

DEREK PRINCE MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

Teaching Letter

We Are the Salt



Part 2/3

Living as Salt and Light

By Derek Prince

In this three-part Teaching series, based on Derek Prince's landmark book, *Living as Salt and Light*, we are examining the theme of our role and responsibility as Christians toward the nations in which we live.

The first letter in the series introduced Jesus' description of the Church, which He gave in a message known as the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew 5:13–14. We are "a city that is set on a hill," which the eyes of the world are carefully watching. We are also "the light"—the only light—that illuminates Christ to a dying world.

In this letter, we focus on our third role: we are "the salt of the earth." Again, the word "the" is exclusive. It means that the earth has no other salt—we are the only salt available to the earth. There are various ways in which you can apply the significance of salt. However, since I am not a scientist, I will keep my explanations on a very humble plane. Let me just point out certain obvious facts about salt.

Salt Gives Flavor

One great function of salt is to give flavor to that which would otherwise lack it. In Job 6:6, the Scriptures record Job as saying:

> Can flavorless food be eaten without salt? Or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

The answer is no. That is why, when you eat the white of an egg, if you are like me, you sprinkle salt on it to give it flavor.

In the same way, Christians are the salt of the earth. We are here to give the earth flavor in the sight of God. Apart from our presence on the earth, there is no reason why God should deal with this world in grace and mercy any longer. We are the only factor that makes the earth acceptable to Him, the only restraint that holds back His final judgment and wrath on a Christ-rejecting world. As long we are on the earth, our responsibility is to live in such a way that we commend this earth to God.

For Ten Grains Of Salt

In Genesis 18, we read how the Lord stopped at the home of Abraham on His way to the city of Sodom. The Lord told Abraham what He was planning—He had come to bring judgment upon that city. Abraham was very concerned

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about what God had told him, because his nephew, Lot, as well as Lot's family, lived in Sodom. So, Abraham walked with the Lord toward Sodom, boldly pleading with Him to spare that wicked city. He "bargained" (if I may use that term) with the Lord on the basis of numbers, saying, in effect, "Lord, if there were fifty righteous men in that city, would You spare it?" The Lord said yes.

Then Abraham said, "If there were forty, would You spare the city?" The Lord said yes.

Abraham said, "If there were thirty, would You spare the city?" The Lord said yes.

Abraham said, "If there were twenty, would You spare the city?" The Lord said yes.

Then Abraham said, "Please, Lord, do not be angry, but I want to ask once more. If there were just ten righteous men in that city, would You spare it for the sake of the ten righteous men that are in it?" The Lord said, "Yes, I would." The tragedy is that the Lord did not find ten righteous men in Sodom.

Whenever I read this story, I cannot help but wonder whether Abraham did a little mental calculation. Could he have said to himself, "There are my nephew and his wife, and his unmarried daughters, and his married daughters... between them, surely, wouldn't they be able to muster up ten righteous people?" And if Lot had been doing his job, they probably would have equaled that number. But Lot was one of those believers who failed God. Oh, he was a believer, all right. He had heard all the revelations from Abraham, but he was not living in the light of that revelation.

Our Presence Makes A Difference

We derive an eternal principle in the example of Lot. For ten righteous men, God would have spared an entire city. That proportion is applicable today, as well. Ten grains of salt can commend a whole serving to God. As I said earlier, our business is to be such that we commend this earth to Him. Our presence makes a difference. Our presence causes God to deal with the world in a way that He otherwise would not.

Every believer should be a single grain of salt in the particular place God has put him. God does not lump all believers together in one place, any more than we would put all the salt we are to consume at a particular meal into just one mouthful. It would taste excessively salty! Each of us has been scattered to a particular place in order to be a grain of salt to flavor the world—whether that place is in your family, at your school, at your place of employment, or anywhere else.

You may say, "I feel so lonely there." But you are there for a purpose. You are there to give flavor to a place that, without you, would have no flavor at all.

As Christians, we are like grains of salt. Our presence makes a difference. There should not be a single believer among us whose presence fails to make a difference.

Salt Is a Powerful Preservative

Another great feature of salt is that it is a preservative. Before the days of refrigeration, when people went on long journeys and wanted to preserve their meat, they salted it. The salt had the effect of holding back the forces of corruption that would otherwise have worked in the meat.

Likewise, since we are the salt of the earth, we are here to hold back the forces of corruption. As long as we are in the earth, the forces of evil that are at work—godlessness, rebellion, and so forth—will not be allowed to come to their fullness. Only after the Church has been taken from the earth will wickedness come to its final culmination. We are here to arrest and hold back the forces of corruption—whether they are forces affecting the moral realm, the social realm, the political realm, or any other realm of the society in which we live. We are responsible to hold those forces back because we are the salt of the earth.

An Opportunity to Respond

I am absolutely convinced that the Church of Jesus Christ, in every part of the world, could rise to the occasion and meet God's very simple, very clear, very specific condition. If we would do so, we could change and then arrest the downward course of events. On the other hand, if we don't do so, it will be our fault, and we will be the ones who will suffer first and worst. If we suffer for our failure to meet God's condition, we deserve it.

Before we go any further, allow me to give a simple application to what we have covered thus far. If you are not convinced by what I have presented, by all means, don't feel compelled to respond. But if you believe that what I have expounded to you in a practical way is what the Scriptures teach, I invite you to read Matthew 5:13 again:

> You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is

> then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

I want to make the above verse very personal for you right now so that you can apply Jesus' statement to your life. We realize that Jesus is talking to Christians, and we are Christians. Therefore, where it says "You ..." I want you to read it as "We ..." And, in the middle of the verse, where it says, "It is then good for nothing," I want you to read, "We are then good for nothing." I believe this change is absolutely legitimate.

After you say the following, you are going to be answerable to God in time and eternity for what you have said. So, if you are ready, try it now, out loud:

We are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? We are then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

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