

This Way to Happiness: What to Do Until the King Comes

by Warren Wiersbe

As Christians, we are called to be salt and light in a decaying and dark world, influencing others and bringing glory to God.

Duration: 44:59

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-16, Luke 17:26-30, John 1:6-9, Ephesians 2:10, James 2:17

Topics: "Christian Living", "Spiritual Decay"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the progression of human history as depicted in the book of Daniel. He explains that society is deteriorating and becoming weaker over time. The preacher highlights the acceptance and endorsement of immoral behaviors by religious people. He emphasizes the importance of Christians being the light of the world and the salt of the earth, by actively engaging with the needs of others and giving of themselves. The dangers to avoid are losing one's effectiveness as salt and hiding one's light under a bushel.

Transcript

This evening we finish a series on the Beatitudes. Some of you have suffered through the summer months and we appreciate your faithfulness. Matthew chapter 5, verses 13 through 16.

Our Lord Jesus speaks and he says, ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt have lost its savor, with what shall it be salted? It is thereafter good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

Neither do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a lampstand, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Back in our Lord Jesus' day, oil and salt were very important ingredients.

Of course, it was oil that kept the lamp burning and salt was necessary for their everyday eating and working. In fact, our word salary comes from an old Latin word that had to do with the allotment of salt that was given to the Roman soldiers because they needed it so desperately. The Lord Jesus closes this section on the Beatitudes, comparing Christians to salt and to light.

Now perhaps in a specific sense he was talking about the disciples and therefore talking about those who are called to Christian service, but I think in a general sense he also is speaking to each one of us, whether we be called to some special service or not, because certainly whether a person is a preacher or a principal, a missionary or a mechanic, he can be salt and he can be light. Now in these two symbols of salt and light, our Lord gives us some very valuable insights into the Christian life, and I want to share at least four of these insights with you tonight with the hope that God will use this truth to help us be what he wants us to be. I think this is the desire of your heart.

I'm sure it's the desire of my heart that each one of us would be what the Lord wants us to be. We can't want anything more than that. We can't want anything less than that.

We certainly don't want anything different from that. We want to be all that the Lord wants us to be. Insight number one, he gives us an insight into our salvation.

You see, I wasn't always salt. When I came into this world, I came into this world not as salt. I came into this world as clay.

I inherited this from my father who inherited it from his father, and it went all the way back to our father, Adam. God took the clay and God made a man. Now, when Jesus Christ comes into your life, a change takes place.

To use the same figure that our Lord used, there's a transformation from clay to salt. The unsaved person is just simply clay, but the Christian person has a brand new ingredient added to him. When you trust Christ as your Savior, God's nature moves into you, and this makes you different.

And because we are different, we have a different responsibility and a different relationship to this world. You see, if you've never been converted, my friend, you don't have God's nature. Everything that he has to say in the Sermon on the Mount just goes right over your head.

He's been giving in the beatitudes, the kind of attitudes that ought to be in the life of the believer. But the unsaved person couldn't begin to tackle these beatitudes. They're beyond him.

Apart from the Holy Spirit of God, they are beyond us who are saved. What happened at your conversion? Clay became salt. That means that you're special, you're different, and you're special.

Now we could spend the rest of the evening, which we'll not do, just walking through the pages of the Bible, wondering what would have happened to some of these people had they never become salt. I think of Abraham. Abraham could have stayed in Ur of the Chaldees and been like all the rest of his neighbors, wealthy, accepted, popular, affluent, and died and gone back to clay.

But God called Abraham and said, Abraham, I want you to be different. And Abraham believed God and God did something in Abraham's life. And Abraham was transformed from clay to salt.

And because of this, we're here tonight. I wonder where we would be if it had not been for Abraham, because God said to Abraham, through you, the whole world is going to be blessed. You're the salt of the earth.

You're the light of the world. I think of Peter. We never would have heard of Simon, the fisherman from Capernaum, had it not been for the Lord Jesus.

One day, the voice of Jesus came to Peter and said, follow me and I'll make you to become fishers of men. And something happened to Simon and clay turned into salt. And as a consequence, he didn't spend the rest of his days catching fish, selling fish.

He spent the rest of his days doing miracles in the name of the Lord Jesus. Clay had turned to salt. This has happened in modern times.

It's a marvelous thing to meet people who have been saved and to say to them, when did your clay turn into salt? When did God do that miracle in your life? And you hear the story of the miracle of conversion. And so the Lord gives us an insight into our conversion. He says, once you were clay, now you're salt.

Once you were darkness, now you're light. In fact, the Apostle Paul says this over in Ephesians chapter five. Some people misread this verse, Ephesians chapter five and verse eight.

Paul says this, for ye were once darkness. Now he doesn't say you were in the dark. He doesn't say you were walking in the dark.

He said that those of us who did not know Christ as our Savior before we were saved, you were once darkness. But now are ye light in the Lord. Walk as the children of light.

A miracle takes place at conversion when you trust Jesus Christ. Clay becomes salt and darkness becomes light. Now this is an amazing thing.

You see, no one has to explain the meaning of darkness. I suppose the darkest place I have ever been in is Mammoth Cave. Those of you who have visited Mammoth Cave, when you get way down there and they turn the lights off, it's something like what Egypt was like during those three days of that plague of darkness.

You can almost reach out and feel the darkness. It's the darkest place I think I've ever seen. Now Jesus says this is what you were.

Paul says this is what you were before you were saved. You weren't just in the dark. You weren't in the shadows.

You were darkness. That means that wherever an unsaved person goes, he carries darkness. Mental darkness.

Moral darkness. Spiritual darkness. But then you trust Christ as your Savior and darkness becomes light just as clay became salt.

Now in the Bible, darkness speaks of sin. Darkness speaks of Satan. Jesus called him the Prince of Darkness.

Darkness speaks of death. Darkness speaks of judgment. Darkness speaks of hell, but light speaks of righteousness.

Walk as children of light. Light speaks of God. God is light.

Light speaks of salvation. He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Light speaks of life, and light speaks of heaven.

There's no night there. And everyone here tonight is either darkness or light, clay or salt. Now the Lord has performed this miracle because He has a job for us to do.

He doesn't say, try hard to be the salt of the earth. He says you are salt. He doesn't say you should be light.

He says you are light. The Lord is not exhorting us to be something. He's explaining what we already are.

It gives us an insight into our conversion. Our conversion gave to us a remarkable privilege. I hope this gets to your heart and stays there for a long, long time.

In John chapter 9 and verse 5, Jesus says this, As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. But He's not in the world. He left the world.

That means that from now on, you and I are the light of the world. In other words, you and I, because of our conversion, are taking the place of Jesus Christ in this world. Now if that doesn't give dignity to your Christian life, nothing will.

If that doesn't lay a sense of responsibility and privilege upon us, nothing will. We're taking the place of the Savior. He said to His disciples, As the Father hath sent me, so send I you.

Now Father, I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world. I pray not that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil one. And so I don't come to you tonight and say, My friend, be salt.

You are salt. Be light. You are light.

Our conversion took care of that. There's a second insight that our Lord wants us to see, and it's this. He gives us an insight into the world in which we're living.

These two symbols tell me what the world is like. Now I must be careful as I use this word world, because in the Bible it has three different meanings. There is the world of nature.

Now nowhere in the Bible are we taught that the world of nature is bad. We are taught that the world of nature is in the throes of sin. In Romans chapter 8, Paul says, All of creation is travailing in pain like a woman about to give birth to a child.

There's the travail of sin in nature. But nature is beautiful, even in the city. I don't have to travel 500 miles to the country.

I can see the beauty of God in the city. I hope you can too. But I'm not talking about the world of nature, nor am I talking about the world of humanity.

When the Bible talks about the world in many verses, it means that system of things, that organization of mankind, philosophies, ambitions, programs, things that are going on that are anti-Christ. I suppose the simplest definition of the world is, quote, society opposed to God, unquote. That's a good definition.

We use the word world in this same sense. We talk about the world of sports, the world of finance. We mean a whole system of things.

And Jesus is saying here, here is what the world is like. If I am salt and the world needs me, then the world is decaying. If I am light and the world needs me, then the world is in darkness.

Here are the two great characteristics of the system of this world, decay and darkness. Now my friend, if you rebel at this, if down inside you say, well, I don't think it's quite that bad, you'd better be careful. One of the first steps toward getting out of the will of God is refusing to accept the truth of the Word of God.

That's why many people aren't saved. Many people won't believe what the Bible says about them is true. What do you mean that a nice religious person like me, I'm lost, I can't believe it? You see, I couldn't be saved until I believed what the Bible said about me was true.

And I can't be any influence in this world until I believe what the Bible says about this world is true. Jesus compares this world to a decaying corpse. He does this over in Luke chapter 17.

Now Luke was a doctor, and he knew something about corpses. Over in Luke chapter 17, our Lord is warning his disciples about his return. He's talking about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 22, he starts his little message, and he says in verse 26, it's going to be like the days of Noah. In verse 28, it's going to be like the days of Lot. The days of Noah were days of unconcern.

People were eating and drinking and getting married. They weren't worried about judgment coming, but it came, just like today. People are eating and drinking and busy.

They aren't worried about judgment coming. It's going to come. The days of Lot were days of compromise.

Lot was a compromiser. He had no business being in Sodom. He'd lost his testimony.

He couldn't even win his own family. We have this today. These are days of religious compromise, apostasy.

The Lord's talking about his coming, and he ends this message in verse 37 by saying, they asked him the question, Lord, where? He's talking about two women grinding in the field and two men in the field. Lord, where? Where is this coming going to be? And he said unto them, wherever the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Quite a picture.

Now, when you compare verse 37 to Revelation chapter 19, the coming of the Lord Jesus and the announcement of that feast where they called all the fowls of the heaven and they come and they say, you shall eat the flesh of captains. You shall eat the flesh of kings. You shall eat the flesh of great men.

Flesh. Five times in that Revelation 19 passage. What's our Lord saying? He's saying civilization is decaying.

Decaying. Now, it doesn't take much perception to see that civilization is decaying. Society is decaying.

It's decaying politically. We never get involved in politics in this pulpit because our job is to preach the Word of God, but you can't escape some things that are in the Bible. When God showed the great panorama of history to Daniel, one thing He said to Daniel was, Daniel, it's all going to decay.

It's going to get cheaper and cheaper. You have a head of gold in Daniel chapter 2 and then you have silver and then you have brass and then you have iron and then you have clay. He's saying as human

history progresses, society is going to get cheaper and cheaper and weaker and weaker.

You can just walk down the streets of Chicago and come to the conclusion that something is decaying someplace. Things that were considered tremendously wicked 25 years ago are today accepted. Magazines are now publishing lists of where you can find nudist beaches.

Pornography is rampant. Civilization is decaying. It's bad enough that these things are here, but the sad thing is many religious people approve of them and endorse them.

Some denominations approve of them and endorse them in the name of liberty. And Jesus says it's all decaying. He's telling me something about my world.

Peter said the same thing over in 2 Peter 1.19. Peter says you better pay attention to the Word of God because it's the only light that's shining in a dark and squalid world. Peter compares the world to just a swamp filled with decaying matter. The worst pollution in the world is not the pollution materially, it's the pollution intellectually and morally and spiritually.

And so my friends, you and I are living in a world that's decaying. And we're living in a world that's dark. I don't have to preach this.

It explains itself. It's a dark world that we live in. People are dark mentally.

They just don't understand the things of God. The unsaved man doesn't understand the things of the Spirit of God. Suppose you're walking down the street on a beautiful sunny day.

We do have those occasionally in Chicago. And someone comes up to you and says, Sir, Madam, I want to tell you something. You say, what's that? The sun is shining.

You say, I can see that. I want you to know about it. The sun is shining.

There's only one kind of a person you tell the sun is shining. A blind person. He can't tell.

God sent John the Baptist into the world to bear witness to the light. John came and said, Hey folks, the sun is shining! They said, Oh? Well, we can't see anything. There stands among you one whom you know not.

There is such tragic, moral and intellectual and spiritual darkness in this world. Have you ever walked around your house in the dark? It's an interesting thing. You see, the darkness, if there's just a little bit of light shining, makes everything out of shape.

And in the world today, people who don't know Jesus Christ can't see things clearly. There's something there. They can't see what it is.

They've exaggerated it. They've misinterpreted it. Paul puts it beautifully in Romans 1. Their foolish hearts were darkened, professing themselves to be wise.

They became fools. And then you have that, Romans 1, that picture of devolution. Not evolution.

Devolution. Romans 1 doesn't say man started way down here and worked his way up to the knowledge of the true God. He says man started way up here with the knowledge of the true God.

He didn't want to keep that knowledge, so there was ignorance, which led to idolatry, which led to immorality, which led to judgment. And so this comparison tells us something about our world. It's a world that's decaying and a world that's dark and that needs us.

There's a third insight. There's an insight into our ministry. What are we as Christians supposed to be doing? Now the king hasn't come back yet, but he's going to come.

Until the Lord Jesus Christ returns, what should we be doing? Should we be out trying to patch things up? What should we be doing? He tells us what we should be doing. We should be salt and we should be light. Now let's talk about the ministry of salt.

The main thing our Lord is talking about here is salt hinders corruption. Salt does not cure corruption. If you've got a piece of meat that's starting to rot and you salt it, it won't cure the old rot.

It'll just keep the rest of the meat from rotting. And you and I are the salt of the earth. That means our presence in this world should keep things from rotting.

I read an interesting story about Mr. Moody. I like to pick up stories about Mr. Moody. He was such a great man.

He was in the barber shop, came into a barber shop one day and there was a man in the barber chair who was all covered and being shaved and he couldn't tell what was going on. Prior to the advent of this man, there was the general hubbub of the usual kind of worldly talk. All of a sudden it stopped and after a while the man said to the barber, what happened? Well, he said that was Mr. Moody who came in.

Now, Mr. Moody did not come in and pass out tracts to everybody. He didn't get up on an empty chair and make a speech. He just came in.

He just sat down. And the people around him were so impressed with the godliness of this man that the humor changed, the conversation was lifted higher because Mr. Moody was among the salt of the earth. Does that ever happen when we're around? Does anyone say, well you know, this person is a Christian and I don't agree with him but I admire him and will not have anything like that while he's around.

Has anyone ever said to us, you know, I don't agree with you, I think you're kind of kooky, but you know, I just don't want to do certain things or talk certain ways when you're here. Salt has the ministry of hindering corruption. Now once again, we could walk through the Bible and find people who held back judgment because they were there.

Abraham prayed for Sodom. If it hadn't been for Abraham, a lot would have been lost. Abraham was the salt of the earth.

Daniel's presence in Babylon was salt. Joseph's presence in Egypt was salt. The Apostle Paul's presence on that ship with several hundred other passengers and prisoners, he was salt.

Salt hinders the growth of corruption. Now the world's bad enough the way it is with Christians here. What in the world is it going to be like when we're gone? Over in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, Paul talks about this.

He says there's something that is restraining the arrival of the Antichrist. There is a force in this world restraining the growth of evil. But ah, when that restraint is removed, watch out.

As weak as Lot was, as long as he was in Sodom, that city couldn't be destroyed. Salt has another ministry. It seasons.

I would hate to think of what music would be like in this world without the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be impossible. As weak as we Christians are, we are seasoning to this world.

I would hate to live in a community that didn't have a church. I would hate to live in a neighborhood where I couldn't go to a church. I would certainly hate to live someplace where I couldn't have some Christian friends.

I think we take these things for granted. We can turn the radio on and hear good Christian music, contemporary as well as classical. We can go to concerts and hear good music.

We can buy books that talk about the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian faith has seasoned every part of life. You take the great Christian music out of the repertoires of this world, you wouldn't have much left.

Or you'd have some great secular music, but it's amazing how many secular musicians have been influenced by Christianity. You take great literature. I dare you to read Moby Dick without knowing your Bible.

It's an amazing thing. Here was a man who was so influenced by the Word of God that when he wrote this novel, it gets in there whether he wants it there or not. He did want it there.

He was telling a story. Salt seasons. People come to me and say, Pastor, I'm the only Christian in my office.

Then do some seasoning. Make other people glad that you're there. Salt has a third ministry.

Sometimes it stings. We have the saying, well, now don't pour salt in my wounds. Of course, salt in the wounds could have an antiseptic ministry.

But it stings. It's rather interesting, Jesus did not say, you are the honey of the earth. Now some Christians are.

They're all sweetness. Nothing is ever wrong. Nothing should ever be rebuked or criticized.

Jesus didn't say that. When Jesus showed up, He was salt. And if there was a wound, that salt would sting in that wound.

Because conviction has to come before there can be conversion. Pain has to come before there can be healing. And sometimes you and I have to sting others just a little bit.

Salt has another ministry. It penetrates. You drop some salt into the water, it gets dissolved into that water.

You shake some salt onto your food, it gets to be a part of that food. It penetrates. But as it penetrates, it does not lose its distinctive taste.

This is the biggest problem you and I face. How do we come in contact with the world and yet not be contaminated by the world? You see, too many Christians are salt in the salt shaker. And salt in the salt shaker doesn't do anybody any good.

That salt has to get out to where the need is. One ministry we forget about that salt has, I'll just drop this into your heart, you think about it tonight, salt makes people thirsty. I wonder if anybody gets thirsty for what we have because of us.

I wonder if my presence in my neighborhood, my presence at a family reunion, my presence at some sort of a secular function would ever make anybody thirsty. This is our ministry. To penetrate, to hold back corruption, to flavor, to sting, to make people thirsty.

Now we're not only salt, we're light. The difference, of course, is obvious. Salt is a hidden thing.

Light everybody can see. Salt has to do with my character. Light has to do with my conduct.

Jesus said that the light is good works. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works. Oh, but I thought our good works were not supposed to be seen.

Well, when Jesus talks about doing religious deeds like giving and praying, He says don't parade that. Don't get up in prayer meeting and say, I've been fasting for three weeks. No, you don't do that.

Or I prayed all night. He said no, don't parade your religious deeds. But when it comes to the good deeds that the Lord does through us to help other people, He says if your motive is right, it glorifies God.

You see, we're supposed to let people know why we do good deeds. Jesus Christ is assuming here that we do good deeds. He's not talking about soapbox preaching.

Nothing wrong with that. I've done some of it. He's not even talking about distributing literature.

That's a good thing. I write it and I distribute it. He's talking about helping the next door neighbor when the baby is sick.

He's talking about letting your neighbor use the lawnmower when his is broken. He's talking about giving somebody a lift in your automobile when they need a lift. He's talking about doing good works.

He's talking about giving a pint of blood when somebody is sick. He's talking about winning the right to be heard. That's what He's talking about.

Now we evangelicals have so revolted against salvation by good works that we've forgotten that good works are a part of salvation. We have gone the other extreme. Oh, don't talk about good works.

James talks about good works. He says faith without works is dead. Paul talks about good works.

For we are His workmanship. Ephesians 2.10 Created in Christ Jesus unto good works. What good works which God has before prepared that we should walk in them.

These are the opportunities for witness. And our Lord is saying here there is a hidden ministry. Salt.

There's an open ministry. Light. There is a ministry of character.

Salt. There's a ministry of conduct. Light.

And you don't separate them. You don't separate them. Character produces conduct.

Conduct reveals character. And the Lord Jesus is saying to you and me, okay, your next door neighbor won't come to church with you, but she can't stop you from doing good works. When the winter comes and she can't get out and shovel her snow off the walk, you can do it.

Not to show off, but to glorify your Father which is in Heaven. When her husband can't mow the lawn, somebody in your family can do it. When you're going to the store, you can ask if she needs anything.

It's little things like this done in the name of Jesus in the power of the Spirit that helps to win people to Christ. We're the light of the world and we're the salt of the earth. Now, before we move into the fourth insight, I must tell you this.

Salt and light exist to be spent. In order for salt to function, it has to give of itself. In order for light to function, it has to give of itself.

In order for me to be the salt of the earth, I've got to dare to come in contact with the need and give of myself. In order for me and you to be the light of the world, we have to give of ourselves. Wherever there is light, some price is being paid.

Wherever there is salt applied, it has to give of itself. This explains why we don't like to function as salt and light. We don't like to give of ourselves.

The fourth insight is this. We've had an insight into our conversion from clay to salt and from darkness to light. We've had an insight into what our world is like.

It's decaying and it's dark. We've had an insight into what our ministry is. Apply the salt.

Let the light shine in good works. Our Lord gives us a fourth insight, an insight into the dangers that we must avoid. Now, there are two of them.

Number one, the salt could lose its flavor. Number two, the light could be hidden under a bushel. Now, some of our folks here tonight are chemists.

A pastor should always stick to the Bible and not try to delve into something he's not trained in. But as I've investigated this, I've discovered that pure salt never loses its flavor. But they didn't have pure salt back in Jesus' day.

The salt that they mined from the swamps and from the Dead Sea area was an impure salt. I was reading in one of the history books. William Thompson, many years ago, wrote a fascinating book, which you ought to read someday, called *The Land and the Book*.

Back when very few people were hopping jets to go to the Holy Land because they couldn't afford it and there were no jets anyway, William Thompson went down and lived in the Holy Land. And he traveled around to see whether or not the Bible was really true. It's a fascinating book.

Mr. Thompson tells about a rich merchant who wanted to make a real killing on salt. They had to have salt back in those days for their food and for other purposes. And so he bought a great quantity of salt and to escape paying a tax on it, he had it carted up to the mountains and kept in houses.

He rented 50 or 60 houses and they just shoveled the salt into these houses. He was going to escape paying the taxes. Well, weeks and weeks later, when he was going to sell this salt, he found out that

something had happened.

They shoveled the salt onto the soil, just the dirt floor of the houses. And when that impure salt got next to the dirt, it immediately began to lose its saltiness. And Thompson said, I stood there and watched them fulfill the words of Jesus.

They wouldn't dare put this salt in their gardens. It would ruin the soil. Then he said, I literally saw them shoveling that salt out onto the street where it was packed down by the feet of the animals and the men.

What makes salt lose its saltiness? It gets contaminated. Now, the application is not difficult. When you and I come in contact with the world, we don't have to be contaminated by the world.

It is said of Jesus Christ, He is the friend of publicans and sinners. That's contact. Hebrews says He was separate from sinners.

What does that mean? It meant that whenever Jesus came into contact with sin and sinners, He Himself was not contaminated by it. The friend of sinners, because they need the salt. But separate from sinners, the salt doesn't need them.

This means that when you and I are ministering in this world, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to keep us from losing our flavor. It's a tragic thing when a Christian loses his flavor. He's lost his saltiness.

It happened to Samson. He lost his flavor. Samson means sunny in the Hebrew.

S-U-N-N-Y. And yet he ended up in darkness. He was to be the light.

He ended up in darkness. Why? He got contaminated. Paul wrote and said, Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.

What happened to Demas? He got contaminated. So there's the danger we have to avoid. You and I dare not be isolated from the world.

The world needs the salt. We dare not be insulated from the world. The world needs the salt.

But we dare not be contaminated by the world. And only the Holy Spirit can help us there. Our motive has to be to glorify God.

If our motive is anything else, we'll get contaminated. I've noticed in my Bible that there is a going down, a devolution, a regression in this matter of the world. James says, don't get spotted by the world.

That's where it starts. Just get spotted. The next step is, don't get friendly with the world.

Friendship with this world is enmity with God. The next step, love not the world. Friendship leads to love.

The next step is, don't be conformed to the world. When two people love each other, they start looking like each other. The last step is, don't be condemned with this world.

There it is. Spotted, friendly, loving, conformed, condemned. I'm a little bit afraid for these Christians today who are so involved in penetration, they have forgotten separation.

I don't think I have to become like the people I'm trying to reach to make them what God wants them to be. The second danger is that the light is hidden. He says, let your light shine, which means this.

You can't stop my light from shining, but I can. I can't stop your light from shining, but you can. Our light is always shining.

Wherever we are, we should be doing good works. This is the normal result of walking in the Spirit. Ah, but he says, if you stop doing good works, it's just like taking that light and putting it under a bushel.

Nobody can see it. I think it was Alexander McLaren or Spurgeon who said, if you put the light under a bushel, one of two things will happen. Either the light will be smothered and put out or the bushel will burn up.

I don't want to take that chance. I don't think we lose our salvation. I think we lose our testimony.

The light must not be hidden. We should let the light shine. It's so easy for us to hide the light.

It's interesting that these two symbols follow the Beatitudes. And the last of the Beatitudes is persecution. Blessed are ye when men revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you, and great is your reward in heaven. So here's the world persecuting us, persecuting us. So what do we do? We're the salt to try to keep them from decaying? We're the light to bring them some truth in the darkness? Some life in the death? The trouble with us is when the Christian starts getting persecuted, he pulls back and says, okay, go to hell! We can't do that.

Our Lord is saying to us, all right, you're needed out there in that world. You're needed. That office needs you.

That neighborhood needs you. You're salt. If you weren't there, that thing would really go to pieces morally, spiritually.

You're light. You're the guide to show them which way to go. Now, apply the salt.

Don't get contaminated. But don't be afraid of the contact. When you start contacting wounded, unsaved people with salt, they burn.

It stings. They hurt. They might even fight.

But then they come back because salt makes them thirsty, and they come back, and they come back, and you have the blessed privilege of influencing them for Jesus Christ. I can't think of a greater way to live. I don't know what people are doing, but the greatest thing in all the world is just to be some of God's salt, some of God's light here in this world, to glorify my Father which is in heaven.

Let's pray. For this privilege, Father, we give thanks. Who are we that we should experience the miracle of being turned from clay to salt and from darkness to light? Father, forgive us when we have not applied the salt.

Forgive us, Lord, when we have been contaminated and lost our saltiness. Oh, God, may we not come to that place where the flavor is so far gone that you can't use us anymore and we become castaways. Father, if somebody here tonight is playing with the world, I pray convict that one.

If someone here, Father, thinks the world is a great place, convict that one. Help us this coming week, gracious Father, by faith in the power of the Spirit to be the salt and to be the light. For Jesus' sake, amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/17/SID17623.mp3>

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