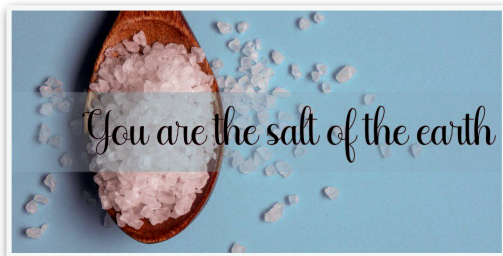


Lesson #3: A Substantial Life

“Not every life actually matters.” Every life matters to God. Every life could and should matter. But not every life truly does matter. Life can be wasted. Our lives truly matter when we have a strong, righteous influence on the people around us. And this is the kind of existence Jesus calls the members of His kingdom to experience.

“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 underfoot.

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:13-16



Salt: Making society morally healthier.

“Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

Jeremiah 29:7

“Morality” is a set of rules about what is right and wrong in human relationships, serving as a guide to help people prosper.

- Christian’s prevent moral decay.

An inherent implication: *the moral trend-line of secular culture is downward.*

How do Christians prevent moral decay in their culture?

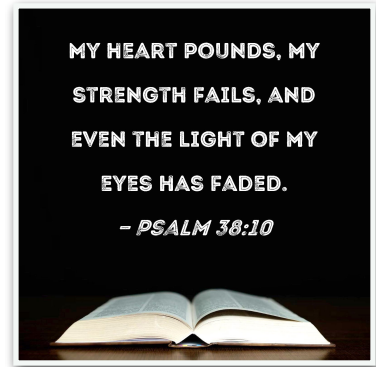
- ◆ By exhibiting the result of a better moral framework.
- ◆ By talking about God’s moral framework.
- ◆ By championing God’s moral framework.
- ◆ By voting for those who will advance God’s moral framework.

- Christian's heal moral wounds.

An inherent implication: *Violations of God's moral code wounds people. Psalm 38*

How do Christians help heal moral wounds?

- ◆ By drawing near. (Psalm 38:11-12)
- ◆ By listening sympathetically. (Psalm 38:5-8)
- ◆ By bringing hope. (Psalm 38:15 and 21-22)
- ◆ By leading to confession and repentance. (Psalm 38:18)



- Christian's model moral flourishing.



An inherent implication: *People struggle with a lack of joy in life.*

How do Christians model moral flourishing?

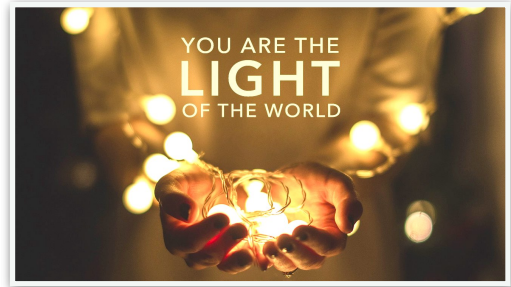
- ◆ By having fun. Luke 7:33-34
- ◆ By exuding joy. John 15:11
- ◆ By being fruitful. Hebrews 13:17

A WARNING: Don't lose your saltiness!

Light: Making society spiritually wiser.

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

—Psalm 119:130



Light as a metaphor means to reveal what is spiritually true, giving understanding into what is real so one can choose what is best.

The implication behind this statement: Society is spiritually in the dark.

Being light

- Jesus is the one who gives light to the world. John 1:9
- As long as Jesus was in the world He was the primary light in the world. John 9:5
- Now that Jesus is gone, His followers are the primary light of the world. Ephesians 5:8

Send out your light and your truth; let them guide me. Let them lead me to your holy mountain, to the place where you live.

—Psalm 43:3 NLT

Shedding light

- We shed light by the truth we share.
- We shed light by the life we live.

Reactions to the light. John 3:19-21

- Some people hate it and are repulsed by it.
- Some people are converted by it.

A WARNING: Don't hide your light!

General observations:



1. Christians are the main source of salt and light the world has.

2. Christians are called to be in contact with the world.
3. Christians are to be an influence in every sector of life.

Before the next class...

- ◆ Tend to one person's moral wounds.
- ◆ Demonstrate the joy of the Lord to those around you at home and at work.
- ◆ Share something from God's Word with someone that needs it.
- ◆ Do one truly good deed.

