

TUESDAY, AUGUST 3RD

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: **Matthew 5-7 (The Sermon on the Mount)**

"SALT AND LIGHT"

SCRIPTURE Matthew 5:13-16

OBSERVATION

I am writing this devotional in a Panera Bread restaurant in Holland, MI. I recently started a workout plan that incorporates five small meals a day. It's not that hard if you plan well (emphasis on planning). I ordered a salad for lunch. I ate it because I will pretty much eat anything put in front of me (as my expanding waistline reveals), but it wasn't very good.

What was it missing? Salt. It had some but not much. In the text above Jesus talked about his disciples being "the salt of the earth." He also talked about us being "the light of the world." Salt, among other things, preserves. It was used in the ancient world to prevent meats and fish from rotting. It was also used to provide flavor.

Light has a more obvious purpose--to illumine. One power outage at home makes us realize how dependent we are on light.

Both metaphors are used by Jesus to help us (disciples) understand what a fundamental and essential role we play in the world. Just as tasteless salt and hidden light are worthless, so are we who forget our role in the world--to preserve; to add flavor; to provide guidance and hope in a world of darkness. Jesus clearly calls his followers to live in such a radically different way that people actually notice--they notice that we are his followers by our good deeds.

APPLICATION

The specifics of the good deeds are not laid out. There are other places we find those in the Bible (i.e. feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the prisoners--see Matthew 25 as one example). But the simple truth of this passage is that if the world is going to be preserved, be filled with "flavor," have light that guides us through life...the ball is in our court.

What am I, you and we doing to cause people to take notice of the beauty, hope, grace and love of Jesus? Try to find one thing you could do today that would cause his light to shine... and then do it!

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, it would be an honor today to sprinkle some salt and shine some light in a way that causes people to see you in me. Help me be that kind of person. In your name. Amen.

S.O.A.P. Entry Author: Nick Twomey