

Act as Salt



Let's Show Our Gratitude (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again and to wish you "Happy Thanksgiving."

My theme this week is specially suited to the occasion. It is: "Let's Show Our Gratitude."

In my previous talks this week, I've briefly outlined the historical background of Thanksgiving and I've explained my own personal reasons for being grateful to the United States. I've also suggested that all of us need to do something practical along this line that goes beyond just celebrating one day each year. With this in mind, I'm sharing with you some important practical ways in which we can show our gratitude to God and to our country.

Yesterday I spoke about the obligation which we all have to pray for our country and its government. Today I'm going to share another important way in which we need to show our gratitude to God and to our country. The way that I'm going to deal with today is to act as salt in our nation.

Now, you may not understand what I mean by that so let me turn to the words of Jesus. In Matthew, chapter 5, verse 13, where He says to His believing disciples:

> "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."

So, Jesus compares us, as Christians, as His followers, to salt. He says something which is staggering in its implications: You are the salt of the earth—the only source of salt that the earth has. Now, there are many aspects of salt which we could look at, but when I read this passage I always think particularly of two: first of all, salt gives flavor. Something that would be in itself tasteless and flavorless, when salt is added becomes tasty and tempting and appetizing. So, that's one of our responsibilities is to give flavor to our nation. Flavor to whom? Who's going to appreciate the flavor? Well, as I see it, it's God. Our presence in a nation should make our nation acceptable to God. Apart from us, our nation would be like the food without the salt, it would be unattractive, unappetizing—but the presence of true Christians in this nation should make the whole nation

acceptable to God by their presence. They should cause a different attitude in God toward our nation because of their presence.

Secondly, on another aspect of salt, salt restrains corruption. Today, of course, we're familiar with refrigeration. When we want to preserve food we automatically put it in the refrigerator or provide some other method of refrigeration. But we can look back in history to times before refrigeration had been developed—for instance, when sailors went on a long sea voyage and took meat with them, in order to prevent the meat going bad and becoming inedible, they preserved it with salt and we still do, sometimes, preserve meat or other things with salt today.

So, salt restrains corruption. It's important to see in that little analogy that I gave you there was corruption present potentially in the meat. And the salt did not completely eliminate the corruption but it restrained it as long as the meat needed to be eaten. Well, that's how this world is. There is corruption in this world. There's corruption of sin. That's here. It can't be changed. Our business is not to eliminate sin, but it is to restrain sin for as long as the purposes of God's mercy and the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ are to be carried out.

So we are to be the salt that restrains corruption. There are many forms of corruption in our society and they're very manifest today. Moral corruption, political corruption, and so on, social corruption. Do you realize that you and I, as Christians, have a responsibility—we should make a difference. Our presence should be decisive in the destiny of our nation.

In the 18th chapter of the book of Genesis, it records how the Lord visited Abraham and his household and then He told Abraham He was going on His way to visit the city of Sodom and the other cities of the plain, which were extremely wicked and to see if they really deserved His judgment. Now Abraham was particularly interested in Sodom because his nephew, Lot, was living there. So, as the Lord was about to go on, Abraham rather boldly put himself between the Lord and the city and pled with the Lord for the city and he asked the Lord, in essence, if He would destroy the whole city if there were a certain number of righteous people found in it. And the Lord showed him if there were a certain number of righteous people in the city, He (the Lord) would spare the city for the sake of those righteous people. Abraham started with the number 50 and gradually (in a kind of spiritual bargaining) worked down to the number 10. And the Lord gave Abraham the assurance that if He found 10 righteous persons in that extremely wicked city of Sodom, He would spare the whole city for the sake of the 10 righteous persons.

Now, we don't know the exact population of Sodom, but I have made some researches and I am convinced it was 10 thousand or more. In other words, God could cause a whole city of 10,000 persons to be spared His judgment if there were 10 righteous persons in that city. What was the function of those persons? Clearly their function was to be salt. To make that city flavorful and acceptable to God whereas otherwise it would not have been and to restrain and to hold back the forces of corruption.

Now, let's apply that for a moment to the United States. Suppose the population of this nation is something like 250 million people. How many righteous persons would be required, on that same proportion, to make the nation acceptable still to God, hold back the forces of corruption? The answer, of course, is a quarter of a million. One quarter of a million people, 250,000 people, can cause God to spare a nation of 250 million—that's the proportion.

Now, I want to ask you a personal question: Are you one of those people? Are you leading such a life that your presence makes your community, your city, whatever area you live in, somehow acceptable to God in a way it would not otherwise be and are you, personally, holding back the forces of evil and corruption (moral, spiritual, political, social) in your area? Are you acting as salt? If not, I want to challenge you, this Thanksgiving season, to dedicate yourself to be salt in this nation.

Let me suggest to you two very simple, practical ways in which you can act as salt in this nation. First of all, identify yourself with righteousness. Stand up and be counted amongst the people that care about righteousness. Wherever you have an opportunity, if there's a politician who's a man of real integrity, doing a good job, identify yourself with him, support him, write to him, pray for him. Maybe your local policeman. It may be the school principal where your children go to school taking a stand for righteousness in a very difficult situation. Are you just sitting back and letting him go it alone or are you willing to support him? You might become, perhaps, the president of the PTA in that school and take a real stand in that school for righteousness, which is probably going to have a very important affect on the destiny of your children if you're in that school. Or it may be through some voluntary organization, such as the Right to Life or one of those organizations that are opposed to the tremendous evils of abortion in this nation. But do something.

And then again, you can take a stand against sin and corruption in politics, in the media, in the entertainment world. For instance, when undesirable TV programs are shown, don't accept them in your home, switch to another channel, don't let your children watch them and write,

perhaps, to the particular channel or to the particular network and say you disapprove of such a program. If enough people disapprove of those programs, they won't be shown because they all depend on popular support to make the advertisements effective. In other words, stand up and be counted.

Now I'm going to pray for you today that God will give you grace. You know, somebody said, "Any dead fish floats with the stream, but it takes a live fish to swim against it." I'm going to pray for you, that you'll be a live fish.

Father, in Jesus' name, I pray for those who confess the name of Christ, who are hearing this message, that You give them a new conviction, a new dedication to righteousness, that You give them the strength to stand up and be counted for the cause of God and of righteousness in this nation. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Radio Program

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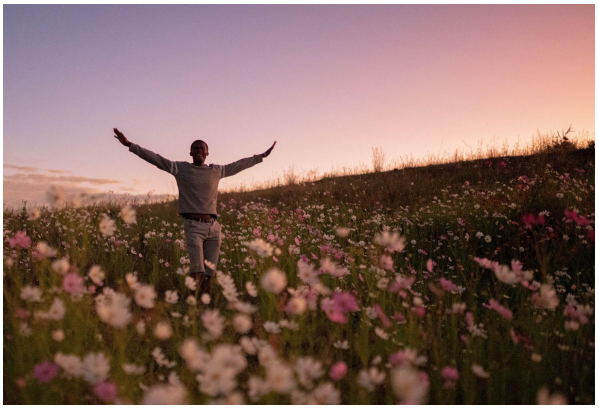


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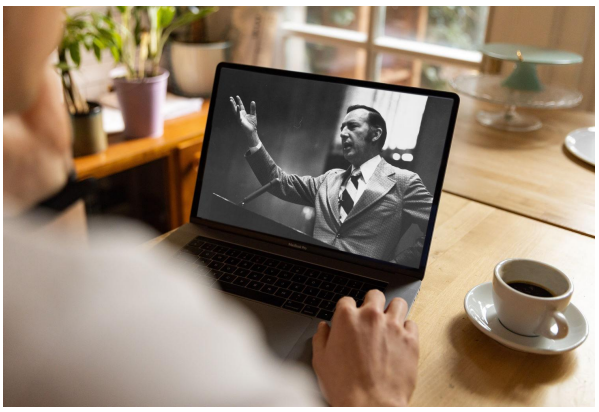
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