

25/07/10 (pm)

You and You Alone!

Matthew 5:13-16

*Theme: Christians alone are the salt
of the earth and the light of the
world.*

Jesus uses two striking metaphors to describe His disciples.

They show that Christians are essentially different from non-Christians.

Christians are in the world and must function in a certain way.

You and You Alone!

The grammar in Matthew 5:13-16 shows that Jesus is telling His disciples that *they and they alone* are the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Salt of the Earth (5:13)

Salt in the ancient world had two main functions:

a condiment,
a preservative.

The only way meat could be preserved was by rubbing salt into it.

Salt slowed decay.

Why did Jesus describe Christians as
the salt of the earth?

Earth is in a state of decomposition
and decay due to sin and rebellion
against God.

*Christians, by their behaviour, are to
retard the decaying process in a sinful
society.*

How does this work in practice?

Christians must speak and act **against** what is sinful.

Christians must speak and act **for** what is good, right and just.

When Christians behave as salt we retard the decay that is inevitable in a sinful, God-rejecting society.

Christians can lose their saltiness.

This happens when Christ-likeness is
lost.

*Christians must guard against losing
their saltiness!*

Light of the World (5:14-16)

Jesus is the Light of the world, *cf.* John
8:12,

but He describes Christians as the light
of the world.

The world is a dark place spiritually.
It is characterised by filth, error and
ignorance.

When Jesus speaks of light here He is speaking of purity, truth, knowledge, divine revelation.

What does it mean for a Christian to be light?

It is connected with a Christian's *good deeds*, *cf.* 5:16a.

Good deeds means every evidence of a Christian's faith.

It includes both words and deeds, evangelism and social interaction.

Christians must not hide their light—
5:14b-15.

Through new birth the Holy Spirit
lights Christians to shine.

*We are told to let our light shine, and if it
does we won't need to tell anybody it does.*

*Lighthouses don't fire canons to call
attention to their shining. They just shine.*

(D L Moody)

A glorious result of letting your light shine

When others see the mind of God in
His children, they will praise our Father
in Heaven.

Conclusion—Reflecting Christ

Brother, sister in Christ do you see how significant you are?

You are to reflect Jesus to a dark and decaying world.

You and you alone are the salt of the earth and the light of world.

Do not lose your saltiness.

Do not hide your light.

Go and be salt.

Go and be light.

*Then watch others begin to praise your
Father in Heaven.*