

"SALTY CHARACTERS"

Matthew 5:13

Main Idea: Jesus' followers have the capacity to make spiritually barren places fertile and fruitful.

Declaration: "You are the salt of the earth"

The meaning of the metaphor

The varieties of salt in the ancient world

The agricultural use of salt in Palestine

Enables arid soil to retain moisture

Facilitates the absorption of vital nutrients by plants

Enhances the fertilizing capacity of manure

The implications for Christ-followers

The profound effect on whatever or whoever they contact wherever they are

An intrinsic quality that enables them to stimulate life, growth, health, and productivity in people, families, neighborhoods, and communities

They turn what are otherwise spiritually barren settings and circumstances into ones that are spiritually fertile

They infuse those settings and circumstances with spiritual nutrients that provide spiritual nourishment

Their presence in those settings and circumstances activates spiritual life

They are catalysts for spiritual transformation

What gives Christ-followers this salt-like quality?

Warning: If salt loses its saltiness... it is good for nothing

The meaning of the metaphor

How salt becomes ineffective

Thrown out and trampled under foot

“Fit neither for the soil or the manure pile”

(Luke 14:37)

The implications for Christ-followers

Application:

As the salt of the soil, Christ-followers measure their effectiveness by the growth of others and the impact to a community, not by their personal well-being or vocational success

Christ-followers are expected to be present in “barren” places