

Salt and Light

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¹⁴ *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.* ¹⁵ *Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

What is the purpose of light?

To make visible that which is in the dark.

Some light is visible to the human eye, most light is not visible to the human eye. Some animals and insects can see a part of the light spectrum that we cannot.

Light is an energy beam that moves in wavelengths.

Along the electromagnetic spectrum, radio waves and microwaves are part of the infra-red-light spectrum.

Things like x-rays and gamma rays are a part of the ultra-light spectrum.

Light travels at 186,000 miles per second. For light to get from earth to the moon, it only takes 1.255 seconds.

Light is mentioned more than 250 times in the bible.

The first-time light appears in the bible, is *Gen 1:3, Let there be light.* God is described in the bible as being light. *God is light; in him there is no darkness. (1 John 1:5b-NIV)*

In John 8:12, Jesus said, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. Light in the Bible is a metaphor for having truth and Jesus.

Walking in darkness is the opposite of that. Jesus uses light and darkness in many ways to describe the contrast between light and darkness.

If you know Jesus, that is walking in the light. If you don't know Jesus, that is walking in darkness. Walking in darkness means you are in the world, you are a slave to sin, you have the devil as your father.

Let me say that again. If you are not a Christ follower, if you do not allow Christ to run your life, forgive your sin, and make you like Christ, thus pleasing God as Father...then...

...you are a slave to the world, a slave to sin, and a servant to the devil.

You might be a nice person.

You might be a member of a church.

You might be serving in events like Convoy of Hope, if you are not a follower and servant of Jesus Christ, you are a friend of the world, lover of sin and a puppet of the devil.

Ok, I think I made that clear. Now, you do not have to be all of that. You can be a friend of God, lover of Christ and light of the world. So, how do I do that? Invite, Jesus Christ to become your leader over your life.

For God so loved the world, that He gave his one and only son, that whosoever believes in him, shall not perish, but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

If you want that, or decide you need that today, make that decision, now. Just 3 verses later, Jesus is rejected, even though he offers eternal life.

Jesus said, Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. (John 3:19-NIV)

Why does Jesus use the light metaphor to describe who we are? Salt and light have some common ingredients. Here are **3 common ingredients** that will clearly explain, your purpose and mission in God's kingdom as light.

Salt and **light** are needed to sustain life.

Salt and **light** have purifying and healing qualities.

Salt and **light** have penetrating properties.

Without natural light, some of that which is alive shrivels up and dies. People even suffer, where there is limited access to light.

People who live in dark wintery climates, Finland, Russia, and Alaska, where sometimes you don't see daylight for several months at a time, must manufacture synthetic light. Or sit under lamps. There is a disorder for people who suffer from lack of light.

SAD. Seasonal affective disorder. The most common symptom is often depression. Why does this happen? Because there is not enough light. So, people sit in rooms, boosted by light so they can stay upbeat. This additional light keeps them from crashing into depression.

As light is a necessary ingredient for life, we should be offering light giving hope to a dark world. To a world shrouded in darkness. To people who are stumbling around in the dark, stubbing their toe. Bumping into walls.

Light is needed to sustain life.

Understand the metaphor, we are living in a dark world, and God calls us to give light. In Phil 2, Paul tells us to hold out God's word, and God's power to offer light...to those in darkness.

Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky ¹⁶ as you hold firmly to the word of life. (Phil 2:15-16-NIV)

You are to shine like stars, lights, to help people see true life.

Salt and light have purifying and healing qualities.

Light is beneficial to your well-being. Light is a good disinfectant. Used to kill germs, bacteria, or viruses.

Dr Jim Molly, germicidal, ultra-violet technology has been around for over 100 years. During the Corona virus, they tried to kill it with ultra-violet technology.

In subways, like New York, ultraviolet technology is used as a disinfectant on trains. Light has healing properties and is often used by dermatologists, to heal skin diseases, eczema, psoriasis.

Laser is a form of light and is used to repair and remove scars. Healing and purifying are benefits to light. The world and people in the world are infected, and Christ came as light to heal. To disinfect. To deliver.

Mankind is dying of a common contagion called sin. And God is using light, to shine so people can find a path to freedom in Christ out of the contagion. But we have to do our part.

Salt and light have penetrating properties.

And our part is to shine light, not so much on sin, the salt exposes that, we are to shine light on Christ, and Christ as the answer to the contagion of sin. The Apostle Paul shows us how to do this.

Paul is in prison, in Col 4, and he writes these words:

³ And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message,

Paul is not so concerned about getting out of prison, for his benefit, he is asking God, to get him out of prison for the benefit of others.

Paul is not asking for the prison doors to open, so I can get on with my comfortable and cushy life. Paul knows that God will open the door in due time. What I am most concerned about is those who have yet, to hear of Christ's atoning death.

Pray, he asks his friends at Colossae, that God would open the door of the message of the gospel, which burns inside of us, that has transformed us, and we want that message to transform others.

Pray a door is open for Christ's message to get out to the world that needs it. To my friends. To my family. Pray for an open door, like salt and light offering the atoning death of Christ to forgive sins, offer eternal life.

Then he says, I am asking for an opportunity to proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains,

...so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.

Paul is not complaining about the chains. On a previous occasion the chains opened a door to evangelism for Paul. Paul tells us that sometimes it cost a little something to proclaim the message of Christ.

Let me just read it straight from my Bible. ¹⁴ *And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear. (Phil 1:14-NIV)*

And Paul asks for prayer, for himself. ⁴ *Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.*

Pray that I may proclaim it clearly. This is the guy who wrote half the New Testament. Paul has done more to explain how salvation by grace works than any other New Testament writer.

This is the apostle, Paul; his scriptural writings are the gold standard for salvation. Do you think that Paul is not clear on the essentials of what it means to be a Christ follower?

I think Paul is suggesting, anybody, even me can get a little fuzzy on what it means to offer this tremendous message. If I have the opportunity to proclaim the message, pray that it will be clear.

Let me suggest 4 clear images that you can use, to proclaim Christ's message clearly.

Scales-Do or Done. *Titus 3:5-NIV*

⁵ *he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, (Titus 3:5-NIV)*

Ladder-God at top. *2 Cor 5:21-NIV*

²¹ *God made him who had no sin to be sin^[a] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor 5:21-NIV)*

Cell Phone-what do I say? Rom 10:13-NIV

¹³for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Rom 10:13-NIV)

Book Open-Your Story

Before Christ > Exploration >
Conversion > What I Enjoy Now!

Paul gives us a challenge. You believers at Colossae and in Kansas, you be wise. ⁵ *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders;*

Can I just be honest here? Can I just say it? People far from God, watch the words, watch the ways, and watch the ethical and attitudes of Christians.

And they watch them closely, like a hawk. Outsiders watch the lives, watch the spirits, watch the parenting of Christ followers. They watch.

And your behavior, your demeanor, your sacrifice, your friendliness, it all either draws them a little closer to Christ, turns them off, or sends them home justifying why they don't need God's help.

Hey, a little soul searching. A little naval gazing. A little gut-wrenching honesty. How are you doing here? Paul knows this. He goes, hey gang, be careful in how you act toward outsiders.

Because they are always watching. And if the door of conversation opens, make the most of every opportunity.

Offer that prayer.

Invite them to church.

Let someone know they are loved deeply by God. Make the most of every opportunity.

I asked this last week, what is our lead card? As we are having conversations with family or friends? What is our lead card?

⁶ *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Col 4-NIV)*

Paul says that it is grace, mercy, kindness, all people matter to God, non-judgmental love.

Let your conversation be full of grace. Then he finishes his request for prayer. Seasoned with salt.

