

that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His ~~marvelous~~ marvelous light. ~~and~~

Now the same is true here. We are poor of spirit, merciful, and we are to be salt. And when we consider the functions and the purposes of the Christian in this world then we come to discover the mind and purpose of God. We are told very clearly the relationship of the Christian to the world in general. This question of the function of the Christian is one of the most urgent matters confronting this church and the individual Christian at this present time. This is a difficult one to deal with and yet it is very clear in the scriptures as we saw in our considerations back in verse 10 and 11. It may well be that these urgent problems may be before some of us. It is like many that we might suffer persecution as the sin in the world becomes aggravated. The persecutions of the church is like to be increased. Many Christians today are already experiencing this and we need to pray for our brethren who are suffering such. But the really most urgent question arises even here and now for us in this country. What relationship do Christians have to the world and to society. What does our text say about the Christian in the world. We have a description here or an implication as to what Jesus says. What then is the Biblical attitude toward the world? Well, it is a tragic century

INTRODUCTION: The words of this text are the text of the most famous sermon ever preached, the Sermon of the Mount. Seated on the side of the mountain of Galilee, Jesus addressed this sermon primarily to his 12 disciples and the others who were present. The contents of the sermon have been considered in the past several messages but we come to the fresh section. We come from the descriptions of the Christian character which has been given in verse 1-12 to an applied description as He comes to tell us what a Christian is. This brings us to consider how the Christian should manifest his life. We realize what we are, what we must be. You must remember that this was not just an evangelistic sermon, it was not to present the plan of salvation but it describes some of the characteristics of those who are saved and lets them know what kind of behaviour is expected of them with respect to God and fellow human beings. You see, it is futile for us to expect the unsaved to apply the principles of the sermon of the mount to their unregenerated lives. The moral, spiritual, and ethical standards proclaimed by Jesus in the sermon on the mount are quite beyond the reach and grasp of the unbelieving world. You might take for example the golden rule. All things therefore whatsoever you would take men should do unto you, even so do you also

unto them, we often hear it said if anybody follows that rule it follows that he would be in the kingdom of heaven. But that is an idle remark for it is only subjects of the kingdom of Christ who are capable of observing such a rule.

As we look at these beatitudes we see a revolutionary idea. They were heavenly rather earthly in their estimates as to what constitutes blessedness. The unregenerated world has ~~never~~ never held to such estimates as Jesus talked about here bringing blessedness.

I. An applied description of the Christian

Here we have a figure, of the Christian life. He does not give such an astounding figure as one might expect but what could be more impressive and expressive than the figure that he does use than common salt. Just a little pinch of salt. Everybody knows its meaning, everybody knows what it is for. Ye my people are the salt of the earth. The figure under which God's people describes sets forth great paths to which God's people are called. This is the important and influence and responsibility of the people that He has talked about that were poor, who mourned, who were meek, who hungered after righteousness, who were merciful. What is their importance? What is their influence? What is their responsibility? And Jesus in one short verse emphasises the answer and He puts it in a pronoun "Ye are". And you need to

capitalize the pronoun that He is emphasizing and if we would give the proper emphasis to it that our Saviour put to it, we would say "Ye, Ye, Ye are the light of the world". And you would capitalize all three. By saying not only light but salt. So the emphasis is on "ye".

When Jesus said, these Galilean fishermen we know understood what He was talking about. They understood the figure of this description. They knew what salt did. They knew how important it was when they were fishing on the seas of Galilee down there to have what - salt. You are salt. You are the salt of the land, of the earth, Jesus said.

II. The world

The Christian is not someone who is to live in isolation. He is in the world and he is not of it. He bears a relationship to it. There are 2 things that a Christian is told that he must be. Not of the world in his mind, in his outlook, and yet it means that he must not retire out of the world. This is the whole error of the monastery in which the living of the Christian was meant to necessitate the separation of one from society and living a life of contemplation. This is denied everywhere in the scriptures. Nowhere more completely than in this verse for our Lord draws out this truth as we read in Peter, the first epistle, chapter 2, ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people

meat into which it is rubbed. He is as different as the salt is for the wound into which it is put. This external difference still needs to be emphasized and stressed.

He is to glory in this difference. He is to be as different from other people as the Lord Jesus Christ was clearly different from the world. Separated, unique, understanding, and kind, and this is one of the great functions of the Christian.

III. What is the function of salt?

We see first of all that one of the great functions of salt is to preserve.

As we come to understand the Christian functions it is his business to preserve as an antiseptic. Take for example as piece of meat. There are certain germs on its surface.

Perhaps in its very substance that was derived from the animal. The business of salt when it is rubbed into the meat, it preserves it against those agencies which tend to disintegrate. Salt's main function therefore is surely

negative rather than positive. It is not only the function of the Christian in the world because as we shall see later

that he is to be the light of the world but this is the first instance and the first effect as the Christian and

that is to preserve. It is still true out in the country when you kill hogs it saves your meat. It preserves your meat.

and it is very tragic because its own life is completely disapproved and demolished its own favorite philosophy. When we read what philosophers and poets have said of the last century as they talked about the golden era that was to come it was based on the theory of evolution, not only in the biological sense, and the controlling idea was that the whole of life was advancing, developing, and going upward. We were told in a pretty biological sense, man had risen out of the animal and had arrived at a certain stage of development. Wars were going to be abolished, diseases were going to be cured, suffering was going to be no more and finally eradicated. It was to be an amazing century. Most of the problems were going to be solved for man had at last rally begun to think. The masses through education would cease to give themselves to drink, immorality and vice and they would hold conferences instead of rushing on into war. The whole world was going to be a paradise. By acts of parliament all of these things were going to be brought to pass.

Many people living in the world today believe the same thing. You still find a remnant of such teaching and such places today.

But the Bible teaches and what Jesus implied in this text. What does it imply? It clearly implies, rottenness,

in the earth, it implies a tendency to pollution, to become foul and offensive, that is what the Bible has to say about this world. It is fallen sinful and bad. It has a tendency to evil and wards. It is like meat which has a tendency toward pollution. And so as a result of sin the fall. Life in the world in general tends to drift toward a state of corruption. This is the only right sane ~~the~~ view to take of humanity. Instead of going upward, it goes exactly in the opposite direction. It tends to festor. There are these germs of evil that infect and unless checked they will cause disease. The Christian should not be surprised at what is taking place because this is a scriptural position. The Bible is endless in illustrations and we think about the first book in the Bible. The world was perfect because sin entered the evil pollution elements at once began to show ~~it~~ itself. We read about the sixth chapter of Genesis and we find that God said, My spirit shall always strive with man. Evil in the world was terrible and God sent a flood. When we come to think of Sodom we think of a sin where sin was almost unthinkable and the story in the Bible tells us that God blotted it out. What lied ahead of us? Clearly if we do not start by holding this biblical doctrine at the center of our thinking our prophecy must of necessity be false. The world is bad, sinful and evil. Human society

without God is corrupt and downragging. No nation in the world is safe without God. No family in the world without God is safe. No man in the world is safe without God. Human society is corrupt and corrupting without God. That is what the figure of salt so strikingly sets forth and implies. They are to conserve that the world is corrupt and corrupting is attested to in every direction that you look today. As you look and see how the world takes a race for gold, take the greed for poverty, the awful clashing everywhere of great races of men, we see the race for amusement and for entertainment and people must be amused, they must be entertained and we see that look for things more sensational than ever before.

What does this say about the Christian in the world? He says The kind of world in which you have been looking ~~you~~, you are to be salt. What does this tell us? The first thing that it tells us is that we are to be unlike the world and we need to underscore ~~that~~ that. There is no need to ~~stress~~ stress that it is perfectly obvious. Salt is essentially different from the world. It exercises all of its qualities by being different. The very characteristic of saltiness proclaims the difference, even a pinch of salt, a small amount of salt is out of proportion at once to anything in this world. The Christian is a man who is essentially different from everybod else. He is different as the salt is from

ot make these pronouncements. The main task of the church is to evangelise and preach the gospel. The Christian church today ~~stands~~ spends most of her time in denouncing Communism it seems to me that the main result will be that Communists will not be likely to listen to the preaching of the gospel if the church continues to denounce and shuts the evangelistic door upon that section. Believing Communists have a soul, they have a soul that needs to be saved, in exactly the same way that everybody else has a soul. It is the business of the church and the representatives of the church to evangelise all conditions, all classes, everywhere. The moment that the church begins to intervene in politics and social and economics therefore she hampers and hinders herself in the God appointed task of evangelism. Let the individual play the part of the citizen, belong to any political party that you choose. That is something for the individual to decide. The church is not concerned as a church about these things. Her business is ~~to~~ to preach the gospel and whenever the church has stuck to her task we have seen changes. When we think about the great awakening during Richard Baxter's preaching not only were the people of the church revived but many from the world on the outside were converted the whole life and town was effected. The evil, the sin, the vice, was controlled. This happened not

In the Sea of Galilee it saved their fish. These disciples knew what He was talking about. Then the means by which saving was going to be done. A means by which saving was to be protected as they function as salt. As the climate in Palestine it was indispensable for the preservation of food. A bag of salt was reckoned as precious as a man's life. And so it preserved the food. Food spoils without this. And so society becomes corrupt and greed and lustful and indifferent and decays without the salt of the Christian.

Second, salt provides savour. Or it prevents food from being insipid. This is undoubtedly a further function of salt. Life without Christianity is insipid. Does not the world today prove that? Look at the pleasure ~~mania~~ mania. Clearly people are finding life dull and boring so that thousands of them are rushing out for entertainment to this or that. But the Christian does not need those entertainments because he has a savour in life, his Christian faith. Take Christianity out of life and the world and what an insipid thing life becomes, especially when one gets old or one is on his death bed, it is utterly tasteless. So a pinch of salt provides savour. T

Third, it promotes digestion. It gives zest to food. The Christian folk ought to add joy to the common day because they are Christians. Food otherwise would be distasteful and

not palatable but a pinch of salt aides at this point.

IV. How is the Christian to do this?

In the first place is the church just to make ~~the~~ pronouncements? There should be a vital distinction between the church and the individuals Christian. Many Christians have the idea that if the church speaks out on the world of politics or economics or international affairs that that will take the place of his salt. There are vast majorities interpret this text as saying that the church ought to denounce Communism, talk about war, international situations and similiar problems in a general way and yet I believe that this is the most serious misunderstanding of this verse of scripture. However they feel that they have truth ~~in~~ on their side when they point out that the prophets in the Old Testament talked about the church and nation. Of course, we know that there is no distinction between the church and the state then and the prophets addressed the whole nation. They were speaking about the entire life of the people but when we come to the church in the New Testament days it is not identified with the nation or nations in any way at all. The result was that Paul or the earlier apostles never commented on the government of the Roman Empire to a great extent. There are many great pronouncements by the church. The thing boils down as to how we are to do this, to the

individual by the individual life, his character, by just being the man that he is in the various speres that he finds himself.

First by his personal purity. Salt preserves and conserves all it well if the salt is brought into contact with the meat at the right time. And so it is in Christianity by the right kind of lives on ~~our~~ part and by the right kind of examples on our part, we will become the purifying and the preserving power. It is healing. It is changing. It is correction. It is challenging. It is a stimulating power to make the world better. For exampel, when we think of this we think of a man who might walk into the company of people and his very presence will effect the entire conversation and modify the language and the actions of the group. He will cause ~~the~~ them to cease corruption and because he is a Christian man and because of his life, because of his character, because of his general deportment, he is already controlling evil. This ought to happen in your home, in your shop, wherever you live, that when you come in, you should be salt. Why of course, you should be salt to the political life. You should be salt everywhere. You should register and vote in the affairs of society. Chrstian ~~and~~ individuals ought to be good citizens in the contry.

But you say I thought you said that church ~~was~~ was not

preaching. He was the salt of the earth. God's saving salt. What we are is vital inside. One man of incorruptable character stands like a great mountain calling the world to the heights above. We should not take any short roads or short cuts. We must live with yourself and you must answer to God. We must be salt which touching the world with saltiness we can counteract corruption and bring healing and health.

Salt must be applied. Salt must contact the meat. Salt is not to be kept in its place and meat in another place but they are to be brought together. That means that God's people are to go out into the world and into the places of society. You must not go into a cave and shut yourself up and say, I will do my best not to be contaminated. Whatever men ~~suff~~ suffer in sin and die you are to go. You are to go with the contact and the Christian appeal and the Christian message and save decaying and dying humanity. Salt must make contact to be affective. A man is not to be a Christian only on Sunday morning as he looks into the face of the preacher and sings out of a hymn book or as he greets heartily men around the front door of the church. He must be a Christian on Monday as another seeks to take advantage of him. He must say to himself, I am the friend, the Son of God and I cannot take such a course that misrepresents Jesus,

because the church denounced them but because the church preached the gospel and individual lives were changed and thus they became salt in the community.

In the Old Testament every form add revival brought general benefit to the society. Constant reformation found itx affected the whole life, not because of parliament or laws that were passed but because those that were touched became salt. Then the perfect proof of this principles is that in the last 50 years the church paid more attention to politics and the social economic situation than in the whole of the previous 100 years. We have talked about social application of Christianity. Pronouncements we have made resolutions and church assemblies. We have all been in tremendous interest in the practical application, but what is the result? No one can dispute it. We are living in a society in which there is more immorality than 50 years ago, in which there is more vice, and lawbreaking, more lawlessness than ever before. Though we try to bring them about directly by applying principles the main trouble is that there are few far too few Christians people and that those of us who are Christians are not sufficient salt. By this I do not mean aggressive. I mean Christian in a true sense. Just a little bit of salt, a little pinch, can affect a great mass as we look at life and look at society the world that is

at the decay that is setting in amongst ~~the~~ all classes of people. We look at the horrible divorces and separations, the sanctities of life, the increase in drinking, and the stealing. These are problems that will not be settled by parliament or by newspaper articles. They will not be settled by philosphers who try to shine, they will not ~~be~~ settled by police. Should they be set up in the world. They will not keep the world from corrupting and rottenness. They will not be saved by the public schools and politicians ~~not~~ matter how good our public schools may be. We know that these characteristics are internal, spiritual, practical, and the followers of Jesus Christ are the only ones who can furnish salt. This pinch of salt.

In the name of Jesus Christ ~~but~~ for the humble god fearing men and women in any state or any county or any town it would rot. They are the salt of the earth.

A young boy fresh from his mother's teachings and prayers went to work in a large lawyers' office where he was bewildered by the strange surroundings. Tears almost filled his eyes. What is the matter with you, youngster, said a coarse voice. Do you want to go back to your mother's apron strings? N, he replied, but we never said such things in my mother's home as you say here. The answer brought laughter but the head of the office, Gentlemen, this lad is right and as long as he

stays with us, I must request you to modify your speech. You see the whole tone of the office was changed and altered by the lad's presencd who acted as salt. A Christian as C Christ thought ought to save the world with personal goodness just as Joseph in Potiphar's house with the temptation that was terrible knew that his own life and his own influence stood in the balance. How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? So every Christian everywhere is under the eyes of God and is held under the spell of God. Just as Paul on the storn ~~svept~~ sea with the 276 fellow passengers in the temptest stood and said, Be ~~hat~~ afraid, all shall come to land. I prayed ~~for~~ for you and God's angel has testified to me of the certainty that not one of all the whole shipload shall perish. There was a good man in God's hands. He was salt to save the ship. Just as in many a family there is a little wife or mother who by devotion to Christ in the means of warding off a thousand perils and turning aside 1000 poisoned arrows meant to reach that family, she is the salt of the earth. The richest possible possible possession for community is a fight kind of a man of a woman. The richest possible blessing for a home is a right kind of a person there. One said, so tenderly of John Chrysoston the great preacher of Constantinople, It were better for the sun to cease his shining than for John Chrysoston to cease his

satisfied, spending more on your clothes than you give to save a lost world. Caring more for earthly possessions than for heavenly treasures.

We may become useless and fruitless and always under condemnation even as the barren fir tree that failed to produce. Christian friend, what are you good for?

How much are you good for? Would the world really miss you if you died? Would the world grieve at your going? Would the world be poor if you were to die today? Would heaven be any richer if you were to die? You and I are going to need our work every bit of the missionary work we have ever done we shall answer face to face with Jesus for the deeds done in the body. Good for nothing; that shall be the portion of any groups of God's people if they fail to be ~~something~~ salt to be salt. I feel very deeply that you are either salting the world or it is corrupting you. You are either making a mark that is lasting and unchanging or the world about you is turning you into its way. Which is it in your case? Where do you stand? Is your passion for Jesus and His great gospel gone? Or has that kind of devotion died within you so that now you say that I will hedge against putting forth my best power for Christ. Any man or woman who is content with less.

~~Proverbs~~ As one great man said. I should like to give 1000 years for just one purpose and that purpose is ~~that~~ to

We are to go into every realm. What would the world be without Christianity. Imagine South Norfolk this 25,000 without a church, without a preacher, without a Sunday school, without a prayer meeting, without Sunday, without an open Bible, without a Christian voice, what would this city be like? What fearful deeds of destruction the adversaries of Satan would work if the conditions I have just named existed? Ponder the warning. Now what a fearful possibility is suggested in our text. The great quantities from the ~~mines~~ marshes of Cyprus were hid in their houses are on remote mountains by some to avoid payment of the tax, some were put on the floors of the houses which was of common earth and soon the salt by the contact lost its saltiness and then was used to make hard surfaces on the roads. The Christian either redeems the world or the world robs him of his Christianity.

Moody once wrote in a man's Bible this book will keep you from your sins or your sins will keep you from the book. The warning is solemn. We either lose the gift and grace which has been given or either we propagate. We can be a sensational witness for Jesus Christ in an inconspicuous day by day witnessing in a silent manner and yet what if the salt becomes stale if it loses its taste, it is worthless. You can become like that. We may easily lose our

savour. Salt left in contact with a damp soil ceases to be salty. It is neither fit for the ground nor to be used except trodden under feet. Lot is an example of this. Sodom went on its way regardless of his presence in its midst. And he lost his saltiness, there. The seven churches in Asia lost their saltiness and they were trodden down. You can lose your spiritual potency. You can decline in spiritual power. You can become stale and insipid and unprofitable as my friend and my servant even after I have saved you, Jesus says. There are illustrations that are endless in the Bible and out of it. Paul had the very idea in mind when he said, Oftimes there comes over me great terrible fear lest I have preached to others I myself shall become a castaway. He did not mean that he would fail finally to get into heaven. But he meant that he had lost his vitality and his enthusiasm and his vision and his passion and had become cold blooded and a castaway in the kingdom of God, a man discarded and left by the way because my attitude and my spirit ~~is~~ have brought this about. This loss of savour is not only an alarming possibility it is also a distressing reality all too often. The salt can lose its savour, let a Christian grow careless, let him get cold hearted and he will find that his enthusiasm and his great religion ~~again~~ dies out of his heart and he goes downward. Christianity is a passion. Christianity is a life of love,

is vital, it enlarges. The Bible gives us the tragic picture of the whole churches going on the rocks. The seven churches of Asia all went on the rocks. The salt lost its savour. They became contaminated by the world instead of changing the world they went with the world and let it change them instead of putting forth their influence the world put its influence on them and the seven churches of Asia which are shone like 7 cities on 7 high hills during the early years of Christianity had their candlesticks removed. The sad story is told in Revelations. What a story it make. To one church he said thou has t lost thou first love. O the tragedy when a church loses its first love, when the warmth of Christ's love does not dominate the lives of its members, the world can never be won to Christ through a cold blooded program.

To another church He said, thou ~~hast~~ hast a name thou livest and thou art dead. You meet, you gath r on Sunday, many of you come and the preacher speaks and the choir sings and the people listen but Jesus said, you have ~~not~~ a name that you live but in reality you are dead. They want with the world, the played its tricks, they laughed at its laughter they pursued its course, the heart and passion that belonged to the people of Christ's church were gone. We need to be careful lest we become mechanical and for you dear people of this church lest we become proud and presumptuous and self

serve God.

Christ must save and Christ alone. Do you not long to lift your voice, to make Him known? As the end of Dr. J.M. Frost the well known and beloved Sunday school board leader said in a whisper, Please do not do that because I am entirely ready, and have been ready for a long time. I should like to stay for just one purpose, to have more time to plead for Christ, to write for Him, to give for Him, and to live for Him, but the time is about due. I've been like one waiting in a railway station for a delayed train to come. And then the train came. ~~Maybe~~ Maybe it was a chariot from the skies like the one that took Elija home. Do you think money is the main thing? That thought is of Satan and he is laughing at you? Do you think pleasure is a great thing? Do you think the mad rush for earthly things is the main object of life? I placed you there in the world, Jesus said, I saved you and endowed you ~~from~~ ~~with~~ a great business, that you should be the salt of the earth. What have you done with your trust?

What have you done to forfeit the power that you should exert? Repent and do the first works, Yea ask the Lord Jesus to infuse into you His own strong sweet pure nature If you are false, you will bring happiness to children, cheer to the depressed, gladness to the young and old, flowers will burst forth, songs will overflow, the mountains

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