

CHRISTIANS ARE TO HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON OTHERS

Matthew 5:13-16

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: What do we use spices for? To flavor food of course, otherwise the food would just be the same old stuff and not very tasty. Also some spices are used in preserving certain foods, especially salt. Jesus commented that believers are supposed to be like salt. How in the world can a Christian be like salt? What do they have in common? What was Jesus saying? How was He comparing a believer and salt?

I. AS SALT ADDS FLAVOR, IT ALSO PRESERVES *(Matthew 5:13)*

1. Although salt was/is common, it was very valuable and still is.
 - It was used as money for the Roman soldiers at times.
 - It kept food from spoiling.
 - It was used to add flavor to cooked food.
2. Christians are to add "flavor" to life (daily living) and to help keep people from ruining their lives.
 - Christians are to become like Jesus, do good deeds, have no bad habits, the kind of people that others notice and are attracted to.
3. Christians have made our world a better place to live in.
 - Hospitals, orphanages, schools, all in the name of Jesus.
 - Missionaries have taken medicines, education, vocational training to all parts of the world, all in the name of Jesus.
 - Women have better rights today than ever before.
 - Christians have used the Bible as their guide to help better the human race and in using the Bible, they have taught honesty, fidelity, respect, peace, etc.
 - Those who follow Jesus and have put the Bible into practice have had and still have a great impact on the world, therefore have become "salt of the earth."
4. Sadly, salt can become mixed with impurities and become useless.
 - Christians can compromise their goodness by stop doing good and allow moral corruption to happen in their lives, thus they cease to be "salty" and cease to be useful in helping the world change to the good.
 - Becoming useless as "salt" can happen quickly or it can occur very slowly, un-noticed until it has happened. Christians can gradually lose their "Christ-like-ness" and therefore lose their positive impact on the world.

II. CHRISTIANS HAVE TRIED TO BE "SALT" IN SOME WRONG WAYS

1. Christians have picketed places, stopped buying at places, had "sit-ins," public protests over things they believed were against God's Word (homosexuals, abortion, etc).
2. What kind of impression do Christians leave with the lost world when they protest by marching with offensive signs, writing unkind newspaper articles, boycotting businesses that contribute to worthy institutions? Just what would Jesus do?

3. Face it! Jesus didn't approach similar issues the same way some Christians do today and He didn't leave instructions that indicated that He ever would. *(John 3:17)*
 - If anybody had a right and authority to condemn the world over wrongs, it was Jesus yet He didn't not did He leave instructions for anybody else to either.
 - The message Jesus left for Christians about this sinful world is that of love and forgiveness, not of condemnation and confrontation. *(John 3:16; 16:8)*
 - It is not the Christian's place to condemn or convict, it is the Holy Spirit's work/job.
4. What did the early Church do about the wickedness of their time? They preached and witnessed. They did not have protest marches nor sit ins nor boycotts.
 - They did not reproach unbelievers for their sin, they instead pleaded for them to accept the Lord Jesus Christ.

III. WHAT ARE SOME RIGHT WAYS TO BE THE "SALT" OF THE EARTH?

1. Work at being how YOU should be. *(Philippians 2:14-15)*
 - It's hard to live as a Christian should being in the middle of such a wicked, sinful world.
 - If we really want to be "salt" for the Lord in this world, then we have to live moral lives.
 - We have to get our own life right and stop acting like the rest of the world.
 - The world has a hard time seeing a difference between a Christian and a non-Christian.
 - Christians need to live like they talk and if they did Churches couldn't hold the people.
 - Just think how many others would want to be a Christian IF Christians really acted and lived like Jesus.
2. Promote morality, decency, honesty as an average citizen.
 - Christians need to be kind, peacemakers, not trouble makers. *(1 Peter 3:15-16)*
 - Avoid public protests. What if someone did the same thing to your Church because they disagreed with what you believed?
3. Be concerned with the Bible concept of morality, decency and honesty.
 - The Bible does state very clearly that some things are sinful (homosexuality, abortion, etc.)
 - It also states that it is wrong to deny justice to the poor, or to discriminate against such.
 - It also teaches about many other sins that Christians don't care about having enforced.

CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus indeed "flavored" the world when He was here and changed a lot of things for the good.
2. Jesus has left for His followers (Christians) to do the same thing and calls the "salt."
3. Christians are to show the world how to live a life as Jesus lived and to tell them how they can become a part of God's Family.
4. Everywhere Christians have been in the world of their generation, changes have been made for the good. What changes for the good is our generation making in the world?