

Matthew 5:13

Introduction

- A. In Matthew 5:13-16 Jesus shows us that kingdom *righteousness* (5:3-12) should always result in a kingdom _____.
- B. Matthew 5:14-15 shows us the _____ side of our witness (light). This is always the ultimate and greatest goal.
- C. Matthew 5:13 shows us the “_____” side of our witness (salt).

I. “You are the salt of the earth”

- A. The uses of salt in Jesus’ time
 - 1. Salt as a seasoning.
 - 2. The primary use of salt in Jesus’ time was as a _____.
 - a. Raw meat is really just the carcass of a _____ animal.
 - b. The carcass of a dead animal _____.
 - c. By _____ salt into meat the process of decay could be postponed.
- B. What Jesus is telling us about the earth.
 - ✓ The world is spiritually _____. It is in a constant state of moral and spiritual _____.
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:12-13 – All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.
 - b. Romans 1:18-32
 - c. Genesis 6:5, 11-12 – The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually... Now *the earth was corrupt* in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw *the earth*, and behold, it was **corrupt**, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth.
- C. What Jesus is telling us about – *us!*
 - 1. We are a preservative that works to _____ the process of moral decay and corruption in the world. (Salt can’t _____ the process of decay.)
 - 2. As the salt of the earth, the world can’t continue to _____ without us.
 - a. Sirach 39:26 – “The world cannot endure without salt.”
 - b. We are *indispensable* to the _____ of the world that we live in!

II. "But if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet."

A. The composition of salt in Jesus' time

1. In Jesus' time, "salt" was always _____ with other impurities.
2. The more the impurities, the less the taste.

B. What makes us salty?

1. As kingdom citizens our power to preserve only lasts as long as we remain _____ righteous.
2. When we don't look *different* from the world, then as salt we have lost our _____.
3. If once we lose our distinctive saltiness, then we are _____ to the world.
4. 2 Corinthians 6:17; 7:1 – Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing... let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.
5. Our distinctiveness is always rooted in the following:
 - a. We are poor in spirit
 - b. We are faithful to mourn
 - c. We are meek
 - d. We are hungry and thirsty for righteousness
 - e. We are merciful
 - f. We are pure in heart
 - g. We are peacemakers

III. "You are the salt of the earth" (take 2)

A. Making the world a _____ (than it otherwise would be).

1. Wherever the principles of the Gospel have any bearing on economic issues, political issues, social issues, or religious issues, it is there that as Christians we have a responsibility to be _____.
2. Even apart from _____ (see 5:14-16), our witness still has a powerful impact upon society and upon the world to greatly slow down the inevitable process of moral decay.
3. We are responsible to seek the *welfare* of the world by being a _____ force upon the world's natural tendencies.

- B. Jesus assumes that as the salt we are to be in _____ with the world.
1. John 17:15, 18 – I do not ask that you take them out of the world... As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them *into* the world.”
 2. The salt isn't just sprinkled onto the meat, it is _____ *into* the meat.
 3. Our preserving and restraining influence upon the world _____ in direct proportion to our contact *with* the world.
 4. Am I the world's _____?

Conclusion

- A. The more corrupt and decayed the world becomes, the more it stands in need of _____ as the salt of the earth.
1. The world hates us for all our efforts to be the salt of the earth, and yet our salting of the earth is essential for the world's own _____!
 2. Even though the world hates us, we are still called to _____ ourselves for the world.
- B. See what kind of love the Father has given to us (cf. 1 John 3:1)...
- ✓ In and of ourselves, we are just as prone to _____ as the rest of the world, and yet by the marvelous mercy and grace of God, Jesus actually calls *us* the _____ of the earth!

Teaching our Children

Q. In Matthew 5:13, what does Jesus say that we are?

A. We are the salt of the earth.

Q. What was the most important way that people used salt in Jesus' time?

A. See I. A. 2.

Q. If the earth needs salt, what does this tell us about the earth (world)?

A. The world is dead (spiritually) and so it will constantly be decaying (becoming more and more wicked and evil).

Q. What does Jesus mean when He says that *we* are the *salt* of the earth?

A. God uses us to help slow down the world's decay. God wants to use us to help keep the world from acting so wicked.

Q. What happens when salt loses its taste (its saltiness)?

A. It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

Q. In Jesus' time, how did salt lose its taste?

A. Salt would lose its taste when it became mixed with other things.

Q. How do we lose our saltiness?

A. We lose our saltiness when we aren't living righteous lives as citizens of Jesus' kingdom.
(Review the beatitudes to see what true kingdom righteousness looks like.)

We lose our saltiness when we stop being different from the world.

(Discuss ways that we can become like the world – greedy versus generous; more interested in the stuff of this world than in the things of heaven, contrast each of the beatitudes, etc.)

Q. What happens when we lose our saltiness?

A. We are no longer of any use to the world around us.

Q. As the salt of the earth, will the world always like us?

A. No! We will sometimes be hated and mistreated by the world even though we are helping the world! Think about Jesus who was hated and mistreated by some of the very people He came to save.

Q. Read John 17:15, 18 (III. B. 1.) How are we being the salt of the earth? (Neighborhood, school, work, sports teams, etc.)

Q. Spend time with your children marveling at God's amazing grace – that *we* (who are so prone to decay apart from the indwelling Holy Spirit) should actually be called the *salt* of the earth!