

Salt and Light

Matthew 5:13-16 • Brad Manley

Jesus intends to do _____ for the world.

Jesus intends to do good for the world through his _____.

Jesus intends to do good for the world by putting the _____ of God on display through the good works of his followers.

Matthew 5:13-16

¹³ "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: What's one of your favorite seasonings? What do you like about it?

Read & Discuss: Matthew 5:13-15

1. It is evident from this passage that Jesus wants His followers to do good in the world. Why might Christians be tempted to develop a negative attitude toward the world? Why might Jesus want us to have a positive attitude toward those who do not follow Him?
2. Jesus uses the two metaphors of salt and light to explain the role his disciples are to have in the world. Why do you think Jesus might have chosen these two symbols in particular? How do these images help you to think of your relationship to the world?
3. An implicit warning is given for each of these metaphors in that salt can lose its saltiness and light can be hidden. What would be another way of saying this, and how might this look in modern-day disciples? How can we keep this from happening in our own lives or in our church family?
4. **Read Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18.** In Matthew 5:13-16 Jesus exhorts His followers to let their good works be seen by the world. But Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 seems to advise against allowing others to know of the good things we do. How would you reconcile these two passages? What are some practical ways we could let our good works be seen by others without being or appearing to be self-serving?
5. Do our good works *by themselves* communicate the Gospel? Why or why not? Since even unbelievers do many good works in this world, what needs to happen in order for others who see our good works to give glory to God? (Have you seen specific instances of this happening?)

Apply: What is one specific way you could better align your life and your conduct with Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:13-16? (Perhaps consider ways you could do this with others in our church as well.)

Pray: Praise God for working through us to display His glory to the world. Repent of any failure to be salt and light in this world. Ask God to work through us for His purpose in the world.