

Salt and Light Part I: Salt of the Earth |

Family Worship Guide

Matthew 5:13



MAIN IDEA: We need the preserving, enduring work of Christ just as the world needs to experience that saving grace through our testimony.

PREPARATION:

Look up the definition for “preserve.” Next, think about the things in your home. List all the things you can think of whose job it is to *preserve* something. Can you think of 5 things? 10? Lastly, consider what would happen – what would be the cost – if these things didn’t do their job?

EXPLANATION:

In the previous passage, we looked at characteristics of a Christ follower. Here, Jesus gives His disciples a metaphor for another mark or characteristic when he says, “You are the salt of the earth.” Before refrigerators were invented, salt was used to preserve meat – to prevent it from rotting. In other words, salt *saved* the food because it made it last longer than it would if you just left it out by itself.

But what (or who) preserves God’s children? Who keeps us from spoiling and suffering eternal death and decay in hell? Jesus, of course. So then, how is it that Jesus can say that *we* are the salt of the earth. Why doesn’t He just say that *He* is the salt of the earth?

When Jesus saves us, He gives to us a new heart – one that loves Him and is saved from the wrath of God against our sin. That saving grace, the message of our hope in Christ – the gospel – lives in us. So, what are we to do with that saving message? Spread it! Like salt coating meat so that it will not decay, we are to spread out the message of the gospel. In this way, the preserving power of the gospel goes out into the world.

“...but if salt has lost its taste...” Here is something very interesting. Pure salt doesn’t lose its taste. However, at this point in history when salt was gathered, it could’ve been mixed with many impurities. These impurities would degrade the salt, or the salt would dissolve in water leaving behind white granules that looked like salt but had no flavor. It’s like when you get a Sprite from a soda machine and then take a sip and realize it’s just carbonated water with no flavor at all – yuk!

But what does it mean for someone to “lose their saltiness”? There can be those – maybe even someone reading this – who look like and can even sound like a Christ follower, but really aren’t. This would be someone who appeared to be living “the blessed life” described in the beatitudes, but over time their character revealed that they were not. Or it might describe a Christian who has lost their passion to tell other about the goodness of God. Either ways, what is called for is repentance.

This world so desperately needs to taste and see that the Lord is good. Let us press on to reflect His goodness.

CONVERSATION:

1. Can you remember a time when the flavor of something was not what it was supposed to be or what you expected? Describe that experience.
2. What are some ways Christ followers can help the world by being in it?

APPLICATION:

1. If any person came to mind who seems to have lost his or her saltiness, pray for them that God would show to them their need of Jesus.
2. Ask God to show you opportunities to spread His good news to people who need it.

SUPPLICATION:

God, thank you that you have saved us. Thank you for not only saving us but thank you for using us to carry out your will and your work on the earth. Help us to be salt in the world. Give us eyes to see the opportunities you give to us to tell others about Jesus and what He has done in our lives. Help us to reflect your character and your heart in the way we talk, in how we feel and what we think, and in our actions. Teach our hearts to grieve when we get it wrong. Forgive us for how we have failed to reflect Your character. We are completely dependent on You. Thank you for the gift of Jesus. Amen.

EXULTATION:

Close your time together by listening or singing (let the little ones dance!) to Forever Reign
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3f3sNiYpuF4>

You are good, You are good
When there's nothing good in me
You are love, You are love
On display for all to see
You are light, You are light
When the darkness closes in
You are hope, You are hope
You have covered all my sin

You are peace, You are peace
When my fear is crippling
You are true, You are true
Even in my wandering
You are joy, You are joy
You're the reason that I sing
You are life, You are life
In You death has lost its sting

I'm running to Your arms
I'm running to Your arms
The riches of Your love
Will always be enough
Nothing compares to Your embrace
Light of the world forever reign

You are more, You are more
Than my words will ever say
You are Lord, You are Lord
All creation will proclaim
You are here, You are here
In Your presence I'm made whole
You are God, You are God
Of all else I'm letting go

I'm running to Your arms
I'm running to Your arms
The riches of Your love
Will always be enough
Nothing compares to Your embrace
Light of the world forever reign

My heart will sing no other Name
Jesus, Jesus

Salt and Light Part 2 | Family Worship Guide

Matthew 5: 13-16



MAIN IDEA: The Holy Spirit guides us each day to renew our hearts, affections, and attitudes; so that, we may be light to the world around us.

PREPARATION:

Grab a flashlight and turn it on. Then, gather in a place where there are few windows or outdoor light. With the flashlight turned on in hand, turn off the lights. Sing “This Little Light of Mine” of course.

Ask these questions:

What happened when the lights went off?

Did anyone notice the light before?

Did you disregard/dismiss its presence in the room?

How do you think Jesus is like this light?

EXPLANATION:

The “light” that is spoken of here in Matthew conveys a message of hope for the world. When Jesus claims, “You are the light of the world,” He intends for the disciples to remember just as He has been light for them, they have been tasked with providing light for others. They can only be the light because Jesus, the light, has called them out of darkness and into His kingdom, the essence of knowing where the darkness ends, and the light begins.

Jesus then extends this idea of His followers being light to a “lamp” on a “stand,” suggesting the idea that we, as light, can shine brightly with the good news of the gospel. Believers are called to engage the world around them outside and inside their homes. Regardless of location, when we walk in obedience, our gospel-centered response will “give light to the whole house” and “give glory to [our] Father who is in heaven.”

Those in darkness in our midst can see a beacon of light within us because we are obedient to the Lord’s work through us. All in all, this is often a cause for a countercultural response. There are many conversations that can be spurred on between believers and non-believers in “light” of this truth. Each day, we have an opportunity to respond to life in light of the gospel. We can calibrate the ways that we think, the words that we speak, and the things that we do by turning to the Lord. These responses of “light” bring glory to God and renew a hope in the promise from the Lord’s Prayer: “Your kingdom come. Your will be done.”

CONVERSATION:

Why do you think Jesus compares his disciples the “light”?

Why do you think in times of difficulty that people are more likely to seek and search for the light? Think upon the last sunrise you’ve experienced. Or, think about when you’ve read about or viewed a video of a sunrise. (Side note: If you haven’t been roused early enough to see a sunrise, you should make it a priority.) Consider the attributes of God as you remember this experience. What is the significance of why you can see the light of the sunrise before you actually see the sun?

APPLICATION:

Generate some ideas about how and where someone can be a light to the world.

What are some areas of darkness that you recognize in your thoughts, speech, and actions?

SUPPLICATION:

Lord, thank you for calling me into the light and into your kingdom. Remind me of your ways, your thoughts, and your actions, for your light shines bright in the darkness.

Father, reveal to me the places of darkness near me or far from me that need your light.

EXULTATION:

Link to a song to sing together, a poem to recite together, or some other method to worship Christ as a family.

He’s the Light of the World

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eI302Av7vSI>

Here I am to Worship Lyrics

Light of the world

You stepped down into darkness

Opened my eyes, let me see

Beauty that made this heart adore You

Hope of a life spent with You

Here I am to worship

Here I am to bow down

Here I am to say that You're my God