMPLE OF JESUS (& APOSTLES)
 - I ALSO WANT TO SPECIFICALLY LOOK AT THE CULTURAL IMPACT THAT JESUS HAD
 - TO UNDERSTAND WHAT JESUS REALLY MEANT BY BEING "SALT & LIGHT"

DURING JESUS TIME THERE WERE FOUR GROUPS

Essenes = They called themselves the "Holy Ones"

Characteristics: Poor, Isolated – Isolationists

- Sectarian – If you are with us, you are "in" if not... you don't measure up
- Supported by sect.

History: Separated from Society in 150 B.C.

- Did not agree with Religious establishment
- Set up communities around the city & the desert
- Focused on Serving God alone

Beliefs: Sectarian - Ascetic

- Celebrate,
- Worship, Prayer & Discipline
- Only Faithful Essenes are going to enter into

Focus: "Society is Evil"

Engagement: None (no impact on society)

- Repelled Culture,
- Lived in wilderness

- Apocalyptic

Sadducees = They believed that they were the “Priestly Ones”

Characteristics: Rich, Well bred, Compromised – ENTITLED

- A “Caste” – primarily borne or voted in..
- Supported by temple system (temple offerings)

History: Started in 300 B.C. (Oldest group)

- From a Priestly CLASS during the Maccabean Period
- Became a Religious elite
- Served in Temple
 - o Lived off of the Temple sacrifices
- Became liberal in order to appeal to all groups

Beliefs: Liberal

- Rituals are important
- Did not believe parts of the scripture (raising from Dead)
- Presiding /Entitled

Focus: “To go along, you gotta get along..”

Engagement: Aloof

- Little impact on Society
- Hated by the poor
- Had LIMITED IMPACT on leadership BY HISTORICAL RIGHT

Zealots= “Zealous Ones”

Characteristics: Hidden, Committed, Violent – Revolutionary

- Supported by followers

History: Started in 6 BC

- By several “messiahs”
- In Response to Roman Takeover/ Oppression
- Crusaded against Roman oppression
- Organized “RAIDS” on Roman targets
- Fomented RIOTS among the people

Beliefs: Ultra- Conservative

- Overthrow Roman Rule,

Focus: “Freedom by Violence”

Engagement: “Resist by all means”

- “Undercurrent of Discontent”
- Breakthrough violent events
- Loved by sympathizers, hated by Romans & elite
-

Pharisees = “Separated Ones”

Characteristics: Community leaders/Teachers – Community Leaders

- Supported by societal structures/ followers

History: Founded 167 BC – Out of grassroots revival

- Conservative Movement of Lay leaders
- Founded on Following the Law – revival of reading scripture
- Leaders were respected members of Society
- Knew the Scriptures
- People gave them allegiance

Beliefs: "Sola Scriptura"

- Law keepers
- Order promoters
- Hypocritical and Legalistic

Focus: "Follow God by following the law"

Engagement: Daily, regular

- Taught the Scriptures
- Patrolled society
- Accused sinners
- Exhonerated the lawful

Traveling Rabbi's

Characteristics: "Wandering Teachers" – Charismatic Teachers

- Supported by followers

History: Long Tradition

- Prophets in the Old Testament
- Live in the Wilderness
- Preach and Teach
- GATHER DISCIPLES
- Create MOVEMENTS of change in society

Beliefs: VARIOUS (some were Righteous, Some were Cultic)

- Some were "MESSIANIC" = "I am the promised Messiah!"
- Most were peaceful Change promoters
- Some were Audacious or revolutionary

Focus: "Culture Changers"

- Speak/live/teach the Truth = Transform Culture

Engagement: Engaged in regular teaching/discipling

- Teaching, discipling events
- Followers attract or repel adherents

SCRIPTURE EXEGESIS

Mat 5:13-16 (NIV) "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.

- You are Salt...
 - o What are the characteristics of Salt
 - Preserves,
 - Flavors
 - Balances
 - o If you are not Salty – then you are no good

[14] "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. [15] Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. [16] In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

- You are LIGHT
 - o Hidden Light is no good
 - o Light must be high & exposed so it illuminates the WHOLE HOUSE
- You must SHINE YOUR LIGHT
 - o So that your DEEDS can be seen

- So that People will Glorify (see the fullness of) God
- What Are the characteristics of Light
 - Illuminates
 - Warms/ Attracts
 - Sterilizes/ Causes to Grow/ Transforms

Let's talk about Salt

1. Salt PRESERVES

I believe based on context clues that Salt is mostly about Speaking

Example:

- My parents used to have several "Country Hams" that hung in our basement
 - The salt cured hams did not need to be refrigerated
 - They had a green coating on them – just cut it off
- Salt is a good preservative

Preserve

- Mat 10:26-27 (NIV) "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. [27] What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.
 - Being Salt in the world is
 - SPEAKING THE TRUTH FEARLESSLY
 - SPEAKING THE DISCERNMENTS THAT GOD GIVES US
 - In this time, we cannot be silent
 - We are placed as salt in situations so that we can PRESERVE the good in culture
 - We must speak out
- 1Pe 4:11 (NIV) If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.
 - HOW DO WE SPEAK/SERVE
 - We must speak what We hear WITH AUTHORITY
 - With the Strength that God provides
 - SOOO
 - That God will be Praised
 - So that God will be glorified on the earth

2. Salt SEASONS

Seasons

Col 4:5-6 (NIV) Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. [6] Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

- We must have SALTY CONVERSATIONS
 - Conversations that produce interest
 - Conversations that are caring
 - Conversations that INVITE
 - Not repelling, argumentative
 - Conversations that ARE INTERESTING
 - Draw people into conversation
 - INVITE PEOPLE TO COME IN to the family of God

3. Salt CREATES BALANCE

Creates Balance

Eph 4:15 (NIV) Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

- When we SPEAK THE TRUTH
 - o WE BECOME MATURE BY HEARING & FOLLOWING
 - o WE GROW UP IN GOD
 - o WE BECOME LIKE JESUS
- We must speak the truth – teach – advocate for the truth so that others/ culture around us can grow!

WHAT ABOUT LIGHT?

What are the characteristics of Light?

- I believe that Light is primarily about our ACTIONS – ABOUT what WE DO!

What are the Characteristics of Light?

Illuminates – You can see what was hidden

Warms – enlivens creates life, and comfort and draws us

Sterilizes – UV - Keeps mold from growing BOILING - sterilizes

Illuminates

Php 2:14-16 (NIV) Do everything without grumbling or arguing, [15] so that you may become blameless and pure, "children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation." **Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky** [16] as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain.

- WE must engage in CULTURE
 - o We are LIGHT = WE CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE
 - Some people are tired
 - "I AM SO SICK OF POLITICS"
 - Disengagement is against the call of God
 - WE MUST USE OUR INFLUENCE TO ELECT LEADERS WHO HAVE OUR SAME VALUES
 - o Not voting is HIDING YOUR LIGHT
- OUR ACTIONS REVEAL WHAT'S IN OUR NATURE
 - o If our nature is full of character of God
 - THEN our actions will reveal God
- WE MUST BE FULL OF GOD
 - o THEN WE WILL REVEAL THE CHARACTER OF GOD
 - o We must allow God to transform us
 - So that that people will SEE the truth = Understand what is wrong

Warms / Attracts

1Pe 2:11-12 (NIV) Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. [12] Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

- We must not hide our lifestyle with God
- We must ATTRACT PEOPLE by our AUTHENTIC and TRANSFORMATIVE relationship with Jesus
 - o Even if we have flaws – people need to see them

- 1Ti 1:16 (NIV) But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.
- We cannot be HIDDEN about this!
 - We must LIVE IN PUBLIC
 - We must not live as Prayer Monks – Essenes
 - Have no impact on Society
- OUR TESTIMONY
 - We overcome the enemy by our Testimony

Sterilizes/ Transforms/ Causes to Grow

1Ti 4:16 (TPT) Give careful attention to your spiritual life and every cherished truth you teach, for living what you preach will then release even more abundant life inside you and to all those who listen to you.

- WOW!
 - IF WE REVEAL GOD BY OUR ACTIONS...
 - WE CREATE LIFE IN OURSELVES
 - We “STERILIZE” THE CULTURE AROUND US
 - Those who hear us will be changed

What is the Lord saying about BEING SALT AND LIGHT

- Perhaps the Lord is calling you to step out
 - Share VERONIQUE HEALING STORY
- JUST SAY WHAT HE TELLS YOU?
 - STOP BEING QUIET
- Perhaps God is leading you to LIVE MORE PUBLICALLY
 - Getting Engaged in local civic groups
 - Getting Engaged by voting
 - By PUTTING THE SALT on what needs it
 - SHINING A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS??