

Intro: Some of you know that soup is my comfort food. Any kind of Soup. ALL kinds of soup. Love to eat it...and Make it! And, I don't have a recipe. I just kinda make it up. Whatever is available I use. Usually works out well...But... A couple months ago...made a pot...and forgot I had put salt in it already...tasted it...awful! So salty couldn't eat! Tried a couple of "remedies" helped it a little...but...never quite got it where it needed to be!

Not enough of something...or...Too much of a good thing...can cause problems sometimes! That is what Jesus is saying
Matthew 5:13-16 Pg 683

This Little Light Of Mine!

John 10:10 "I have come that you might have life, and have it overflowing in you..."

Learning From Jesus: Learning to Let the light of Jesus overflow from your life to the life of others all around you!

1. Understand The Purposes You Are Called To As A Follower OF Jesus. Vs 13-14

Remember that this is EARLY in Jesus ministry, and that He is laying out the ground rules of being His follower.

In this passage Jesus uses two examples for what His followers are supposed to BE in their world.

Jesus is basically saying, "Make sure you understand what you are getting into. THIS IS YOUR PURPOSE IN THE WORLD If you choose to be my follower...to claim my name, to be one who walks in my footsteps, then You ARE two things:

1. Salt: Now there are a LOT of different potential understandings and explanations of what salt was used for then.

- Best Understanding: Preservative: Prevent Corruption, Make it useful in Future!
- Slows the process of Decay and Corruption
- Acts as a Preservative for future use!

Jesus is saying to us, understand...the Holy Spirit living in you, AND the transformation He makes OF you...SALT

2 Thes 2:6,7 "The one who holds back" HOLY SPIRIT

ILLUS: See it at work...Go to a party... "What do you do?" Pastor...

~That is a little of the "restraining" influence

~Also, the Holy Spirit I believe, based on this passage, has an unseen spiritual influence in our world!

2. Light: Like Salt, there are a lot of potential understandings. The primary purpose of light: REVEAL/MANIFEST
Eph 5:13 "But everything exposed by the light becomes visible..." Lit = Visible: Render apparent, to show forth

- God is revealed through us Path Forward revealed through us
- Truth is revealed through us Right and Wrong: revealed through us

When God's Holy Spirit is at work transforming us, working through us, shining from within

God's goodness, life, hope...everything is shining: Then others can see what it means to be His disciple!!!

Also...The Holy Spirit within shows the darkness for what it is! Pulls the curtain back...reveals sin

Quote: Just as NATURAL light from the sun illuminates the natural world, so SPIRITUAL light from the Holy Spirit within illuminates the world to Spiritual truths!

2. Understand The Characteristics Of Salt and Light. Vs 13-14

There are a couple of very important fundamental understandings you have to wrap your mind around as you think S and L

- **Distinctive:** Presence or absence is NOTICABLE!
Not there: You Know it! (30 day famine NO SALT, Room without light
Too much: You know that too! (Rock from Dead Sea. (Touch it to your tongue!)
Spot light after being in the dark! Blinds you
- **Balance:** There is a "sweet spot" In both of them where you want to be. Depends on the situation
Sometimes...you need a lot of light...Operating room: Sometimes dim light...watch movie!
- **Essential:** Humans have to have both. No salt, bodies shut down, No light, photosynthesis stops...plants gone
- **Purpose:** Point people to God! Ultimate goal...Glorify God and draw people to Him Vs 16

Everything that is important here for physical salt and light carries over for what we are to do for spiritual salt and light!

That's why Jesus is so direct and clear as He warns us about losing our effectiveness.

He picks up that theme...and he applies it to both items. Notice what He says about the Dangers we face.

3. The Dangers We Face. Vs 13-15

Jesus, because He understands how we are put together, takes the opportunity to tell us, "As you follow me, Some struggles"

There are some dangers you will face to being the kind of person I want you to be, and accomplishing what I call you to do.

- **Lose your distinctiveness:** Lose your "saltiness" ie, lose your distinctive flavor! No longer able to do what I call
Illus: This is a VERY real danger in our world today. Christians want to "blend in" instead of stand out!
In fact, we often do that INTENTIONALLY! Don't want to be seen as different at all...when we should be!
1Pe 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:
Illus: Talking with a Pastor friend...said, Do you know so and so? Yes...Support him (Drink bourbon/Smoke cigars!)
Blend in...and Hide their light...Never seen as different at all!

- Get out of balance Too much Salt ruins a meal Too much light (Spotlight) Painful!!!
 Too little...tasteless Too little...can't see where you are going
 Don't just blend in...Don't Hide your light!
 We are called overflow...Where our life is transformed...and it shows!

Illus: Ever know Christians that didn't understand balance? So aggressive...So intense...like a spotlight
 Instead of drawing people to Jesus, like a moth to a flame...they chased them away!

Illus: Couple of years ago... "Evangelistic method" Ever tell a lie? Ever take anything shouldn't, Ever look
 That makes you a liar, a thief and an adulterer! What do you think God should do with you?

~ I am not advocating for NO light...Just suggesting...Might use the rheostat a little!

~ I am not advocating for NO salt...Just saying...don't dump the whole box in the soup!

- Not Contribute what ONLY we have to offer.

If we don't shine as children of God...No one will!

If we don't set ourselves apart...and not be what we are created to be...lose our influence

Illus: Welch Revival pit ponies! Confused...language of the miners was changed!

There are some things that ONLY you can contribute. We have to be wise in the way we interact!

1Pe 3:15 *But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

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

4. Be Prepared For The Different Reactions You Get From People.

- Outer: Look at what come just before: Sometimes you will be rejected and persecuted. Deal with it. Happens!
 We are SO concerned about being rejected...that we often hide our light...and don't shine
 Other times...people we be open...READY to talk about spiritual matters.
 Illus: One very significant thing that you can do to encourage someone to attend church...doesn't normally
 In fact, so powerful, little more than 50% of population says, This is what it would take to get me to come
 A friend that I know: ASKS ME!!! 50%
- Inner: Transformed life! The next couple of chapters detail for us what it means for us to be salt and light
 The kind of life we are to live...not just surface...but one where we are transformed from inside out
 Notice how Jesus says...you need to be VERY DIFFERENT than the religious leaders of the day!
- Upper: The ultimate outcome...We bring glory to God. When we live a life of overflow...
 When the Holy Spirit living within shines out...causes us to be transformed...it shows!

Php 2:12 *Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed-- not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence-- continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life-- in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.*

CONCL: Let me tell you what light looks like...

Years ago I used to have a rule...No poetry or songs I haven't screened prior to service at funeral. Never know: In appropriate
 One day...I learned my lesson! Small family burial. Not having a service, just at Cemetery. 10 people Last minute Start time
 Car came zooming up, young lady jumped out, Here for my Uncle's funeral. Pastor, I have a special poem...What to do?
 Her uncle had been sick...lost both legs...very ill...no idea if he was a believer...Best I could do was share gospel..not know

Let her go before...it was heart wrenching...Favorite uncle...used to dance with her little girl...so hearbroken...Read Poem
 It was EVERYTHING I was afraid of... Fairies frolicking Moonbeams, Unicorns, Elves dancing...So far from Gospel...
 I had NO IDEA what to do...how to recover...SO I just stood up...read my passage...Beloved we do not grieve like rest of
 men who have no hope we believe Jesus died and rose again...so ... It was like...LIGHT IN DARKNESS... Gospel So Clear!

Now...I ask: Anyone got a poem you want to read!?

CHALLENGE:

- *Ask yourself: How can I bring light to those in my life. Not a spotlight...just a little clear gospel light shows God*
- *How can I add some spiritual flavor...Not dump who box...but not be silent either*
- *How can my life shine the Gospel into this situation? (Be ready...if you shine...need to speak!)*
- *How can I look just a little more like Jesus here?*