

feb 18

salt and light

"you are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? it is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men." matt 5:13

salt had two purposes in the middle east of the first century. because of the lack of refrigeration, salt was used to preserve food, especially meat, which would quickly spoil in the desert environment. believers in Christ are preservatives to the world, preserving it from the evil inherent in the society of ungodly men whose unredeemed natures are corrupted by sin. "they have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one. psa 14:3 the loss of saltiness occurs in the failure of the christian to daily take up the cross and follow Christ wholeheartedly.

in the analogy of light to the world, the good works of Christ's followers are to shine for all to see. "you are the light of the world. a city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." matt 5:14-16

the idea here is similar – the presence of light in darkness is something that is unmistakable. the presence of christians in the world must be like a

light in the darkness, not only in the sense that the truth of God's word brings light to the darkened hearts of sinful man, but also in the sense that our good deeds must be evident for all to see.

what sorts of things can hinder or prevent the Christian from fulfilling his or her role as salt and light in the world? the difference between the christian and the world must be preserved; therefore, any choice on our part that blurs the distinction between us and the rest of the world is a step in the wrong direction. this can happen either through a choice to accept the ways of the world for the sake of comfort or convenience or to contravene the law of obedience to Christ.

the role of the christian as salt and light in the world may be hindered or prevented through any choice to compromise or settle for that which is more convenient or comfortable, rather than that which is truly best and pleasing to the Lord. moreover, the status of salt and light is something that follows naturally from the christian's humble obedience to the commandments of Christ. it is when we depart from the spirit-led lifestyle of genuine discipleship that the distinctions between ourselves and the rest of the world become blurred and our testimony is hindered. only by remaining focused on Christ and being obedient to Him can we expect to remain salt and light in the world.

i think back to this passage also: "for we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. to the one we are

the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life." 2 cor 2:15-16

it wasn't too long ago when i asked the question "how smelly are you?" now i am asking the question: "how salty are you?" we must be the salt and light of the world. there must be a marked difference between those who serve God and those who do not. this is the time of our witness. will we be worth our salt?

only those who hold to the uncompromising truth of God will be rewarded by our Lord. "then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" matt 25:34