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Having described the attitude of the heart of the those who will approach Jesus Christ for the salvation of their souls, Jesus continued on to show the usefulness of the those who surrenders his life to Christ through faith and repentance. He compares the pungent power of a disciple to the common mineral salt. Israel had a wealth of salt in none other than the saltiest body of water in the world—the Dead Sea. Much of Israel’s salt was processed from the Dead Sea and used in many of the same ways in which we use salt today.

Luke 14:34-35 NKJV

- ³⁴ "Salt *is* good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?
³⁵ It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, *but* men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

An implied “therefore” precedes Christ’s illustration of the salt. One could read, “*Therefore*, having heard of the call, cost and commitment of discipleship, if you follow after Me you will be a prized commodity for the sake of your usefulness in this world for My purposes.”

Salt has several valuable qualities to it. It is a natural preserver, it is a purifier, and it is a tantalizing seasoning. But one quality that is sometimes overlooked is its non-diminishing essence. No matter what salt is applied to, it retains its quality.

So then, if salt is always salt, and no less than salt, in what way does it lose its flavor as Jesus explained? And why would it not be a helpful mineral for farming or an agent of enhancement to a composte pile?

The Dead Sea contains ten times more saline than the oceans. When salt was harvested from the Dead Sea, it was necessary for the mineral to be processed to remove impurities and “add-ons.” One such clutching “tag-along” was Gypsum. Dead Sea salt contains some measure of the Gypsum element, which diminishes the effectiveness of salt in all of its uses. Gypsum forms a protective layer surrounding the salt crystals. If this unwanted mineral is not removed from its bonding to the salt crystal, the salt is deemed worthless. Gypsum is somewhat easily separated from its host due to its nature of being soluble in water.

If salt is useless, then you have a small problem on your hands. What do you do with it? You don’t put it on your food, nor do you discard it onto your land. You really can’t do anything with it. When salt is no longer useful there is finality. It is judged useless and then it is thrown out. There is a definite end to it. The language used here is absolute.

The call to follow Christ is a call to learn of the invaluable design for which you have been created. It is a discovery of usefulness, worth and value. It is the delight of God to see the effectiveness of His power enabling change in this world. And not just any change, but change towards godliness.

When a person looks to Christ as his Savior he leaves the past behind and find his potential and power in Jesus Christ. The command to obey the Gospel is a command to leave behind the things that have a grip on you—your sin, your guilt, your independence, your God-lessness... The person who looks to God in repenatnce turns away from those things that he placed his trust in and now looks unto God as his Savior. **His life is now defined by a nature of single-focus and pursuit of God’s glory.** Like salt, his character is now pungent with God’s transforming power and his usefulness is invaluable.

Like salt...

- The disciple of Christ has a **preserving** influence upon society, as he is pro-active in preventing moral erosion and decay by the “good works” and the preaching of the “Good news.”
- The disciple of Christ is like **seasoning** in this world, drawing out the glory of God to be displayed.

- The disciple of Christ is a **purifying** agent, as he faithfully promotes the forgiveness of sins and removal of guilt available through Jesus Christ to all who will repent and believe on Him.
- The disciple of Christ is a **loyal** and **trustworthy** ambassador for God, as in ancient covenants when salt was a symbol of loyalty and trust, defining the integrity of a contract or agreement.

This multitude that was following Christ around looking for the next display of supernatural healing mercy was caught up in “the moment.” Christ was calling them to a true realization of the claims that He was making—that He is Savior. Knowing their fickleness to follow only when sensational miracles were performed, Christ mercifully called them to a greater purpose. They must cast off this temporary infatuation and become true followers of Christ. They must abandon self-reliance, love for the things of this world and self-preservation in order to find true and lasting value in Jesus Christ alone.

Like salt, they must become pungent with power, casting off the impurities of their sin, claiming Jesus’ forgiveness alone. In that moment they will begin a life of inestimable usefulness and unchanging character rooted in the promises of eternal life. That eternal life would begin the moment of their confession and continue forever. Like salt, a right standing before God will not diminish in its savor.

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- 1. How was it helpful for Christ to use a common mineral like salt to illustrate vital spiritual lessons?**
- 2. What spiritual need was Christ addressing in the hearts of the multitude by warning of the flavor-less salt? (How is this a follow-up to the first part of His message?)**
- 3. Are the terms for salvation as expressed by Christ relative or absolute? Explain.**

- 4. In what ways do you see your life as a disciple of Christ like salt?**
- 5. Do you desire to be more “salty”? Do you desire to be as effective of a follower of Christ as you are designed to be?**
- 6. Are there “add-ons” in your life robbing you of your effectiveness to bring glory to God in the purpose for which He has redeemed you? (Pray that God would expose these areas to you.)**
- 7. Have you been fundamentally transformed by the renewing power of Jesus Christ through repentance and faith in Him alone for your salvation? Are you salt?**

