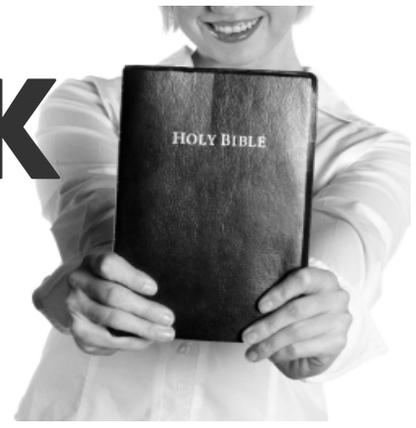




Mid-Week

Bible Study and Prayer
Wednesdays 6:45pm – 8pm



Good Hope Baptist Church (Sermon on the Mount studies)

Pastor Josh Franklin

Pour on the Salt & Turn on the Light

A Christian's Influence in the World

Matthew 5:13-16 (NKJV)

- ¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.
- ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.
- ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house.
- ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.



POUR ON THE SALT!

In ancient times salt was used as a currency.

Caesar's soldiers received payment in salt. We actually get our word salary from "salt", literally meaning "salt money". We hear the expression, "That man is NOT worth his salt." In ancient China, salt was second to gold in value. The Greeks thought salt was divine. They offered it to the gods as a sacrifice.

Salt is a miracle. It is chemically composed of sodium and chloride. Pour a little hydrochloric acid on your hand and it will be burned away in half a minute. Drink hydrochloric acid and you will die in agony in a few minutes. Add sodium to hydrochloride and you will have salt, one of the most common, most useful substances on earth, a substance essential to life itself. Similarly, when God pours His grace into the hydrochloride of our lives, the result is a miracle: a regenerated person placed in the world for the blessing of all mankind. *[John Phillips]*

USES FOR SALT:

1. Salt is used for healing
2. Salt is a cleansing agent
3. Salt helps to eliminate dye stains
4. Salt helps get rid of tea stains on fine china
5. Salt melts ice
6. Salt keeps your feet from slipping on ice
7. Salt is used as a gargle for a sore throat
8. Salt is good for bathing tired feet
9. Salt is good for bee stings
10. Salt stops bleeding
11. Salt kills unpleasant odors from garbage cans
12. Salt keeps clothes sparkling white when washed
13. Salt helps lessen sour taste, like in grapefruit
14. Salt keeps disease away on a dunghill or cesspit
15. Salt is a seasoning, making food taste better
16. Salt is a preservative, keeping things from spoiling
17. Salt is an antiseptic, killing germs.

[from R.T. Kendall, The Sermon on the Mount, 74]

1) **Salt Seasons** - **Colossians 4:6** - *Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*

*To me t'was not the truth you taught, to you so clear, to me so dim;
But when you came to me you brought a sense of Him.
Yes, from your eyes He beckoned me and from your heart His love was shared
And I lost sight of you and saw the Christ instead. [Anonymous]*

Oliver Wendell Holmes put it this way: "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not acted and looked so much like undertakers." Some Christians behave as if they were baptized in lemon juice!

2) **Salt Preserves** - Salt in that day prevented decay; it restrained corruption.

- Why does our nation not simply destroy itself? It is the presence of godly people in our nation. John Wesley's conversion led to a Great Awakening in the eighteenth century.

Secular historians now concede that the Wesleyan revival in England is the single thing that kept the nation from the equivalent of the French Revolution and all its upheaval. Godly people, even if they are a minority – serve as a preservative in a nation. [Kendall, 76]

- Remember when Abraham asked God to save the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah? "If there are 50 righteous people, will you destroy them?" and God responded, "No, I will not destroy them if there are 50 righteous." Those righteous people could have kept God's hand of judgment from destroying the cities.

The world would have been rotten long ago but for the presence of the Holy Spirit in Christians. - Vance Havner

3) **Salt Heals** - In Bible times, when little babies were born, they would give that baby a saline bath. They would salt the baby with salt, that is, to hold down infection.

4) **Salt Burns and Irritates** - Have you ever gotten a little ulcer in your mouth and then eaten something salty? Have you ever gotten a cut on your hand, and then got salt in it?

5) **Salt Penetrates** - You can take just a pinch of salt, and put it into a gallon of water, and it will permeate that entire gallon of water.

6) **Salt Causes Thirst** - John Wesley saw in the Moravians a peace and calmness as they were crossing through the storms in the Atlantic – a peace he knew he himself didn't have. It made Wesley thirsty for what they had. Consequently, he went to their Bible studies and was gloriously changed. An Arab sheik kept watching Arthur Blessitt – taking note of the shining smile on his face – as Arthur sipped his Coca-Cola in a Holiday Inn in Amman, Jordan. The sheik said to Arthur, "I want what you've got." The result was that the Arab was converted, and Arthur was given an open door to many Muslims in that area within a few hours. [Kendall, 76]

Just being a church member or professing to be a Christian does not make you the salt of the earth. It is when you are broken, pure in heart, hungering for righteousness, full of mercy and persecuted for righteousness' sake that you qualify to be the salt of the earth. [R.T. Kendall]

CAN SALT LOSE ITS SALTINESS?

Pure salt cannot lose its flavor or effectiveness, but the salt that is common in the Dead Sea area is contaminated with gypsum and other minerals and may have a flat taste or be ineffective as a preservative. Such mineral salts were useful for little more than keeping footpaths free of vegetation. [John MacArthur]

A little boy asked his mother, "Mother, would you give me a dollar if I'll be a good boy?" She said, "Son, why don't you be good for nothing like your father."

TURN ON THE LIGHT!

If Jesus Christ were to stand here, He could very well say the same thing to us. He could look you right in the face and say, "You are the light of the world." God's plan is to take ordinary people, just like you, just like me, and through us, to do extraordinary things.

1) Don't Hide Your Light – Don't hide it under a Bushel

You are the light of the world - Greek scholars tell us "you" is emphatic. **"You [emphatic: you alone] are the light of the world [and no one else!]."**

A little boy asked his daddy, I'm told, "Daddy, how tall am I?" And the dad said, "Well son, I don't know, about 4 and a half feet." He said, "Daddy, how tall is Jesus?" Well he said, "Son, I don't know, maybe He's six feet tall." He said, "I'm four and a half, and he's six feet tall," he said, "Well then, if Jesus is in me, He'll stick out, won't He?" He really will. If Jesus is in you, He will stick out.

2) Reflective Light - Ephesians 5:8 - For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. Jesus Christ is the light of the world. And His light shines in us and then His light shines through us.

Dr. Barnhouse, the master of illustration, used to explain it this way. He said that when Christ was in the world, he was like the shining sun that is here in the day and gone at night. When the sun sets, the moon comes up. The moon, the church, shines, but not with its own light. It shines with *reflected* light. When Jesus was in the world he said, "I am the light of the world." But as he contemplated leaving this world, he said, "You are the light of the world." At times the church has been at full moon, dazzling the world with an almost daytime light. These have been times of great enlightenment, times such as those of Paul and Luther and Wesley. And at other times the church has been only a thumbnail moon, with very little light shining upon the earth. Whether the church is a full moon or a new thumbnail moon, waxing or waning, it reflects the light of the sun.

3) Collective Light – A City on a Hill

We shine brightest when we shine together.

It is said that John Fletcher, an early Methodist and contemporary of John Wesley, had a reputation of being a very godly person. One Sunday morning, a man walked down the road on his way to church. A friend shouted at him, "Where are you going?" The reply came, "I am going to see and hear John Fletcher preach today." A few hours later, on the return to his home, the same man asked: "Well, did you see John Fletcher today?" There was a long pause. The man, emotionally overwhelmed, was only able to say, "No. I saw Jesus Christ and Him crucified." ... By the way, Wesley's generation was also the generation of the French atheist Voltaire, an ardent opponent of Christianity. Voltaire was asked, "Did you ever meet anybody who you thought might be truly a Christian?" Voltaire replied, "I once met a man by the name of John Fletcher." [Kendall, 79]

ILLUSTRATION: Christian Lives His Testimony

Earl Palmer, in a fine little book entitled *The Enormous Exception*, tells the story of a pre-med student at the University of California, Berkeley "who became a Christian after a long journey through doubts and questions." When Palmer asked the young man why he had chosen Jesus Christ, he answered that what had "tipped the scales" in his spiritual journey were the actions of a classmate who happened to be a Christian.

During the previous term the premed student had been very ill with the flu and, as a result had missed ten days of school. "Without any fanfare or complaints," his Christian classmate carefully collected all his class assignments and took time away from his own studies to help him catch up.

The premed student told Palmer, "You know, this kind of thing just isn't done. I wanted to know what made this guy act the way he did. I even found myself asking if I could go to church with him."

Palmer says, "I think the best tribute I ever heard concerning a Christian was the tribute spoken of this student. *'I felt more alive when I was around this friend.'*"