

## THE SALT OF THE EARTH

Jeremias Antonetty

The bible tells us we are the salt of the earth, and if we are going to reach a nation, if we're going to reach people we are going to have to be salty.

I remember when I was a younger Christian and I was living with my brother, I went to clean out the refrigerator and it had a bad smell. There was a piece of cod fish (bacalao), I asked my sister if I needed to throw it out and she asked me what kind it was and I told her. She told me I didn't have to throw it out because it does not go bad, it's salty. Salt preserves it, it's still good.

Matthew 5:13 says "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

The bible tells us that we are the salt of the earth. This is what Jesus spoke to his disciples metamorphically to give them an understanding of an area of Christianity that was so profound, and so deep. They took a hold of it, and since the time of the book of Acts that salt still has savor, it still has flavor.

The apostle's made such an impression upon the world that almost 2,000 years later you and I are the product of that salt. I'm talking about the true Christ like life and if we're going to be like Christ we're going to have to learn who Christ is. Just because we've been sitting in church and reading the bible doesn't mean we have the full revelation, we still can be taught.

The bible gives us different descriptions of who we are.

The bible tells us we're like sheep going astray,

1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls and that's Jesus Christ. The world is hopelessly corrupt, so therefore it needs salt. If God were to remove the Christian from this earth there would be no earth. The only reason this earth is preserved is because we're on it. Somebody has to pray for it, somebody has to make an impression. Somebody has to speak to somebody about Jesus.

The bible tells us we are like newborn babes,

1 Peter 2:2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation. I'm just giving you some examples of how God looks at us in the bible.

It tells us, we are as obedient children in 1 Peter 1:14 says, As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

The bible also tells us we are as stranger and pilgrims on the earth.

1Pet 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

1 Pet 2:5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. The good thing about that is that our sacrifices are in the spirit wherein the Old Testament it was an actual sacrifice. The bible tells us we are a living sacrifice and that we're living stones and we are a spiritual priesthood, a spiritual house.

The bible tells us we are to be good stewards,

1 Pet 3:10 For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. These are basic Christian principles.

The word salt in the Hebrew is 'halas' and it means to be seasoned, as in seasoning food. There were some sacrifices, which were sprinkled with salt. There were some covenants that were called salt covenants. One of the meanings of salt is a symbol of lasting covenant because it protects food from pollution and preserves it unchanging. There were some covenants in the bible that God called salt covenants and there are actual scriptures pertaining to these covenants. Who's the salt of the earth? Jesus is the salt of the earth. He says, salt is good but if it loses its saltiness how can you make it salty again. Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another. So salt is important for relationships. If I don't have any salt in my marriage, my marriage will not come out to be very much. Do you know why so many marriages are ending in divorce? Though people make all kinds of excuses to why marriages are failing I can come up with but one: there's no salt in the marriage. There's no flavor in the marriage.

What does it mean to have salt in ourselves? It includes all the parts of righteous, godly, somber life. To walk with God is to set God always before us, to act as always under His eye. It is to constantly care in all things to please God and in not wanting to offend Him. It is to be followers of Him as dear children. Are you followers of Christ? Is there salt in your life? Have you made him the apple of your eye? Are you constantly seeking Christ to put flavor in your life? We have to be careful that we don't worship the bible. We have to be careful that we don't worship worship.

We should not strive to find favor in the sight of man, nor should we try to find eternal comfort in this world.

The world will hate you because you don't belong to it and it will persecute you and even kill you for the sake of his name. The Lord pleads with us to have salt in ourselves to be the flavor of his life in love to a dying world. We are the only preservatives in this world. We are the only preservatives where we are. Sometimes we move from where we are because we're tired of our neighbor or surroundings. But if we must move, our neighbors need to hear the gospel from us? How are they going to be affected with love? We are the only preservatives in this world, so let us not lose our taste. Let Christ be our chief desire and may we please him in every way.

Let's look at the word 'good' from the scripture that says 'salt is good'. The word is 'kalos' and it means "better", salt is better. It means honest, beautiful. When Jesus said you are the salt of the earth, he was saying you are the honesty of the earth. You are beautiful of the earth. You are shapely and magnificent, commendable. I have put you in the earth so you would be the commendable ones, the holy ones, and the honest ones. He put us here that our lives would have such a radiance of love of God and that the flavor of his Spirit would not cease to come out of our lives and that when they touch us they would be affected. Otherwise what is the sense of our Christian life, if we don't share with someone else.

It means to be praiseworthy and noble.

You are the noble ones of the earth and if you lose your nobility, if you lose your honesty, or beauty how are you going to get it again? Salt is good. Are you salt?

Let's look at the term, 'if it loses its saltiness'. It simply means to lose your savor, to be foolish, to make foolish, to lose your taste and be flat.

In eastern countries there are still places that take the salt which has no more taste to it and throw it in the street so that men will trample over it.

Let me share some things that make the Christian life tasteless:

A life without prayer

A life without worship

A life without church

A life without fellowship

A life without witness

A life without bible study

When you depend on the grace of God you nullify all the things of the flesh because when grace kicks in the power of God comes with it.

A different aspect of salt is this,

Salt is a mineral, sodium chloride, it's a white crystalline substance used mainly for seasoning for preservatives. Salt is not only one of the most important substances mentioned in the bible but it's necessary for life.

The Hebrew people were aware of the importance of salt and they actually knew it was good for their health. Look what Job 6:6 says, Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg? Every time we look at the word salt even though there may be negative connotations to it, salt itself is not negative. For example when God went to Sodom and Gommorah to destroy it there were some righteous people there. God took Lot and his family out of there but someone looked back. The angel told them not to look back, but his wife could not resist because her heart was still in Sodom and Gommorah. The bible says, she looked back and God turned her into a pillar of salt. There's a place in Israel where they believe they found a pillar of salt, which is Lot's wife. So, we may ask how is that healthy? Well, that salt which means preserved is preserved in our memories forever not to look back when the Lord says go forward. Otherwise, God will make an example of you, then people will look at you and remember what God said. Every time you speak of Lot's wife she is preserved very much in your mind.

Salt had a significant place in Hebrew worship it was included in the grain offering. Season all your grain offering with salt, do not leave the salt of the covenant of your God out of your grain offerings add salt to all your offerings. It means if you're working in church or wherever you're doing anything for God, if you're not seasoned with the Holy Ghost, it has no flavor in it and it is not acceptable to God. It's just an offering. That's how important salt is in the life of the believer. If you don't pick up a pencil in

the name of Jesus and the Holy Ghost it means nothing. How important is salt? Very important. If we are going to touch anything, or anybody, if we're going go anywhere on the earth, are we going to leave a lasting memory of the Christ.

Ezek. 43:24 You are to offer them before the LORD, and the priests are to sprinkle salt on them and sacrifice them as a burnt offering to the LORD. God said don't leave any salt out of the offering, it's important.

Ezra 6:9 Whatever is needed-- young bulls, rams, male lambs for burnt offerings to the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine and oil, as requested by the priests in Jerusalem-- must be given them daily without fail. God told his people be to sure to supply the men of God with what they needed so that they could perform their duties. That's salt to God.

You are the salt of the earth, you are the salt in your church, you are the salt in your relationship. Are your worldly friends influencing you more than you are influencing them? We are called to reconcile a dead world back to God. We are called to be the life, the taste, the savor.

Salt was also used to establish covenants:

2 Chronicles 13:5 Don't you know that the LORD, the God of Israel, has given the kingship of Israel to David and his descendants forever by a covenant of salt? They knew the significance of salt and the reason he said this, is because the covenant would be established not only through blood, but also through salt to preserve it.

Every time you read covenant in the bible think about salt because without salt there is no covenant. You think it's a coincidence that the Dead Sea is nine times saltier than any sea. I believe what God is telling us spiritually is that we as Christians are much more anointed, much more salty than anyone in the world. Did you know that in the bible they used to rub newborn babies with salt? They believed it would promote good health.

Ezek 16:4 On the day you were born your cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water to make you clean, nor were you rubbed with salt or wrapped in cloths.

During the time of war the enemies' lands were sown with salt to render them barren. In Judges 9, Abimelech pressed his attack against the city until he had it captured and killed its people, then he destroyed the city and scattered salt over it. He did that to kill the fertilization. You may say this is negative, but it's not because wherever God puts you and there is living sin, God will sprinkle you all over the place to kill it. If you're going to school for the first time and there's whole lot of gossip going on just let them know you're a Christian. Let God sprinkle you all over the place. Wherever you sit there's holiness there. Whenever they see you coming you just sprinkle salt and kill the sin.

Lastly, but not least Jesus described his disciples as the salt of the earth urging them to imitate the usefulness of salt. You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt loses its saltiness how can it be made salty again. It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and be trampled by the foot of men.

In the book of Heb 6:1-6

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so. It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

God has called us to press in, press on, press forward.

The bible talks about our conversation being seasoned with salt.

Col. 4:6 Let your conversation be always full of grace seasoned with salt so that you may know how to answer everyone.

The bible also says you're a stream.

We are a living river, inside of us there is a living river. Our river is a tight river, the tighter the river the more force there is. If there is a wide river it will move but it doesn't have that much force, as if you have a small river. It moves with power because everything is concentrated in that one area. Jesus said, that the road we walk is a narrow road, it's a powerful road. James tells us that we have to be careful because we can't have to streams flowing out of one river. Some of us have a stream of the discos and then on Sundays we have a little stream of the Holy Ghost dance. We watch anything during the week, but when we come to church we're holy.

James 3:11-12 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives or a grape vine bear figs, neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. We are a stream of living waters.

We can't get involved in the things of the world. You know how you lose your saltiness? When you allow the water of the world to water you down. But the bible tells not to love the world neither the things of the world. For whoever loves the world and the things of the world the love, [the salt] of the Father is not in them.

God put salt in the heavens. We are called to preserve the world from corruption, to season its insipidity, to freshen and sweeten it.

The uniqueness of salt:

There are no two grains of salt the same. If you take a grain of salt and place it under a microscope, you will find that every grain of salt has its own characteristics and not one is the same.

Even within a straight line, if you drew the straightest line in the world its still imperfect because if you took a microscope and looked deep into it you would see circles in it.

There are no two grains of salt the same. We are so unique, none of us are the same. What I have to do for the Lord, you can not do, but what you have to do for the Lord I can not do. You have a destiny and a purpose to fulfill that only you can fulfill. You are the salt of the earth. As long as we are one the God

has given us a unique calling. That's why we never have to be jealous or envious of anyone else, because where God called you to be you have to be.

Salt makes you thirsty.

Have you ever eaten anything salty at night and have had to get up and drink something. God has called us to go into the world and make them thirsty for Jesus. God has called us to go into the world and be such a flavor that when we leave them they would smack their lips and say, "I'm thirsty for some more". They'll come knocking on your door and want to hear more about Jesus. I'm thirsty. That's why Jesus said whoever thirsts let him come to me..for I will give him water to drink and that water will well up in them into eternal life.

Salt can blind

We have such a mighty influence. The bible says that the devil the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they can not see the glory of God and the gospel Christ. But you and I have the power to blind them from the devil so they can see the gospel of Jesus Christ, the light of God's glory.

When you are a light you blind people. It was that same light that blinded Paul when he was on his way to Damascus, the bible says he fell, he fell off his high horse. And the light appeared to him and he said, Oh, Lord who are you? Jesus answered, "I am Jesus". For three days he was blind. He was blind because of the glory and the presence and the majesty of Jesus Christ. He was blinded by the light. Salt can blind a man. We're so mighty in the Spirit that when we're around people they should be saying, "I don't know if I can be around you because you blind me, you give me something to think about."

Testimony

There's this young man I know and one day we were talking and he said, "You scare me", and I asked why do I scare you and he said, "because you have power to take".

Salt causes pain on an open wound.

Be very careful when you're ministering to people, don't overwhelm them. Be tenderhearted, be gentle and compassionate.

Our body's need salt.

If you did not have salt in your body you would die. When God created us he put salt in our bodies. Too little and you die, too much and you have high blood pressure. You have to have just enough.

The tongue has sections that tastes only salt.

When you lick there are sections that tastes sweet, salt, etc. and you get the fullness of it. Our flavor of salt goes much beyond the borders of the prophets who were before us, simply because they were salt of all the Canaan land, but we are the salt of the earth. The prophets were the salt of the Old Testament, prophesying to the people of God. But you and I have a greater responsibility to affect the whole world. God has put you to affect the whole world. For we must go into all the world to be a witness of the love of God. This working of the Spirit in our lives is a divine intervention that allows us to influence others

to make a commitment to Christ. And we must do all that is possible to present with attractiveness the Lord Jesus Christ as the only hope to all mankind.

How should our lives reflect the life of Jesus?

1. It should be reflected in our character: Keep in mind that character is made in the anvil and it's a byproduct of trials and tribulations. Everyone who claims to be a Christian must undergo the fire in order to develop character.

The anvil simply means: sorrow and pain. Character is made out of sorrow and pain, trials, and tribulations. There's no way you can have salt in your life and not go through trials and tribulations, pains and sufferings.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines character as: The combination of qualities or features that distinguish one person or group or thing from another. A public estimation of someone.

The bible talks about a wonderful woman of character and her name is Ruth. A noble woman, she was so influential in her time, she had so much salt in her life that the whole town knew that she was a woman of nobility. Ruth 3:11 says, and now my daughter don't be afraid I will do for you all you ask, all my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character." The bible speaks aloud of a wife of noble character. Prov. 31:10, a wife of noble character who can find she is worth more than rubies. You cannot put a price on nobility. One that receives truth is noble.

Acts 17:11 says, Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. If you're noble than you receive truth.

Character comes from perseverance, therefore since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ to whom we have gained access by faith into this grace. In which we now stand and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God not only so but we also rejoice in our sufferings because we know that suffering produces perseverance, perseverance character, and character hope and hope does not disappoint us because God has poured his love into our hearts by the Holy Ghost whom he has given us.

Character means experience, perseverance develops experience and when you are the salt of the earth you will be one who has experience.

We should have salt in our speech life. In our conversation, we talk about Moses' studding, but the bible says,

Acts 7:22 Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action.

Notice, when you speak something you better have some action to back it up. And when you are a salty Christian your speech is powerful because everything you say will affect someone you speak to. Watch what you say. What you say, you will have. If you say, I'm sick then you are sick. If you say, I have a condition then you have a condition. But if you say, devil this is your condition then it's his condition. Reverse that curse, be powerful in speech. When you speak with people let them know that you belong to Jesus. Let your speech be so influential that the power of God will leave an impression in their mind

and in their hearts, even if it seems they're not listening to you when they go home you'll be on their mind. If you think back, who spoke to you and left an impression on your mind?

2 Cor. 6:4-7 Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left;

There it is again, truthful speech, power of God; mighty in speech mighty in action; mighty speech is always accompanied by mighty power. That's why we must be careful how we speak.

We are to be an example of good speech

1 Tim 4:12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Are you an example in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. You are the salt of the earth.

Let us be an example of love to all

Because love is patient, love is kind, love does not envy, love does not boast it is not proud, it is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no records of wrong, love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth, it always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always preserves, love never fails.

This is my proof that the love of God is salt: He preserved this world by sending his only begotten Son. For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16 the center of the bible, if you never heard any other verse in the bible that verse is enough to convince you, to save you, to sanctify you, and to bring you into heaven.

You're the salt of the earth, if the salt loses its saltiness how can it become salty again. Love is the greatest preservative in the ingredients of life because it binds all things together. You are the salt of the earth.