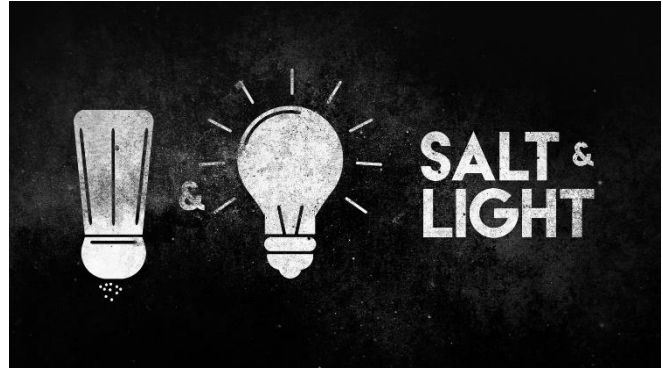


3—Salt and Light

Matthew 5:13-16

1. Jesus illustrated His teaching with simple and common analogies that were easy for His audience to grasp. What two common substances does He use to speak of our influence in Matthew 5:13-16. Though simple, how important are these two substances in real life?



2. *Salt can be used as a preservative.* In other words, it keeps dead foods from decaying and rotting. What application does this have when it comes to our influence on the world (John 17:15-16; Matthew 9:10-13; Proverbs 14:34)? Can salt preserve meat without contacting it?

3. *Salt is used for cleansing and healing.* Yet, how does it feel when salt is first applied to an open wound? As Christians, how might the world feel when we serve as God's cleansing agents (Ephesians 5:11; Hebrews 12:11)?

4. *Salt makes people thirsty.* How can our behavior help trigger a thirst in someone's heart for Jesus Christ? Who can ultimately fulfill our thirst (John 4:13-14)?

5. *Salt was connected with purity.* In what areas does the Christian need to set a standard for purity (cp. James 1:27)? When we are corrupted, what is our value to the lost world (Matthew 5:13)?

Ben Franklin's Plan For Lighting Philadelphia

When Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) set out to persuade the people of Philadelphia to adopt city-wide street lighting, he took a very interesting approach. Franklin did not make speeches or publish studies. He did not lobby the city government or criticize his opponents. He simply hung a lantern on the street outside his home and lit it every evening. Before long, his neighbors noticed how nice it was to be able to see outside their houses after dark. The darkness was dispelled, and there was a comforting sense of security in being able to look out and see that all was well. In time the neighbors began to hang their own lanterns and this multiplied the pleasant effect. As the light and lanterns spread to more and more houses, the rate of participation increased dramatically. Before long the city government recognized the need for street lights throughout Philadelphia. In the end, the entire city was lit, all because of a single lantern hanging outside the home of one concerned citizen. (From the introduction to *Walking in Son Light*, the 2008 VBS material from Lambert Book House)

6. Light is meant to be seen. Jesus makes it humorously clear how foolish it would be to “*light a lamp*” and then “*put it under a basket*” (Matthew 5:14-15). What are some ways you are tempted or have been guilty of hiding your light? What problems lie behind this issue?

7. Light serves as a guide on runways, canals, walkways, etc. In what ways do Christians need to serve as a guide for others? Why do some need a guide (1 Corinthians 11:1)?

8. Light also exposes danger. According to Jesus, how would some feel about and react to the light when it exposed the darkness in themselves (John 3:19-21)?

9. Light is beautiful. Jesus said, “*you are the light of the _____*” (Matthew 5:14). If our lights only shine around other believers or within the confines of a church building are we truly being what Jesus calls us to be here? What do “men” need to see from us if they will glorify the Father (Matthew 5:16)?

10. Below are some of the tasks needed to keep lamps burning brightly. How can we accomplish some of these tasks, spiritually speaking, to keep our “lamps all trimmed and bright?”

- Kindle our flame—
- Trim our wicks—
- Replenish our oil—
- Shine for a purpose--