

**Read: Matthew 5:13-20**

## Saltshakers and Flashlights

### **Matthew 5:13,14,16**

You are the salt of the earth ... You are the light of the world ... In the same way, let your light shine before others, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

To start today's devotion, take a minute to focus on something special about each family member present. For example, "She has a wonderful smile" or "He is incredibly helpful."

Isn't it nice to have someone point out something unique about you? Taking the time to do this for each other helps us recognize and appreciate the unique gifts and abilities God has given to each one of us. We encourage one another when we point out each other's gifts and abilities.

That's actually what Jesus was doing for those who were listening to him preach in our reading today. "You are the salt of the earth" and "You are the light of the world."

Jesus was pointing out two very unique characteristics of those who follow him. Let's take a moment to recognize and appreciate what Jesus means when he calls us "salt" and "light."

Salt in Jesus' day was not just seasoning in a shaker on the kitchen table. It was used to preserve food from spoiling. It was very valuable and played an important role keeping people healthy and well-fed.

Likewise, light in a lamp had a very important purpose (and still does today). It lights up a dark room so people can see what is around them and move about safely.

Jesus' followers have important roles in the world: To preserve his words when the world wants to spoil them. To light up a room so people don't feel alone and afraid. We are salt and light because Jesus has called us to faith and has given us these special roles in the world.

Does knowing this help you understand just how important and special you are? That is what Jesus wants you to know. He has given you everything you need to live as a child of God in this world. You are God's child. You are connected to Jesus through his Word. His Spirit lives in you.

You may have a beautiful smile or be incredibly helpful around the house. Today, God says you are salt and light. And that makes you so very special, with a very special purpose in this world.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What did Jesus do for you that makes you a special child of God?
- How can you show people that you are a special child of God?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Review the purpose of *salt* as Jesus describes it in our reading. How can you live a life that preserves God's Word?
- Review the purpose of *light* sources such as a lamp or a flashlight. What role can you play in helping people find their way to Jesus in this dark world?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- What effect is salt that doesn't taste salty, or a light that isn't turned on? How do these analogies help you think about your purpose as a Christian?
- What can we do when we struggle with our identity or sense of purpose as a Christian? (ref. 1 John 3:1-3)

### **Closing Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, you have made me your own dear child. You have given me unique abilities to live my life as salt and light in this world. Please help me to remember that. Give me the courage to live a unique and special life for you. In Jesus' name, Amen.