

# Jesus gives a “New Title” to the disciples/believers(church)

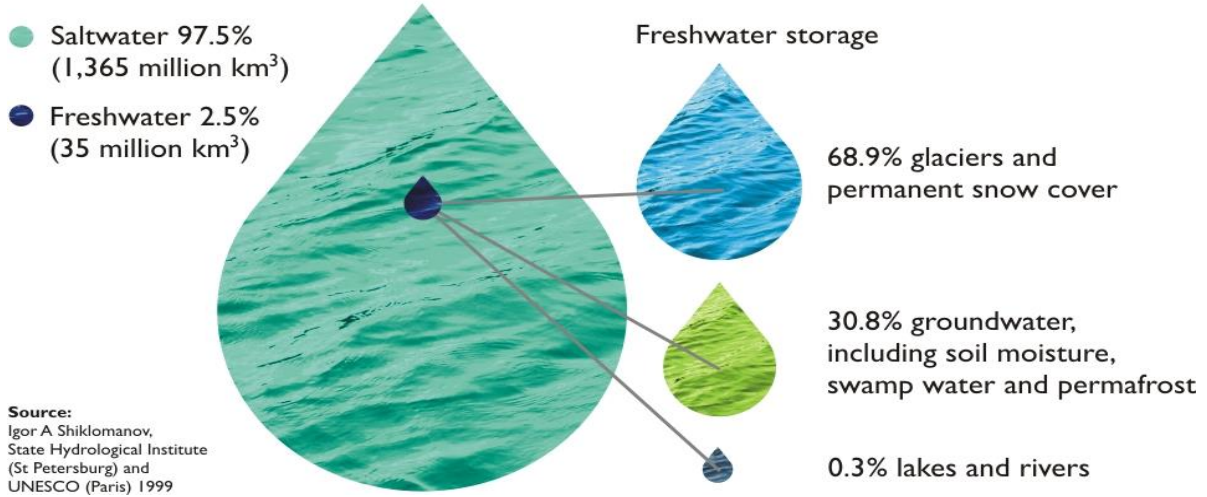
## Concord Community church

Dated: 16/07/2023

**Matthew 5:13** “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet”. (ESV)

## A World of Salt

### Global saltwater and freshwater estimates



انڈیا پاکستان سے 7 روپے کلو نمک لے کر 2000 روپے کلو ایکسپورٹ کرتا رہا  
پاکستان نمک سے 100 ارب روپے اور 1 لاکھ نوکریاں پیدا کر سکتا ہے



Jesus said that believers (Church) are the salt of the earth". This simple statement about salt is filled with meaning and application, but the main thrust is ***distinctiveness***.

Salt is distinctively different from the things, it is put upon or used for.. By nature and by purpose it is different. So are believers. We are (or should be) distinctively different by nature and by purpose.

By nature, believers are a new creation, born of God(2-Cor5:17; 1-Peter 1:23). By purpose, believers are to penetrate and change the very taste of the earth as they become the salt of the earth. When the believers assemble together to worship their creator and their redeemer, they are called the church. We are going to look at this subject under the following headings:

1. The disciple/believer's Character: The Salt
2. The disciple/believer's place to salt: The earth
3. The disciple/believer's mission: To salt the earth
4. The disciple/believer's danger: Becoming useless and destructive

### **1. The disciple's character: Salt.**

The disciple's character is like salt. Believers are called and designed (made) to be the salt of the earth. Several things can be said about salt that point out just what Jesus means.

**First**, salt is distinctive. It is totally different from the food or object upon which it is put. The power of salt lies in this difference. Believers, just as salt, are to be different from the world. The power of our lives and our testimony lies in our being different and distinctive. We are to be "unstained" or "unspotted from the world" (Jas.1:27).

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Ro.12:2)*

*Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. (1 Jn.2:15–16)*

**Second**, salt preserves. It keeps things from going bad and decaying. It cleanses and disinfects. Believers, just as salt, are to cleanse and preserve the world. We are to disinfect the world and keep the germs of the world from causing things to go bad. We are to save the world from corruption.

*Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." And this word is the good news that was preached to you. (1 Pe.1:22–25)*

**Third**, salt penetrates. It inserts a new quality, substance, and life. It changes that upon which it is put. Believers are likewise to penetrate the world and insert a new life into it.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Co.5:17)*

*And to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ep.4:24). And have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. (Col.3:10)*

**Fourth**, salt flavours. It improves the taste of things. It takes a bland, tasteless food and makes it enjoyable. Believers are to so flavour and influence the world for Christ. We are to take the bland and the tasteless and salt them, making them enjoyable and desirable within the world.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Ga.5:22–23)*

**Fifth**, salt is quiet. It is visible, but it works silently, making no noise whatsoever during its work. Believers, the salt of the earth, are to work quietly and discreetly.

And to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you. (1 Th.4:11)

But let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious. (1 Pe.3:4)

**Sixth**, salt spreads. Its flavour spreads all about. Just as a sprinkle of salt has a widespread effect, a believer's salt—influence and impact—spreads far and wide.

*For we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard. (Ac.4:20)*

*But in your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect. (1 Pe.3:15)*

**Seventh**, salt is irrepressible. Once applied, it cannot be stopped. A believer's salt, our testimony, is irrepressible; it cannot be stopped.

*For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the Sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. (Is.55:10–11)*

## **2 The disciple's place to salt:**

Christ-followers' place of ministry is the earth. The world is the place where believers are to move about and salt (live and minister). Why? Because the world is bland and tasteless, decaying and rotting, corrupting and foul.

**Thought 1.** Too many believers live as though they are already in heaven: safe and secure from all harm. They do not pay enough attention to this earth: its needs, its turning bad, its decay, its corruption. While on this earth, we are called to salt and flavour the earth, not heaven.

**Thought 2.** There is a sense in which the church is the salt factory, and the world is the marketplace for the salt. Too much salt is being stored and locked up at the church. There is not enough salt being sent out into the marketplace. The result? The world is not being salted and flavoured and influenced enough.

*And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Lu.10:2)*

## **3 The disciple's mission:**

The mission of Christ's disciple is to salt the earth. Note a critical point: believers are the salt of the earth, not of heaven. We can do nothing to salt heaven. We cannot penetrate, flavour, or preserve heaven. Moreover, heaven does not need it. Any relationship whatsoever we have with heaven is a gift from God. However, believers are the salt of the earth; we can penetrate, flavour, and preserve the earth. This is our mission, assigned by no less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. This assignment, salting the earth, is to be the focus and priority of our lives. But two things are necessary before a person can salt the earth.

- We must have salt in ourselves. Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another. (Mk.9:50)
- We must spread out into the world. But one thing must be known when a believer scatters into the world: his or her salt is necessary and useful. There is no salt other than the believer's salt. There is nothing else that can salt the earth, nothing whatsoever. The task is ours and ours alone. The success of the mission rests upon us as believers and us alone.

*And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." (Mk.16:15)*

*Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." (Jn.20:21)*

*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (Ac.1:8)*

#### **4 The disciple's danger: Becoming useless and destructive.**

The danger of the disciple is that of becoming useless and destructive. Salt does not lose its saltiness and flavour. What then did Jesus mean when He spoke of salt losing its taste? In the time of Christ, the salt of Palestine was gathered in such a manner that dirt and other impurities were often mixed with it. Consequently, the salt was useless and good for nothing. In fact, it actually destroyed the fertility of the soil. Therefore, it was not only useless, but destructive. Note two significant points.

**First**, this is a picture of the backslider, of a believer who loses his/her flavour and saltiness or testimony by being mixed with the impurities of the world. Three things can be said about those who backslide:

- They become useless in Christ's service just as salt does.
- They are not good for anything, not in the service of Christ. They may as well be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.
- They actually destroy the fertility of some out in the world by becoming a stumbling block and by not being able to salt them.

*Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Lu.9:62)*

*But my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him. (Heb.10:38)*

*But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. (Re.2:4)*

**Second**, if the believer's salt loses its flavour, they will experience the judgment of God.

- They will be disqualified from serving Christ—be "thrown out."

*But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified. (1 Co.9:27)*

- They will experience loss when they appear before the judgment seat of Christ.

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. (2 Co.5:10)*

**Thought 1.** If salt loses its flavour, what is going to restore its flavour? There is nothing. Once the saltiness is gone from salt, it is gone. It can no longer salt the earth.

**Thought 2.** There is no one other than Christ who can salt and save a person from decay. Those who profess to have salt and remain bland, tasteless, and corruptible either let Christ salt them or else are never salted. Such people are doomed to a wasted life. They are good for nothing in Christ's service but to be thrown out (see Jn.3:16–18; Heb.9:27).

*It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. (Lu.14:35)*

*If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. (Jn.15:6)*

New King James version Bible, uses the word seasoning for "saltiness". If seasoning has no flavour-it has no value. Likewise, if Christian believers make no effort to affect the world around them, they are of little value to God. If the church(company of believers) is too much like the world, we are worthless. Christians should not blend-in, with everyoneelse. Instead, we should affect others positively- just as seasoning brings out the best flavour in food.