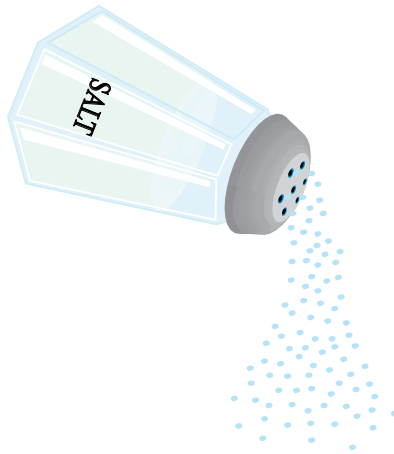


# Salt & Light

## September 2009



**Week 1 - Salt of The Earth**  
**Matthew 5:13**

## **WEEK 1 - SALT**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount:

“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 men.” (Matthew 5:13)

When Jesus talked about “the salt of the earth”, his listeners would have been familiar with the source of the salt he was talking about as it occurred naturally on the shores of the Dead Sea as a rock or fossil variety. The outer layer was generally insipid and lacking in flavour so was discarded for the inner pure core of salt.

Salt was a precious commodity in Jesus' time and was used not only for seasoning food, but as a preservative and part of the covenant meal offered to God. Salt was also used for ratifying agreements and stood as a symbol of fidelity and constancy.

### **ICE BREAKER:**

What is your favourite ethnic food?

Hot and spicy until your eyes water or mild and bland?

What are your favorite restaurants?

## QUESTIONS:

1. Have you heard the expression “salt of the earth”? What does it mean to you?

2. Mark 9:49 - In this verse Mark talks about salt as being good and tells his readers “Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with each other.”

If salt is good, Mark is urging us to have goodness within us. If we take this advice, how could this bring about peace with our families/co-workers/friends?

Do you see a connection between this verse and the expression “preserving the peace”?

## QUESTIONS Cont'd

3. Colossians 4:2-6 says, "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you know how to answer everyone."

In The Message, Eugene Peterson translates this verse as, "Be gracious in your speech. The goal is to bring out the best in others in a conversation, not put them down, not cut them out."

Do you think our modern society has forgotten how to be gracious in speech? Give examples.

4. What are some of the ways you think our conversation could be full of grace? How could we improve on our relationships if we practiced this within our church family?

## QUESTIONS Cont'd

5. Numbers 18:19 says, "It is an everlasting covenant of salt before the Lord for both you and your offspring."

Salt was an outward sign of ratifying an agreement and a symbol of fidelity and constancy. Can you think of outward signs we use in present day when we pledge in the secular world and in the church?

Do you think outward signs are important in noting "rites of passage"? How have we slipped away from fidelity and constancy in the everyday promises we make?

6. What has been the most important covenant you have made before the Lord?

## QUESTIONS Cont'd

7. There is a charming story in 2 Kings 19:22 that talks about Elisha healing a spring of bad water by throwing in some salt. After he did this, the land around became productive.

What do you think holds us back from being productive in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ?

Can you think of an example of “throwing in some salt” that rectified a situation?

## FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

When Jesus talks about the “salt of the earth” he is referring to that inner core of our beings. He is not interested in that front that we portray to the world which can be so insipid and flavourless and which in the end will be discarded as useless. He is more interested in a heart that is faithful to his word. A heart that will be steadfast and constant in loving God and loving neighbours.

How would you view your present relationship with God? Hot and spicy, or mild and bland? How would you like it to be?

NOTES: