

**“YE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH...  
YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD”**

The discourse immediately below is by James Thompson and was given on Saturday, Sept. 12, 1908 at the Annotto Bay convention in Jamaica, page 19. Jamaica is an island in the West Indies, directly south of Eastern Cuba. Annotto Bay is located on the North coast of Jamaica.)

The words of our text are those of our Lord, spoken in His sermon on the mount and recorded in Matt. 5:13 and 14. It should be noticed by all, that our Lord was not addressing everybody but that He was engaged in teaching His disciples—His consecrated followers. The subject of our Lord’s discourse is of great importance to all those who expect to be associated with Him in the near future in blessing all the world of mankind; and the words of our text therefore come to us as a timely admonition as to what we, as Christians, should be doing.

Our Lord in the course of His teachings drew many beautiful illustrations from nature, and the comparisons which He made between these and the church are full of significance. By calling our attention to various things about us, that we come in contact with in the course of our everyday duties of life our Lord has been able to impress upon our minds, just what a true disciple of His should do and say and be. It is our purpose this afternoon to see what lessons we can draw from our Lord’s metaphorical statements: “Ye are the salt of the earth...Ye are the light of the world.”

**Salt** is one of the most essential elements of life, and is found in great abundance in various parts of the earth. Its value as a condiment is appreciated by both man and the lower animals. Because of its quality to make food more appetizing, it was esteemed by the ancients to be the gift of the gods. The Jews as well as heathen people, mingled salt with their religious sacrifices, and this fact together with its multitudinous uses soon acquired for it a symbolical significance.

As a condiment it symbolized hospitality, as an antiseptic it signified purity, and as a preservative, it was used as a symbol of anything which would arrest corruption and prevent decay in the minds and morals of the people. We see from this what a fitting illustration of a true Christian salt is; for the presence of the Lord’s people among human society has always tended to make the lives of the people purer, their actions more benevolent and thus their characters have been preserved from losing all of the original godlikeness in which the first man was created.

We can only have this preserving effect upon the good morals of the people as long as we possess the savor of the Holy Spirit in our own hearts; for if we lose our savory qualities; if we lose the spirit of Christ—the spirit of Truth, the Lord will look upon us as none of

His; and as worthless salt we will be cast out from enjoying the favor and blessing of God to be trodden under foot of men. Those who pursue such a course can no longer be used in the Master's service and will be consigned to death.

But does someone ask, Why is this salt class in this earth? We answer, because there is sin in the world. The Apostle informs us that by one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin and that death has passed upon all men because all are sinners. (Rom. 5:12) Sin manifests itself amongst humanity in various ways and while the Church—the salt has not been able to abolish sin, yet the presence of the people of God has surely had a wonderful preservative influence upon the good morals of society.

The preserving influence has been more potent because of the distribution of this salt class over so large a portion of the inhabited earth. The persecution which scattered the early church from Jerusalem, resulted in widening their sphere of preservation and the witnessing of the gospel amongst all nations has not been without effect in arresting utter putrefaction and moral decay in human society. We should therefore examine ourselves very carefully to see that we still have a wholesome influence upon the people of the earth with whom we come in contact. Let us get more salt in ourselves, more purity in our heart and lives that our healing influence upon the morals of men may be the greater. Let us beware for if we lose all our saltiness—if we lose our Master's spirit we can never regain it.

At first thought one would think that this salt class should be very highly esteemed among men, but not so. Men have learned to love sin and those whose life reproves their evil way, are subject to their scorn and contempt. As a class, the world knows us not, they speak evil of us because we run not to the same excess of riot as themselves. Our influence for good upon human society is not appreciated at the present time. It will not be until the Church is taken away from this earth to be with the Lord in the kingdom, that their value as the salt of the earth will be fully recognized. Very soon after the last member of the Church has been glorified, utter corruption will set in and the whole world will be engulfed in the greatest time of trouble ever visited upon human society.

Salt is such a common article that its values are not as highly appreciated as if it were more scarce. One thinks of a handful of salt as nothing—and so the commercial value of salt is in direct comparison to the world of the Lord's people in the eyes of the world. The salt class does not become discouraged by the rough treatment it receives from the world, because in these things we realize that we are but following in the steps of our Captain and Forerunner, Jesus Christ. Our Lord was despised and rejected of men and we must receive like treatment from our opposers. "If they have hated me they will hate you, as a disciple is not above his Master." (Matt. 10:25)

Being members of Adam's sinful race, none of us possesses the salt qualities naturally. Adam, while in the garden before he sinned, was in the image and likeness of his Heavenly Creator and he could have preserved his life indefinitely had he carried out the will of God in not eating the forbidden fruit; but his posterity all being born in sin, are unsalted in the same sense that no one is able to prolong his life indefinitely.

How then do we acquire these symbolizing characteristics of salt? The scriptures point out that we must first be justified from the Adamic condemnation through faith in Christ as our Redeemer. Afterwards we by the surrender of our wills and the acceptance of the will of our Heavenly Father instead, are counted as no longer human, but as New Creatures in Christ Jesus. All such are called for a purpose. One reason for their call is that they may be examples to the world and exercise a wholesome preservative effect upon those of the world with whom they may become associated during their consecrated life. This course will not bring fame or fortune at this time; but those who love to do the Fathers will, have a joy which the world can neither give nor take away. What if the world does not recognize us, so long as we have the approval of our Heavenly Father?

It is not by joining in with them that we are to assist the world in preserving it from the bondage of corruption. We must remember that the Lord has called us out of the world and we are to be separate from its spirit or disposition. We must not court the world's favor; for the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Our manner of life may strike the world as peculiar and they may think us mad, and attribute evil motives to our actions, calling us devils, even as they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, but in all these things may we say with the prophet, "I will not fear what man may do unto me."

In order to continue to possess the saving quality we must abide in Christ for it is only if we be in Christ that we ourselves are preserved from condemnation. If we abide in Him and His words abide in us, then we will ever possess the savor of Christian character and be the salt of the earth. We were once of the world, but our acceptance of the Truth caused us to change our whole course of life; and we are now walking in the opposite direction—after the spirit and not after the flesh; and it is this newness of life that some take note of, and become purer and nobler in character as a result.

But it is hard to go against the tide of the popular opinion. We are sure to meet with the opposition of those who are on the broad road to destruction. We must let none of these things move us from the purpose of our soul. Let us stem the tide and stand firm upon our foundation of Truth, looking ever unto Jesus, knowing He will carry us safely through. Sometimes it seems as though our feet had almost slipped, and the waters of trouble were about to overwhelm us; but the Lord has promised never to leave us or forsake us, and though the floods of ungodly men make us afraid temporarily, yet we soon rise again with greater courage and determination and float away safe in the arms of Jesus.

We now come to a consideration of the second part of our text, “Ye are the Light of the World.” Like the other expression, it is not applicable to the world of mankind, but only to the Church. Just as we do not possess the salt qualities naturally, so also we do not have “Light” inherent in us. We are by nature the children of darkness, but we have been enlightened by Christ who is the “Light of life” for the whole world of mankind. The Father has set our Lord to be the true Light that shall light every man that cometh into the world in due time. (John 1:9)

We who are in Christ have the Light of truth and righteousness in us, but to receive it is not all; we must remain in the light—walk in the light even as He is in the Light. We who have been enlightened with the word of Truth are no longer children of the night or of darkness. Let us therefore walk honestly as children of the day. Darkness now covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen people but upon us, has the glory of Jehovah risen, and the light of life as it is in our Lord Jesus Christ has come to us.

The enlightenment first comes to our minds, which, aided by the Holy Spirit, are able to appreciate the deep things of God contained in His blessed Word. This light continues to enlighten us as to our own sinful condition and enables us to purify our hearts and lives from the darkness of sin and moral defilement which we find in our bodies. To be thus enlightened requires humility; for this “Light” can only be received by the humble minded—those who are willing to surrender self-will and to be taught of God. The Wisdom of God is foolishness to the world and we must be prepared to be counted fools for Christ’s sake, if we desire to receive the wisdom from above.

The world being in darkness of sin, hates the light because their deeds are evil; but this course on their part should have the proper effect of separating us from them and drawing us near to each other. Amid all the buffeting and persecutions, we are to continue to let our lights shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify God in the day of their visitation. We are to be bright shiners in the world, illuminating the darkened understandings of the people. The Apostle expresses it when he says that we should be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. (Phil. 2:15, 16).

The light we have in us, is like the light that the moon has; it is a reflected light. Just as the moon receives its light from the sun and then reflects it upon this earth, so we have received our enlightenment from Christ and are now letting it shine out upon the world during this dark night of sin. Taking the diamond as an illustration of the ability to reflect the light, we see that an uncut diamond has but little sparkle, while the cut and polished diamond seems almost to possess light in itself and to shine with the brilliancy of a miniature sun. The lesson for us in this is that if we would shine for Jesus we must

submit ourselves to all the various shaping and cutting processes which will develop in us the Christ-like character.

In verse 10 of the same 5th chapter of Matthew, our Lord compares His church to a city set upon a hill. Such a city could be seen a long way off and would meet the gaze of every passer-by. This illustrates how we have been lifted up above the world, and are being made the spectacle of both men and angels. As lights we are guiding men to that holy city the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God. It behooves us, therefore, to keep our lamps trimmed and burning; for as our Master has said, If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness (Matt. 6:23). We must keep ourselves enlightened by daily studying and practicing the instructions laid down for us in the Word.

We can never shine perfectly, because of the weaknesses in our flesh, but we should trim away all the dross of sin from our characters as fast as it is revealed to us. Each should do the very best he can to copy the Master's example and if we take 100 to be the standard of perfection and if by our best efforts we can only attain 70 points of perfection, let us remember that Jesus stands as our advocate to make up the 30 points deficiency, and that as long as we remain in Christ and are walking after the spirit, God will count us free from condemnation.

Our Heavenly Father is now training us in order that we may assist our Lord in blessing all the families of the earth. He has made us exceeding great and precious promises that by these we might become partakers of His own nature—the Divine—the immortal nature. At the present time we are unable to comprehend just what we shall be like but we know when He, our Lord shall appear, we shall be like Him and see Him as He is (2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:2). These promises act as a great incentive to us. As the joy of blessing fallen humanity assisted our Lord to endure the cross and despise the shame connected therewith; so these great promises of future reward enable us to rejoice amid all our trials and afflictions and make us determined to let our lights shine more brightly every day.

The chastenings and disciplines which we receive are given to us in order that we may be merciful and sympathetic priests in bringing the whole world into at-one-ment with God. It is the saints that shall judge the world, and when we are properly fitted for the position, we united with Christ, will constitute the great Sun of righteousness which shall arise upon this dark world of sin and bring the light of Truth to all Adam's race.

When I first received the Truth, I thought that the 13 years of the Gospel Age that remained, was a far longer time than it would take me to develop the fruits of the spirit; but now, I sometimes feel that the time is too short, and I fear that I shall not finish my course in time. However I am still trusting in the Lord to perfect me in every work of grace and to fulfill in me all His rich promises of future reward.

In the parable which our Lord gave about the laborers in the vineyard, I am reminded of how all received the same reward, a penny. We who have come in at the 11th hour, have toiled for our Master only a short time and our lot has been much easier than the Apostles and the early church; yet we shall get the same reward as they. This should make us very thankful to our heavenly Father for all His benefits towards us and give us greater zeal for the Truth.

Realizing that our sacrifices must be consumed in a short time, we must expect our trials to be severer from now until the end of the age. Like good school boys we must learn our lessons daily that we may pass the final examination successfully. May we never flinch under the chastening rod of our Heavenly Father. While no chastening at the present seems joyous but rather grievous; yet such a course of discipline yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are rightly exercised thereby.

We are all called upon to walk the narrow way in the footsteps of the Master and our progress is necessarily slow and the way difficult. But when this age shall have ended, then Satan will be bound, evil restrained and the great highway of holiness will be cast up over which all the redeemed may walk back to human perfection.

For the past 6,000 years mankind has been going swiftly down the broad road that leads to destruction; and the whole creation has been groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for a release from this unhappy condition. The Apostle in Rom. 8 tells us that the deliverance will be accomplished when the sons of God—the glorified Church are manifest for that purpose.

In the same chapter the Apostle says that we also groan within ourselves, waiting for our complete deliverance in the first resurrection. We do not groan outwardly as the world does; our groaning is within our hearts and results from our being burdened with various sins and weaknesses which inhere in our mortal bodies. We have to fight against entrenched weaknesses within and evil suggestions from the Adversary and the world without. This fight is a fight of faith, for we walk by faith and not by sight. We are fighting under Christ our unseen captain, against Satan our unseen foe, for the prize of our high calling, which is only discernible with the eyes of our spiritual understanding.

No one can walk in this narrow way except He has the Holy Word as a lamp to His feet and a light to His footpath (Psa. 119:105); and to receive the enlightenment from the Word we must apply ourselves to diligent study, and assemble with those of like precious faith as often as possible and make use of all the divinely provided helps for the edification of the various members of the body of Christ.

In the scriptures, we find the Lord's people represented under various figures and by various types. We invite your attention for a few minutes to Gideon's Band as a type of the true Christian soldiers and the great victory which we shall shortly achieve under the antitypical Gideon; our Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation.

You remember that Gideon's army consisted originally of 32,000 men, but the Lord said that the number was too great, for if the victory were gained over the Midianites by so large a company, the Jews would credit it to their superior numbers and not to the Lord. Gideon then reduced his army to 10,000 by allowing all the fearful ones to return home; but the Lord said there were still too many. A further sifting was accomplished by taking the army down to the brook and noting the way in which the men drank the water. Those who stopped to loosen their armour and then bowed their heads and lapped up the water like dogs were rejected. The number who dipped their hands into the brook and who thus lifted the water to the lips, were only 300. These 300 met the Lord's approval and followed Gideon to victory. These various siftings in Gideon's army illustrate how the Lord all during this gospel age has been selecting the little flock to whom it is his good pleasure to give the kingdom. Gideon and his Band represent Christ and the church who will shortly gain a great victory over the world, the flesh and the devil without the use of carnal weapons.

Gideon was a bit fearful as to the result of the battle, so the Lord strengthened his courage by telling him to take his servant and steal into the camp of the Midianites. When Gideon had done so, he heard one of the Midianite soldiers telling a dream to another and seeing that it was applicable to himself and foretold his victory over them, he returned to his little army fully persuaded that the Lord had delivered the host of the Midianites into his hand. Gideon then divided his men into 3 companies, and gave each man a trumpet, and a pitcher into which he instructed each of them to put a lamp. He then instructed the men to follow him and to do as he did. When they had come into the camp of the Midianites they all brake the pitchers that were in their hands and blew upon their trumpets and shouted "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon." This strange procedure threw the enemy into utter confusion and set every man's hand against his neighbor, and those who remained alive fled from Gideon's band, badly defeated.

The light which Gideon's men had in their pitchers represents to us how that we have been enlightened with the Truth, but that this knowledge is contained in our human bodies—earthen vessels. When these vessels—our flesh have been broken in death; then united in Christ, we shall shine out as the sun in the Kingdom of our Father, and then all the present evil institutions, no matter how strongly entrenched they may be, will go down before Christ and the Church into destruction even as the Midianites were utterly routed by Gideon.

The 32,000 of which Gideon's army was originally composed seem to represent Christendom. As the greater portion of these were rejected so our heavenly Father will finally show all that the overturning of this present order of things is not dependent upon the efforts of men. The Lord would have us appreciate our own weakness and our dependence upon him; for when we are weak and feel our own inability to cope with the enemy, then we are strong in Him and in the power of His might and prepared to achieve great victories in the good fight of faith.

Let us examine ourselves carefully to see if we are still the Salt of the earth and the Light of the World. As we said before salt is a preservative and we shall see to it, that we are preserving order in our homes and in the Divine family. The believing husband should see that our words and actions are having the preservative influence upon the wife who is an unbeliever; for your holy conversation and godly life may yet cause her to change her views of God and His plan. Sisters are your saintly lives having any influence upon your husbands who are still of the world?

In order to shine for Jesus we must keep our vessels clean, from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; we must keep on hand a good supply of oil by praying to the Father for more and more of His holy spirit. This holy spirit operating upon us through the Word of Truth should transform our characters, accomplish our sanctification and make us of that pure-in-heart class who shall be privileged to see Jehovah face to face.

In calling us to glory and honour, Jehovah passed by all the holy angels to show what effect His holy spirit would have upon us in changing us into the image-likeness of His dear Son. Let us therefore strive to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we have been called and daily endeavor to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. The Scriptures inform us that light is sown for the righteous and truth for the upright in heart and so let us continue to follow the Truth and walk in the light until we are changed into the glory of the First Resurrection.

(Following Brother Thompson's Discourse the Kingston Ecclesia sang a selection entitled: LORD, WHAT IS MAN?)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **THE HOMEMAKER'S TEST**

HELP me to walk so close to Thee  
That those who knew me best can see  
I walk as Godly as I pray  
And Christ is real from day to day.  
I see some once a day or year;  
To them I blameless may appear;

'Tis easy to be kind and sweet  
To people whom we seldom meet.  
But, in my home, are those who see  
Too many times the worst in me.  
My hymns of praise are best unsung  
If He does not control my tongue.  
When I am vexed and sorely tried  
And my impatience cannot hide  
May no one stumble over me  
Because Thy love they failed to see  
But give me, Lord, a life that sings  
And victory over little things.  
Give me, Thy calm for every fear,  
Thy peace for ever falling tear,  
Make mine, O Lord, through calm and strife  
A gracious and unselfish life.  
Help me, with those who know me best  
For Jesus' sake, to stand the test.

(In a letter from Sister Karen Earl.)