

**MISSIONARY DREAMS, PART 2: YOUR MISSIONARY DREAMS**  
**Matthew 5:13-16**

<sup>13</sup> *You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.*

<sup>14</sup> *“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. <sup>15</sup> No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

**--Matthew 5:13-16 New Revised Standard Version**

**In my sermon last week I made a very important announcement.** The basic gist of it was that starting in July, I'll be stepping down from pastoral ministry for one year so I can do some mission work in Tanzania and Cambodia.

And I opened that message by saying, “I’ve always wanted to be a missionary.”

Now, here’s my message for today. Are you ready?

- ***YOU*** HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A MISSIONARY!

Now at this point you may be saying, “Claude! Last week I was concerned about your mental state. Now I KNOW you’ve gone off the rails! I have never wanted to be a missionary—to live in a grass hut in the jungle and eat insects for dinner!”

Well, I don’t want to do those things either. But I know for a fact that you, like me, have always wanted to be a missionary.

And here’s how I know: I know because *within the heart of every human being there is a deep-seated need to make a difference.*

It’s a basic, fundamental drive—the desire to make an impact on your environment. Psychologists call it the need for a “feeling of efficacy.” It’s a God-given desire to change the world around you.

This desire to make a difference is *within* you. You say, “Well why don’t I feel it?” The reason you don’t feel it is because it gets buried beneath the junk of everyday life. But trust me, it’s there.

You want to make a difference. You want to change the world. *You want to be a missionary.*

Now, let me do like I did last week and define the terms.

Last week when I said “missionary,” I meant the kind that goes overseas.

This week when I say missionary, I mean ANY CHRISTIAN who obeys Jesus’ command to “Let your light shine before others.”

That can be you.

That *should* be you.

And deep down inside, you WANT IT to be you!

**LET’S PRAY:** Lord, awaken the Missionary Dreams in each of us. Show us what it means to be salt and light. Amen.

**You’ve always wanted to be a missionary.**

As a human being, you have basic fundamental needs. Physical needs: Air, water, food. Psychological needs: To feel loved, to feel safe, to feel valued. Spiritual needs: To be in relationship with God; to be forgiven; to grow spiritually.

And in addition to those, you have another deep-seated human need that is as basic as all the others: YOU NEED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Every human being wants to know that their life counts. Kennon Callahan says, “What scares most of us about death is dying. What further scares us is that, in the end, our lives might not have counted for anything.”

YOU *NEED* TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

And that’s how I know that you’ve always wanted to be a missionary--because everybody wants to live a life with purpose. Everybody wants to be **on mission**—you know, like the Blues Brothers: “We’re a mission from God.” Or like Mission Impossible: “Your mission, should you choose to accept it ...”

Everybody wants to be on mission. Everybody wants to make a difference. Everybody wants a life that matters!

**And so, how wonderful, how amazing, how marvelous, what good news it is, that Jesus says to you today:**

*“You are the salt of the earth”*

This is a huge compliment, because in Jesus’ day, salt was extremely valuable. People were actually paid in salt. That’s where we get the word salary.

In those days salt was used as a preservative. They didn't have refrigerators, freezers, Tupperware or Saran Wrap—so the only way they could keep food from going bad was to salt it.

Have you ever had beef jerky? That's beef preserved by salt.

Have you ever had country ham? That's pork preserved by salt.

Salt is a preservative.

So when Jesus comes to his followers and says, "You are the salt of the earth," he's saying that we are the preservative that keeps this world from going completely bad.

The preservative that slows down the decay of this world—IS YOU.

And then Jesus says, "*You are the Light of the World.*" Another huge compliment.

Because in Jesus' day, light was a symbol for everything good, moral, holy, beautiful and true.

Light was a symbol of **God's Word**: "*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*" (Psalm 119:105).

Light was a symbol of **life**: "*After he has suffered, he will see the light of life...*" (Isaiah 53:11).

Light was associated with the **creative power of God**. What's the first thing God says in the Bible? "*Let there be light*" (Genesis 1:3).

Light was a symbol for **teaching**: "*...this teaching is a light*" (Proverbs 6:2).

In the time of Christ, light was associated with the **soul**. It was associated with **doing the right thing**. It was as symbol of **TRUTH**.

And Jesus says, "As my follower, **YOU** are the embodiment of all those good things to the world around you."

*Is that not awesome?*

Everybody wants to make a difference. Everybody wants a life that matters. And so how wonderful to be told that you are

- The salt that preserves the world
- And the light that shines in the darkness

**Now, let's look at Matthew 5:13 and 16, and I'm going to tell you how to BE salt and light. Two things:**

First of all— STAY SALTY.

Verse 13:

*You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored?*

--Matthew 5:13

Now this is interesting, because strictly speaking, salt can't lose its taste. Salt—sodium chloride—is a chemical compound that can't break down.

There's only one way for salt to lose its taste—and that's for other stuff to get mixed in with it. The salt loses its taste when foreign substances get mixed in with the salt and its saltiness gets diluted.

Now listen: Salt is a symbol for the values of Jesus:

When we live by the values of Jesus,  
we are the salt of the earth.

When mix in the values of the world,  
we lose our saltiness.

Now, how do I know that salt is a symbol for living by the values of Jesus? *Because this statement comes right after the Beatitudes.*

The Beatitudes are the “Blessed are” statements of Jesus: “Blessed are the poor in spirit;” “Blessed are the pure in heart;” “Blessed are the peacemakers;” and so on.

Right after Jesus gives that statement of values, he says to those who live by them, “You are the salt of the earth.” But if you mix in other values—the world's values—values that are foreign to the kingdom of God – you lose your saltiness.

About a month ago, on March 18, I did a sermon on the Beatitudes called, “The Community's Values.” And I said that the values of the Christian community are

- Humility
- Broken hearts
- Gentleness
- Spiritual Hunger
- Mercy
- Integrity
- Peace-making
- Concern for people on the margins

Please, go to Main Street's website, or go to my blog, and read that sermon again, because living by those values is how we STAY SALTY.

When we live by the values of Jesus,  
we are the salt of the earth.

When mix in the values of the world,  
we lose our saltiness.

So first of all, stay salty. Second, let your light shine!

Verse 16:

*In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

How do you let your light shine? **Go out and do good works in the name of Christ:**

- Volunteer at a local school
- Volunteer at an agency like Crisis Control or the Shepherd's Center
- Serve at Bethany Café
- Help us park cars for Spring Folly
- Get involved with Forsyth Prison Ministry
- Work with Kids First on Thursday nights when we partner with First Baptist to do tutoring for at risk elementary students
- Get involved with New Story Church

We've got our Community Picnic coming up in July—we're going to join with other churches and feed the entire community at Fourth of July Park – Frank Robinson could use your help.

*“Let your light shine”*—and then when people see your good works, they'll be much more likely to listen to your message.

So, stay salty, and let your light shine:

**Stay Salty:** *Live by the values of Jesus*

**Let your Light Shine:** *Go out and serve*

Do those two things in the power of the Holy Spirit,

And you will be a missionary!