

# Lesson 5

## Salt and Light

Key Scripture Readings: Matthew 5:13-16

### Summary

- Jesus also taught His disciples about their place in the world. He told them that when they possess the godly qualities of the “Beatitudes” they become salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16).
- In the time of the first century, salt’s primary function was to be a preservative. It helped keep things (mainly food) from corrupting, rotting, and decaying. This metaphor means that disciples must seek to preserve a spiritually rotting world! This is done mainly through their godly influence!
- Salt also easily stimulates thirst. Through righteous and holy living, followers of Christ should make people thirsty for God's spiritual blessings. The more people are around us, the more they should long to learn the gospel so they can develop a relationship with God.
- Light helps someone navigate their way through the darkness. It shines and exposes the things that are hidden. Disciples are to shine like light and be noticeable. When the world observes their lives, they should see people devoted to the Lord's words. They should see people who are committed to a higher and nobler way of living. They should see righteous behavior that convicts sin and helps them find their way to God.
- By being “salt” and “light,” Jesus is calling disciples to impact people’s lives. He doesn’t want His followers to be hermits and isolate themselves from the world. He does not want them to quietly lurk in the background of culture or be afraid to show people who they are and what standard they follow. Instead, the Lord desires His people to be out in their communities showing people by their conduct that He has something better to offer them.
- There are some dangers that disciples must avoid if they are to be “salt” and “light.” The first danger is contamination (Matthew 5:13). While salt is a stable compound, it can be contaminated with other substances and lose its ability to season and preserve. When Christians start thinking and accept the same values as the world, they are no longer the salt of the earth!
- The second danger is covering up (Matthew 5:14-15). This occurs when disciples want to keep quiet about following Jesus. They want to camouflage themselves and refuse to take public stands against wicked behavior.
- When salt is contaminated, and light is covered up, God’s purposes for us, His people, are not accomplished. Our influence does not make an impact, and the lost don’t become curious about the gospel.

## Study Questions

1. Provide some practical examples of how we can be salt in a rotting world.
2. What obstacles often get in the way of disciples being salt? What are the consequences for disciples not being salt?
3. Provide some practical examples of how we can be lights in a dark world?
4. What obstacles often get in the way of disciples being lights? What are the consequences for disciples not being lights?
5. In what way was Jesus different from the world and from what the religious world expected and wanted?
6. What are some concepts in this sermon that you already know will make you different from the world? How will they make you different?