

BEING THE SALT OF THE EARTH

Introduction

- 1) **Matthew 5:13** – God’s people are the “salt of the earth”
- 2) Salt is a mineral that has always been of high value (approx. 14,000 uses)
 - a) Essential to health – body cells must have proper salt level in order to live and work
 - b) Preserves and flavors – prevents decay, enhances taste
 - c) Cleanses and purifies – antiseptic, cleansing agent
- 3) Used for money – *salarium* [Latin] = salt money; “salary” [Eng] – an allowance of salt was paid to Roman soldiers as wages; source of expression: “not worth his salt”
- 4) Religious significance in OT – used in grain offerings (Lev. 2:13)
 - a) Symbol of enduring covenants – “covenant of salt” (Num. 18:19; 2 Chron. 13:5)

I) **Seasoning Agent**

- A) Context of Jesus’ statement: “...but if the salt loses its flavor...”
 - 1) Salt has the ability to give flavor to what is otherwise bland (cf. Job 6:6)
- B) Christian’s good seasoning affects the “blandness” of this world
 - 1) Infiltrate the world with goodness, righteousness, and godliness
 - 2) A life of righteousness adds zest and savor to our part of the world
 - 3) It will be a distinctive life that will be noticed by others (Mk. 9:49-50)

II) **Abundant Influence**

- A) Salt has a penetrating and diffusing effect – unmistakable flavoring
 - 1) Handful of salt will disperse its taste throughout a pot of food
 - 2) Christians are required to be “salty” with their gracious influence (Col. 4:5-6)
 - a) Our sphere of influence includes our home, church, and community
- B) The righteous influence of the godly can cause God to forbear a wicked world
 - 1) Sodom (Gen. 18:20-32)
 - 2) Jerusalem (Jer. 5:1)
- C) Power of a godly influence is enormous – Abraham, Moses, Paul, Lois/Eunice, etc.

III) **Lost Flavor**

- A) Jesus warned that salt can lose its flavor
 - 1) Become mixed with impurities or diluted
 - 2) The salt mined from the salt cliffs along the Dead Sea, or evaporated from the waters of the Dead Sea, was always mixed with mineral or vegetable matter. When this substance was exposed to the elements or when it touched the earth, the salt lost its salty taste.
- B) Christians can lose their ability to “flavor” if they become mixed and diluted with worldliness
 - 1) We are to keep separate from the influence of the world (2 Cor. 6:14-18; 7:1)

IV) **Thrown Out**

- A) Useless seasonings are thrown out – “good for nothing,” worthless (cf. Lk. 14:34-35)
 - 1) Impurities render us useless – why bother seasoning with a flavorless spice?
- B) A Christian can become useless to the Lord (cp. branch bearing no fruit, Jn. 15:2, 6)
 - 1) No greater dishonor than to be cast away by God to be trodden underfoot by men

Conclusion

The Lord desires “salty” Christians to spread a *good flavoring influence* of truth and morality in this bland, sinful world. With the gospel, lives can be saved and renewed to the Lord’s service. Obey the gospel and be God’s salt of the earth today!