

Spiritual Talk

Discussion and Understand the Context are taken and adapted from EXPLORE THE BIBLE: MATTHEW –THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT Lifeway Press 2015

Matthew 5:13—16

¹³“You are the salt of the earth, 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.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 7:15—20

¹⁵“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

Understand the Context

Jesus stated that those who exhibit qualities expressed in the Beatitudes will function as salt and light in this world. Those who are genuine Christians are going to impact the world.

Salt was very valuable in Jesus' day. The Romans believed that, except for the sun, nothing was worth more than salt. It is believed that they paid their soldiers in salt, a practice from which came the saying, “Not worth his salt.” Salt is a flavoring agent. Salt is also a preservative, absorbing water from foods, making them too dry to support harmful mold or bacteria. Much of the salt used in Jesus' day came from the Dead Sea. The impure salt taken from the area was susceptible to deterioration that left only useless crystals. Salt couldn't be restored and thus had lost its saltiness. Jesus said it was good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot by men. Weak compromising Christians lose their spiritual flavor to attract unbelievers away from the tasteless, sinful society in which they live.

Discussion

- How can you apply Jesus' teaching on salt to the life of a follower of Jesus? How would you describe the spiritual “flavor” of your life?
- What 's the responsibility of believers when they observe others producing fruit contrary to what the Bible expects of Christians?
- What can you do to remind yourself of the responsibility to live as salt and light?

