

**Sermon Series:** “I<sup>2</sup> – Living Lives of Irresistible Influence” – Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN – 6/1/08  
**Title:** “A Life of Seasoning”  
**Text:** Matthew 5: 13-16  
**Intro.:** *Ills.:* “Do We Sell Salt!”  
**Theme:** God leaves his children in the world to have an influence and impact for Christ in the relationships and locations in which they find themselves.

### **Two Analogies—One Meaning**

- Are you a **salty Christian?** (vs. 13)
  1. Influencing or being influenced by the world view surrounding you?
    - a. **Ills.: Tidal tug-a-war on the Yangtze River at Changzhou, China (fresh water or brackish)**
    - b. When believers adopt or blend into the world’s me-culture they become unsalty/tasteless/**foolish (GR: moraino)**
    - c. Adopting attitudes and actions on marriage or morality, child-rearing or career building, money that at the very least are ambivalent to God’s redeeming purpose and at worst are anti-God and destructive.
    - d. Jesus says when salt loses its “strength” to influence (*foolish*) it is thrown out as useless
    - e. *Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe 1 Cor 1:20-21*
    - f. Only God in his redeeming purpose in Jesus has/can reclaim you to a new life (*how will it become salty again*)
  2. Giving a **living testimony** to a redeeming Savior at-work in you
    - a. **Illus.: What do others see?**
    - b. In attitude (*Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Phil 2:4*)
    - c. In word (*Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person. Col. 4:6*)
    - d. In conduct (*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Rom 12: 2*)
- Do you give **more light than heat (vs. 14-15)**
  1. The biblical contrast between light and dark is one between truth and deception
    - a. As Christians we are too long content to play in the shadowlands (C.S. Lewis) of conduct and attitude
    - b. *God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:5-7*
  2. We must know what the Light and Truth are to be able to shine it out without diffusion
    - a. We can become agenda/issue driven producing more heat than light and drive away the very ones meant to save
    - b. What will change our culture is not more laws but the life-changing power of Jesus at work within individual lives
    - c. **Ills.: St. Elizabeth’s home for unwed mothers**
    - d. *Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. John 14:6*
  3. By our connection to Christ, we become beacons of the life-changing and saving truth of Jesus (vs. 14-15)
    - a. *I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. Galatians 2:20*

### **Practical application of salty and Light-illuminated living**

- Before I speak or act, am I thinking: *How will my words or conduct accurately reflect Jesus and His influence on me?*
  1. *But dedicate your lives to Christ as Lord. Always be ready to defend your confidence in God when anyone asks you to explain it. However, make your defense with gentleness and respect. 1 Peter 3:15*
- Seeing my life’s purpose as eternally impacting others (season) for their good rather than my gain
  1. *Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for gain. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like those sent from God. 2 Cor. 2: 17*
- Setting the goal of my Christian conduct to bring glory back to the Heavenly Father
  1. *In the same way let your light shine in front of people. Then they will see the good that you do and praise your Father in heaven. Vs. 16*

### **Do You Sell Salt?**

In his book *Led by the Carpenter*, D. James Kennedy writes: A man walked into a little mom-and-pop grocery store and asked, "Do you sell salt?" "Ha!" said Pop the proprietor. "Do we sell salt! Just look!" And Pop showed the customer one entire wall of shelves stocked with nothing but salt Morton salt, iodized salt, kosher salt, sea salt, rock salt, garlic salt, seasoning salt, Epsom salts every kind of salt imaginable. "Wow!" said the customer. "You think that's something?" said Pop with a wave of his hand. "That's nothing! Come look." And Pop led the customer to a back room filled with shelves and bins and cartons and barrels and boxes of salt. "Do we sell salt!" he said. "Unbelievable!" said the customer. "You think that's something?" said Pop. "Come! I'll show you salt!" And Pop led the customer down some steps into a huge basement, five times as large as the previous room, filled wall, floor, to ceiling, with every imaginable form and size and shape of salt even huge ten-pound salt licks for the cow pasture. "Incredible!" said the customer. "You really do sell salt!" "No!" said Pop. "That's just the problem! We never sell salt! But that salt salesman, Hoo-boy! Does *he* sell salt!" Salt that stays on the shelf doesn't do any good at all. **D. James Kennedy, *Led by the Carpenter* (Thomas Nelson, 1999), p. 46.**

### **What Do Others See?**

*Good Housekeeping* magazine listed the five most-common things guests notice when they enter our homes. First, they spy piles of mail laying around, so keep an empty drawer in the kitchen for your correspondence. Second, they notice dust bunnies and cobwebs, so watch those room corners and use a broom and a hand vacuum. Third, they notice a messy bathroom, so use glass cleaner for the mirror and other handy clean-up aids for the floors and appliances. Fourth, they notice dishes in the sink. Avoid embarrassment here by throwing them in the dishwasher. Or, if needed, rinse and place them in the oven. Fifth, our guests notice full trash cans, so empty any filled container into a larger receptacle that can be kept out of sight. People check our houses, and they also look at us. A good question to think about is: When they view me, what do they see? **Ted De Haas, Bedford, Iowa; source: "Five Things People Really Notice," *Good Housekeeping* (November 2006), p. 42**

### **Matthew 5:13-16**

[13] "You are salt for the earth. But if salt loses its taste, how will it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled on by people. [14] "You are light for the world. A city cannot be hidden when it is located on a hill. [15] No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket. Instead, everyone who lights a lamp puts it on a lamp stand. Then its light shines on everyone in the house. [16] In the same way let your light shine in front of people. Then they will see the good that you do and praise your Father in heaven. [GW]