

Brandon Phillips / General

The King and His Glory / Salt; Light; Light of the World / Matthew 5:13–16
King Jesus gives His representatives on earth (present and future) two critical expectations.

Pre-sermon Comments

[Psalm 23:4](#) (LSB) ⁴ Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

[2 Corinthians 1:4](#) (LSB) ⁴ who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

[2 Corinthians 1:5](#) (LSB) ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ abound to us, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.

Questions to ponder

- Do people suspect or even know that you are a Christian even when you don't say anything?
- When people see your actions and attitudes, do they see Christ or something else?
- When they hear your speech, do they recognize Christ or do they hear the world?
- Do you make the world around you a better place by proclaiming the Gospel and manifesting God's goodness?
- Are you willing to preach the good news of Jesus when it's not popular?

Sermon Text

Matthew 5:13–16 LSB

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out to be trampled under foot by men. ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Introduction to our Text

Proposition and Outline

In Matthew 5:14-16, King Jesus gives His representatives on earth (present and future) two critical expectations. As His disciples, your King expects you to:

Last week -

1. Be a Preserving Agent in the World ([Matt 5:13](#))
 - a. Jesus proclaims, “You are the salt of the earth!”
 - b. Jesus expects you “To be salty!”

Today!

1. Have an Illuminating Presence to the World ([Matt 5:14-16](#))
 - a. Jesus proclaims, “You are the light of the world!”
 - b. Jesus expects you “To let your light shine!”

Review

King Jesus Expects You to Be a Preserving Agent in the World [Review]

Jesus proclaims, “You are the salt of the earth!” [Review]

[Matthew 5:13](#) (LSB) ¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out to be trampled under foot by men.

Salt Preserves

[Matthew 5:13](#) (LSB) ¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out to be trampled under foot by men.

Jesus expects you “To be salty!”

Jesus warns: Don’t lose your saltiness!

[Matthew 5:13](#) (LSB) ¹³ “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out to be trampled under foot by men.

[James 4:4](#) (LSB) ⁴ You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world sets himself as an enemy of God.

King Jesus Expects You to Have an Illuminating Presence to the World

[Matthew 5:14](#) (LSB) ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;

Jesus prioritizes being salt before light!

[Ephesians 4:24](#) (LSB) ²⁴ and to put on the new man, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Scripture always emphasizes first what he is, before it begins to speak of what he does ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

As a Christian, I should always have a general effect upon men before I have any specific effect. Wherever I may find myself, immediately that ‘something different’ about me should have its effect; and that in turn ought to lead men and women to look at me and to say, ‘There is something unusual about that man.’ Then, as they watch my conduct and behaviour, they begin to ask me questions. ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

Jesus proclaims, “You are the light of the world!”

The Metaphor of Light and Darkness in Scripture

[Genesis 1:1](#) (LSB) ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

[Genesis 1:2](#) (LSB) ² And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

[Genesis 1:3-5](#) (LSB) ³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.

Light and darkness are not simply opposites; darkness is nothing other than the absence of light. ~ D. A. Carson

[Genesis 1:14-18](#) (LSB) ¹⁴ Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; ¹⁵ and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth”; and it was so. ¹⁶ So God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night, and *also* the stars. ¹⁷ And God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ and to rule the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.

[Colossians 1:16-17](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ For in Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, And in Him all things hold together.

[Isaiah 9:2](#) (LSB) ² The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in the land of the shadow of death, The light will shine on them.

[Matthew 4:14-16](#) (LSB) ¹⁴ in order that what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled, saying, ¹⁵ “THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI, BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES— ¹⁶ THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED.”

Jesus is the true source of the light!

[John 1:1-3](#) (LSB) ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

[John 1:4-10](#) (LSB) ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ⁵ And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ⁶ There was a man having been sent from God, whose name was [John.](#) ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the Light, but *he came* to bear witness about the Light. ⁹ There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens everyone. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

Jesus gave His light to His people

[John 8:12](#) (LSB) ¹² Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will never walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

[John 9:5](#) (LSB) ⁵ “While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

We cannot hide the light of Christ within us.

[Matthew 5:14](#) (LSB) ¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;

A secret Christian is as incongruous as a hidden light. Lights are to illuminate, not to be hidden; to be displayed, not to be covered. Christians are to be both subtle salt and conspicuous light. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

Whereas salt is hidden, light is obvious. Salt works secretly, while light works openly. Salt works from within, light from without. Salt is more the indirect influence of the gospel, while light is more its direct communication. Salt works primarily through our living, while light works primarily through what we teach and preach. Salt is largely negative. It can retard corruption, but it cannot change corruption into incorruption. Light is more positive. It

not only reveals what is wrong and false but helps produce what is righteous and true. ~ John MacArthur

[Matthew 5:15](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

[John 3:19-21](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ “And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. ²⁰ “For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light lest his deeds be exposed. ²¹ “But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been done by God.”

Jesus expects you “To let your light shine!”

[Matthew 5:16](#) (LSB) ¹⁶ “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Jesus warns: Don't extinguish your light!

Some Christians are like candles: they glow with a warmth that draws people to them. Then again, you have the flashlight sort of believers who seem to be able to look right through you. Christians with the gift of teaching remind me of reliable, steady light bulbs—dispelling darkness, showing things for what they truly are. Then there are the laser-types, cutting right through the tomfoolery and getting things done. Searchlight people have a way of leading others out of darkness and guiding and directing them back to safety ~ Joni Eareckson Tada

Conclusion:

You are the church!

[Ephesians 4:11-12](#) (LSB) ¹¹ And He Himself gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ,

[Ephesians 1:18](#) (LSB)¹⁸ so that you—the eyes of your heart having been enlightened—will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

[Ephesians 1:19](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of the might of His strength,

[Ephesians 1:20–21](#) (LSB) ²⁰ which He worked in Christ, by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

[Ephesians 1:22–23](#) (LSB) ²² And HE PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Further Quotes for Your Consideration

The point of all this is explicitly brought out. *Your light* is, of course, a borrowed light. It is because they have received light from Jesus that the disciples can shine in the world. ~ **Leon Morris**

A secret Christian is as incongruous as a hidden light. Lights are to illuminate, not to be hidden; to be displayed, not to be covered. Christians are to be both subtle salt and conspicuous light. ~ John MacArthur

[Ephesians 5:8](#) says, “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.” We share the very light that Jesus Christ displayed. We are “the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden” ([Matthew 5:14](#)) ~ **R. Kent Hughes**

Damned sinners in hell shall not be allowed their light, being cast into utter darkness; and glorified saints in heaven shall not need their light, for God himself will be their everlasting light. ~ **Matthew Henry**

The Bible is not the light of the world, it is the light of the Church. But the world does not read the Bible, the world reads Christians! “You are the light of the world.” ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Intellectually, light is truth and darkness ignorance or error. Morally, light is purity and darkness evil. ~ **John Stott**

Christians are not utopians. Although we know the transforming power of the gospel and the wholesome effects of Christian salt and light, we also know that evil is ingrained in human nature and human society. ~ **John Stott**

Light is the first of the creator’s works. “Light manifests most adequately the divine operation in a world which, without it, is darkness and chaos” ~ **Gordon J. Wenham**

The darkness endured by our blessed Surety on the cross was only for three hours. The chains of darkness which shall bind all who reject his atonement and die in sin shall be for evermore. ~ **J. C. Ryle**

The essence of the Sermon on the Mount is stated here. The citizens of the kingdom must be salt and light, and their goal is to reach the world with the light of the gospel ~ **Grant R. Osborne**

Darkness is my point of view, my right to myself; light is God’s point of view. ~ **Oswald Chambers**

There is no greater darkness than ignorance of God. ~ **John Calvin**

At the very center of every person, where the knowledge of God, if it is to have any positive effects, must be embraced, there has settled a darkness—a darkness that only the light of the gospel can penetrate. ~ **Douglas J. Moo**

Spiritual darkness is spiritual bondage. ~ **Matthew Henry**

People choose the darkness and their condemnation lies in that very fact. They shut themselves up to darkness; they choose to live in darkness; they cut themselves off from the light. ~ **Leon Morris**

The nearer you get to the light the more you are aware of the darkness. ~ **David Martyn Lloyd-Jones**

Sons of light must not have fellowship with deeds, doctrines, or deceits of darkness.

Charles Spurgeon