

Seasoned For Christ

Presented by Rev. Kristen Lowe on 8-5-2018

At Crossroads United Methodist Church

Waunakee, WI

Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.



“You are the salt of the earth. But, if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It’s no longer good for anything, except to serve as Wisconsin snow melt. Jesus tells us to be the salt of the earth and a light that shines out. Today I want to focus on that saltiness.

Roman Empire

- Salt was another type of money. In fact, salt was often used to pay for part of the salary of Roman soldiers
- This is the same salt you might put on your food
- Salt was precious because there were no refrigerators. This is how we preserved and flavored food
- The Latin word -- *sal* -- gives us the words salt and salary

Money

Brick of Salt

The complex block contains a collage of images and text. On the left, there is a vertical stack of money with the word "Money" written in a bold, black font. In the center, there is a photograph of a Roman soldier in full armor, including a helmet and a red cape, standing in front of a stone archway. To the right of the soldier, there is a small bowl filled with white salt. Below the bowl, there is a rectangular brick of salt. The text "Brick of Salt" is written below the brick. The background of the collage is a mix of colors, including the gold of the money and the red of the soldier's cape.

Did you know that in many societies, salt was so highly valued that it was used for money? The English word salary comes from the latin word *salarium* which refers to the payments made to a roman soldier with salt.

Salt is very, very valuable and has many outstanding properties. It can be used as a preservative, it can be used for healing and it can be used to season food. It’s a

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wonderfully versatile element. But, it must be managed in a delicate way. Too much salt and your meal is ruined. Too little salt and the meal is bland. Perhaps you've had a health situation that caused you to have to go on a low sodium diet. Several years ago, after suffering severe muscle spasms, my doctor recommended I eat More salt. I needed more sodium in my diet. There's a balance.



Someone who observes something and then gives evidence to or testifies to its account

“WITNESS”

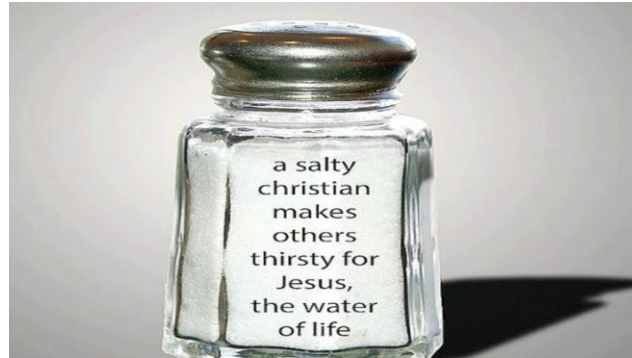
Our witness as Christians is the “salt” that Jesus is referring to. A witness is someone who observes something and then gives evidence to or testifies to its account. This is what Christ calls us to do. Not in a bland way, but in a way that is going to wake up the world and draw people to it. If we are Christians, or we want to be Christians in action rather than simply in name, we have to pull up our big girl or big boy pants and do the hard work of witnessing to others, loving others, forgiving others, caring for others.

Our witness, like salt doesn't always have to be big and bold. But, it should always add value. It should bring a quality that people are attracted to. We've all encountered well meaning Christians who overshoot. They are so focused on getting you to heaven that they manage to put too much salt on the matter.



So, back to that low or no-salt diet. Remember the 80s when no-salt came on the scene as an alternative to salt for people who needed to avoid it? That stuff was terrible! It wasn't salt! It tried to be salt, but it was just sharp and bitter. It was no real substitute. Salt is genuine. Salt is the real deal. And no matter how much no-salt you put on a dish, it's not going to be salt.

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Salty Christians... their mere presence lifts us up because we know they will encourage us just being around them. Do you know Christians like that? Are you one? Christ living in you, reigning in your life will transform you into a salty Christian... one who adds flavor wherever you go and makes people thirsty for Christ.



I once heard someone ask the question, "If your church was removed tomorrow from your neighborhood, from the community, would anybody notice?" What would the impact be? And, we're not talking about the building or the bell or the pastor... we're talking about the Christians - the people who make up the church. Now, I know that you would notice, but what about the people in our community? What about the people in Dane county?

So, how do we witness for Christ to others around us? Sometimes our witness isn't in what we say, it's putting others before ourselves... in just being there, being present.



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Many times, in a difficult situations, I've found myself at a complete loss for words I've been able to share very little, but have learned that words are not the only way we can bring a witness to Christ.



Ambassadors of Christ

1. What does an ambassador look like?
2. How does an ambassador act?
3. What does an ambassador do?
4. How will you report back?

Our presence is a very powerful witness. When people look at me, am I clearly Christ's ambassador? Are you? What does that look like? How does that act? What does an ambassador for Christ do? When we report back to the embassy... when our job here is done, are we going to hear, "Well done good and faithful servant?" Or do we have more to work on? I know I do. This is important, it's about our eternal souls.

Salt changes thing. A little salt can flavor a big pot of beans. It only takes a little salt to flavor a whole community... a whole workplace... a whole neighborhood. Children of God, if the salt never gets poured out of the shaker, then it's no good! Salt that never leaves the shaker is just a decoration on the table. As Christians, we have to shake! We are called to season...to influence the people we've come in contact with.



How can you pour yourself out this coming week starting today? Is your life making people thirsty for Jesus? That's one thing salt does... it will make you thirsty. It is up to you to bring a desire for more of Christ by being a salty witness.

We are called to be seasoning to the world. Not bland bystanders! Amen!