

## Sermon Notes

### SALT AND LIGHT: Making a Difference

Matthew 5:13-16

David A. Renwick

National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC

#### Matthew 5:13-16 (sel)

13 'You are the salt of the earth; 14 'You are the light of the world.

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

#### SALT

1. Adds flavor and enjoyment to a meal
2. Preserves food for the long haul -- from going bad

Jesus calls us & equips us **to impact** the lives of others . .

1. Bringing "flavor" to others, enriching the lives
2. Using our lives to sustain others for the long haul

#### LIGHT

**Light is what we need** when darkness engulfs us

- To see the world around us, the way ahead
- To give us hope & guidance

**2015 Article by David Brooks:** "The Moral Bucket List"

(Book: "*Road to Character*")

ABOUT once a month I run across a person *who radiates an inner light*. These people can be in any walk of life. They seem deeply good.

They listen well. They make you feel funny and valued.

You often catch them looking after other people, and as they do so,

their laugh is musical

and their manner is infused with gratitude.

They are not thinking about *what wonderful work they are doing*.

They are not thinking about themselves at all.

When I meet such a person it brightens my whole day.

(These people remind me) . . that there were two sets of virtues,

the *résumé* virtues and the *eulogy* virtues.

- **The résumé virtues** are the (external) skills you bring to the marketplace.
- **The eulogy virtues** are the (internal) ones that are talked about at your funeral — whether you were kind, brave, honest or faithful. Were you capable of deep love?

*How in the world can I, in some measure, with all my flaws*

*Be redeemed by Jesus – to become like that?*

Jesus:

1. I've made you that way: **You ALL are *already* Salt & Light** – ("you" pl.)

- All of you ARE the Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World

2. But -- if you don't want to lose your saltiness or brightness

- **Stay Connected!**

#### CONNECTEDNESS:

1. **There is no power in a single grain of SALT. .**

SALT is only effective *as hundreds of grains* work together

- Jesus ***called his disciples -- the grains of salt -- together to make a team*** & trained them to take over when he was gone . .

2. **There is no power in salt if it does not lose itself in the "meat"**

"Be the **SALT of THE EARTH**"

- Be connected to those outside your inner circle . . **deeply!**
- **SALT** -- in its role both as an agent of taste and of preservation -- only becomes effective . . **when it connects so completely & intimately with the rest of the meal that it takes the risk of losing itself in the process: Get in the Ring!**

3. **There is no light – no vision, no guidance – (and ∴ no impact) unless there is **a constant connection with a source of power****

#### Desmond Tutu: A Spiritual Biography of South Africa's Confessor

by Michael Battle, who lived with the bishop and his family for two years in the early 1990s . . Battle writes:

(Note: I have abbreviated and brought together a number of passages passages)

I have observed Tutu's devout spiritual life since 1993.

His early morning contemplative prayer, morning chapel, Eucharist

For Bishop Tutu, however, his daily spiritual disciplines . .

- *were not* [for show] – his means to appear holy
- *or* to follow some kind of perfunctory religious ritual;

**instead, they were his weapons** that provided him with

- the ongoing courage, boldness,
- strength, support,
- energy, decision making ability,
- and creative impulse

to face the monumental moments that were in his daily, ordinary routine. . . in the dysfunctional society of apartheid.

**WILL YOU IN 2022 commit to being what Jesus calls you and enables you to be?  
SALT & LIGHT?**