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Series: The Sermon on the Mount
Message: Salt & Light, Part 1

Transcribed Message
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Matthew 5:13-16

It was the writer of Ecclesiastes who said of the writing of many books there is no end. It would probably be the role of the publisher and editor who would say to you if you were writing a book, if you want your book to sell, if you want it to do well, think of a really great title because that'll probably help in that regard. Well, in the first category there have been many books written about evangelism, about witnessing, about the sharing of our faith. In that second category I think Rebecca Pippert's book *Out of the Saltshaker and Into the World* is a great title. It captures exactly what Jesus communicated in Matthew chapter 5. That's where we're turning this morning. Jesus said to us you are the salt of the earth. For that to be realized, we're going to have to get out of the saltshaker. We're going to have to get out of the saltshaker and into the world.

This morning we're going to begin about what will be a two-week look at these verses Matthew 5:13 to 16. There is so much here and I think it's of such a vital importance that I'm going to take this Sunday and next and we're going to see this morning that God's call in our life is to be an influence. I think that's the picture that is communicated in this first metaphor. We're to be an influence in the world. We are to daily live out the gospel before a watching world.

Let's make the transition from the Beatitudes and go to the similitudes. From the Beatitudes to the similitudes. The similitudes mean pretty much what they sound like. They mean similar to something. We have in Matthew 5:1 to 12 the section that we've already looked at what we call the Beatitudes. We're very familiar with that. This idea of Beatitudes is this matter of blessing. We have these eight different statements that Jesus gives as to how it is that we can be a blessing in this life that He has called us to.

What you may not have known is that similar to the Beatitudes is the second section that is often called the similitudes. It's called the similitudes because it's similar

to and there's a definite connection between verses 13 through 16 and the first 12 verses of Matthew's Gospel. The Beatitudes, as we noted for many weeks, is really a description of the life of Christ. This is how a Christ follower is to live. When you read Matthew 5:1 to 12 this is the life that we're to project before a watching world. This is the reality of Christ in us. This transformation. Its focus is on the internal work. It's on this internal transformation.

Then we come to verses 13 through 16 and we're going to be looking at function. So we go from description of this internal transforming work of the Holy Spirit to where now when we look at 13 to 16 it's really the function of what that life looks like. It's the outworking of that life. It is the picture of that in action. These verses secondly form a transition. They really transition into the rest of the sermon. I think it would be fair to say that the Beatitudes at the opening of Matthew's Gospel of the opening of what we call the Sermon on the Mount could rightly be understood as kind of a preface to the whole thing. So when you are opening a book and reading a book there's very often a preface. Then after the preface there's an introduction. I look at the Beatitudes as kind of the preface to the Sermon on the Mount. Then I look at the similitudes as really the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount. We're going to start the Sermon on the Mount in 2018 because we're going to be in Christmas here before we know it. We're really kind of at an introductory point. To me, it's really interesting the way Jesus does this because as you close out the Beatitudes and verses 10,11 and 12 it's the world's response to this Christ-like life. If you live according to the Beatitudes and then to get to verses 10,11 and 12 and Jesus says this is how the world is going to respond to you. This is the way they're going to treat you. This is the way they're going to react to you as you live out that life. Then when you get to verses 13,14 15 and 16 what is it? It's a picture of how we relate back to the world.

So you have Jesus offering us this transition, how the world is going to respond to us, how the world is going to treat us. And then He turns right back around and says okay you know that's coming. So now here is what you're to be doing in relationship to the world. What we're going to see is that Jesus never intended for us to live in isolation from the world. You can't read the Beatitudes and then move into the similitudes without concluding that Jesus very much intends for us to be people of influence. He very much

intends for us to be people who are in the world. That we're separate from yes, but we're in the world. We're not isolated from it. So let's look at that this morning. It's all about making a difference. It's all about influence. and it's all about how to make a difference.

Let's start off by just talking about the basics of this metaphor that Jesus uses. He's going to use two of them and we're going to look this morning at this metaphor of how it is that we're to be salt and how it we are to impact and how we're to influence the world in that way. The reality of this metaphor I think in Jesus's day is probably understood and received a little bit differently than it is for us in the 21st century. We'll acknowledge that and point out some of those things. But I think when those original listeners heard Him say you're the salt of the earth, I think they heard something probably a little bit different than we do, but we're going to try and join those together. The first thing that we note is that it's a very common but valuable commodity. Jesus takes something which He so often does in His teaching – something earthy, something practical, something often times common. It's a very common but very valuable commodity. We might very well take salt for granted in terms of being a valuable commodity or of its availability to us. I don't think that was true in their day.

When you go back into the Old Testament, you get a little bit of the snapshot into their world and to how it is that if they would have received what Jesus said. When you read in the Old Testament, you see things about the importance of salt. For instance, in Ezekiel 16:4 it talks about a newborn baby being rubbed down with salt. I doubt if anybody here as they were born had somebody take a whole bunch of salt and rub them down as one of the first things that happened to them. We're not even altogether sure why they did that. Maybe it had a medicinal hygienic reason, but that was the reference that Ezekiel makes. We know that in some cases when offerings were brought under the Levitical system, salt was included in that. When you brought your burnt offering, you brought salt with it. We'll comment on that a little bit later. In 2 Chronicles 13, it talks about a salt covenant. Making a covenant with somebody else by using salt. If you wanted to make a covenant with somebody, you brought salt and they brought salt. Then you'd mix that salt together and the idea was that covenant between you was going to be in force unless and until somebody could go through the salt and

separate your salt from their salt. Otherwise the covenant was going to be in place, which of course was a picture of the finality of it. Then lastly, we know that it was used to symbolize friendship and hospitality. There was that sense of sharing salt as a sign of friendship and hospitality. These early listeners of Jesus had something of a different context in mind when they heard about being salt of the earth than maybe we do. But it was very much a common and valuable commodity.

The second thing would you notice that the way Jesus states this He just states it as a fact. He states it as a statement of fact. He doesn't say I wish you guys would be the salt of the earth. He doesn't say you've got great potential for being the salt of the earth. He doesn't hope that they'll be the salt of the earth. He states it as a fact. I think the point is simply this. if you are living out the Beatitudes right -- if you're poor in spirit, if you're mourning over sin, if you're meek in your spirit (strength under control), if you are hungry and thirsting after righteousness, if you are a person of mercy, if you're someone who is pure in heart, if you're a peacemaker. you know what's going happen? Do you know what's going to happen? He tells us. There's going to be two things. You're going to be persecuted. We saw that last week. You live that way and the world is going to come at you in the way that you live out your life.

The second thing Jesus says here is that there's going to be influence. There is going to be an impact that's going to come with that. It's on us, in other words. Jesus is, as it were, handing the baton to us. We're going to see what this looks like in the life of Christ as we work our way through this this morning, but He's given this to us. Now He says this is who you are as the people of God. You're salt. You're the salt of the earth.

Then lastly it certainly speaks to the responsibility that we have to the world. If you just take this basic metaphor that Jesus picks here first of all and says you guys are like the salt of the earth. It was very common. It was a very valuable commodity. He just states it is a fact. But then He is saying something very specific and very important to us about our relationship to the world.

We as the people of God are living in a world that needs salt. Why does it need salt? Because it's in a state of decay. That's a part of the metaphor. That's a part of the picture. We live in a world of great need. There is corruption all around us. It's the norm in this fallen world. Things are not getting better and better. In fact, I think you could

very well argue that things are getting worse and worse. As we read our Bible, it would seem to indicate that as the coming of Christ draws nearer, that's exactly what we should expect to have happen. This world that is in the state of decay is not going to improve. Humanity is not going to pull itself up by its bootstraps and suddenly discover how to make life better and better and better for everybody. Oh sure, in terms of technology and advantages of modernism, of course, but not in terms of what's going on in the heart of man.

So we look again at the landscape. We referenced this last Sunday but I know it is just so grievous to me that as we look around our country today and we see almost these daily revelations of the depravity within the heart of man, this is what Jesus is speaking about. We dare not miss the connection between a worldview and a philosophy of life that has basically been built on hedonism. I exist for pleasure. That's the philosophy of America today. For the vast majority of people, their life centers around how is it that I can get the most pleasure out of life. And, oh by the way, you're here so that I can enjoy and have pleasure because of you as well. That's the way these things are being presented to us today. Our world doesn't even get the connection between the two. They bemoan what's happening in our culture, but they have no spiritual capacity to see the connection between the way we have chosen to live our life and the philosophy by which we have chosen to live our life and the natural outcome of those events. It's a sad world that we live in, but this is the world that we're in. This is the world in which Jesus says to us we are to be the salt of the earth. This world is in decay.

But do you know what else He says to us in our responsibility to the world? This is exceedingly important. When Jesus says you're the salt of the earth and you're the light of the world, He is identifying for us our identity and purpose. This is big because this is Jesus handing us the baton. This is Jesus saying this is why you're here. This is why I've left you. This is why I've given you all of the blessings that you could ever hope for and enjoy in Christ Jesus. I have a specific purpose in mind for you and this is your purpose and this is your identity. Within the Beatitudes you have what? The character of Christ follower. You and I ought to be able to open to Matthew 5:1 to 12 every day and go this is the mirror by which I want my life to be lived. These are the things I want to be

reflected in my life. If it's not, then I need to be asking why not? But why am I not? This is what God has called me to be because that's what the Spirit of God wants to be doing in our life. He wants us to think of being a peacemaker. He wants us to be pure in heart. He wants us to be merciful. He wants us to be hungry and thirsty after righteousness. He wants us to be mourning over sin. He wants us to be pure in heart. He wants us to be meek. That's it. Why is that? Because of our responsibility to the world which is then to function, verses 13 to 16, as the salt of the earth. Jesus spoke to it in John's Gospel and we've looked at this a year or so ago.

Remember in the Upper Room Discourse. Remember what Jesus said in verse 14: I have given them Your word. This is Jesus praying to the Father on our behalf. And the world has hated them because they are not of the world just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world... even though we'd like to be taken out of the world a lot of the time. I am ready to go. I'm ready for Jesus to come. I didn't ask You to take them out of the world but that You keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world just as I am not of the world. But you're in the world. You're just not of the world. Your identity and purpose is to be an influence to this world.

Just think for a minute about who Jesus is talking to in Matthew 5 on this original occasion. This Sermon on the Mount. Remember we just read it. He goes to the mountain and His disciples come and a lot of other people came too, but primarily He's teaching His disciples. Who are these people? Who are these people who are going to be so influential and whose lives are going to be so impactful that Jesus would say to them you guys are like the salt of the earth. Who are these ragtag group of guys? The world looks at them and says really? Are you kidding me? This is who You're investing in, Jesus, and these are the followers that are going to change the world? They were powerless people. They were insignificant people. It's a description of 1 Corinthians 2:16 – God hasn't chosen many wise. He hasn't chosen many powerful. He hasn't chosen many noble. But who He has chosen confounds the world if we're living out this life that Christ has entrusted to us. So listen. It's all about influence. That's what Jesus wants us to understand in this opening section. The basic idea of salt is that we would realize that it is about influence and impact.

If that's the case, let's think about what salt does. I'm going to suggest four things that salt does in order to be an influence, in order to be an impact. What does it do? Before we even look at any of the four, what is the only way it can do this? The only way you can do it is if the salt is out of the shaker. As long as the salt stays in the shaker, none of these things work. None of these things apply. So the salt is going to have to get out of the shaker first of all for it to be a seasoning. First of all, salt is a seasoning. Do you think the Bible says anything at all about salt being a seasoning? You might be surprised. Listen to Job 6:6. Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt? Now for some of you, that is your life verse right there. You're changing from Proverbs 3:5 and 6 right now this morning to a new life verse as Job 6:6. I did not know that was in there. Because some of you when you sit down to eat, you either sit strategically by the salt shaker or before you even take a bite you say would you please pass the salt. Now is that true or not? You know that's true because I've eaten with some of you and you put salt on your food before you even taste it. That always kind of blows me away. I wonder if you want to taste it before adding salt. This is what salt does.

Salt acts like a seasoning. It's hard to find a recipe that doesn't call for salt. Occasionally I'll step into the kitchen and bless my family with a meal that I prepared for them or something special. It'll be like something that I wouldn't think that would call for salt. I'll call to Bonnie and say this recipe calls for salt, and she always tells me to put it in there. It's almost in everything. It's a seasoning. It permeates everything. In Colossians that wonderful statement that Paul makes in the 4th chapter in verse 5 he says walk in wisdom towards outsiders. How appropriate is Paul's words and even more so as we go on. Making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt so that you may know how you want to answer each person. Walk in wisdom towards outsiders, and oh by the way, let your speech always be seasoned with salt.

Now, we understand that the world system is going to hate us. The world system is opposed to God. It is opposed to Christ. It's opposed to the truth of God. It's opposed to everything that God loves. That's just the reality. But you and I encounter people, and while they're ensnared in this world system, they're not our enemy. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood. Here is the statement to us that we are to always season our

speech with salt. It is to be a seasoning that comes out of our mouth so that your neighbor, your coworker, that person that you have an encounter with, the store clerk, the teammate, school friend didn't just think of the myriad of ways that we encounter the world that we're to be influencing for Christ. Jesus would say to us in those situations we are to be winsome. We are to be attractive. We are to speak words of kindness. We're to be gracious and helpful and all the things that would come to mind when you think of salt seasoning something in just the right way. We live in a world that is filled with anxiety and worry. So we season a little peace into that, a peace which passes all understanding. We live in a world filled with hate that is expressed so openly and freely anymore. We step into that and we season that hatred and malice with the spirit of love. We live in a world that is stingy and selfish and we step into that world and through the work of God's Spirit, we're seasoning those relationships and those interactions with the spirit of generosity, thinking of somebody else before ourselves. We live in a world of yelling and screaming and we become people who season it with listening. Let everyone be slow to speak, quick to listen.

You just go on through that list. Our marriages. In a world where they're falling apart, ours are reflecting the beauty of the love relationship within the Godhead between the church and Christ. Our families. Pictures not of perfection but people who are committed to each other through thick and thin. We have husbands who are loving their wives. We have wives who are respecting their husbands. We have teenagers who are treating their parents with the honor that the Scriptures speak of. We have parents who are doing all they can to encourage and admonish their children in their walk with God. This is what He's calling for. This is what He is telling us – to be on display. This is the influence that we're to have in the world as being salt. We're a seasoning. We permeate that world that we live in.

Secondly, and it just goes to me with the first one, we're to savor first of all. We're to season. The second one we create a thirst. We create thirst. There's a reason things are salty. Do you know why things are salty? So that you'll drink something. Do you know why Pepsi bought Frito-Lay? The very first thing that Pepsi did when they bought Frito-Lay was they told them to increase the salt by 20%. I don't know if that's right. I just made that up, but it would make sense. They want those chips to be salty so that

you grab something to drink. That's this picture. 1 Peter 3:15. Remember Peter talks about being ready to give a reason of the hope that is within you? Don't you just visualize what Peter is saying there as being someone who creates a thirst in somebody else? They wonder why it is that you act the way you do, why you talk the way you do, why you respond the way you do. Because there's a hope in you and it creates this thirst. Don't you think Jesus in His life on this earth just went around and made people thirsty for something that they didn't have? They didn't even know at times what it was that made Him so different but they knew He was different. He created within them a desire to know God, to know more about the things that He was talking about. They repeatedly said He teaches like no other teacher had ever taught before. He was creating within them this thirst. There was something missing in their life. Not the religious type. Not the Pharisees. Not the legalists. They've got it all figured out anyway. They don't need help from anybody. The common ordinary people, the outcasts and sinners. The people nobody wanted to have anything to do with. Those people were attracted to Christ. Those people were made thirsty by Christ.

A beautiful picture is right there in John 4. Jesus's interaction with the woman at the well. She's been married five times. she's acting like none of that's really there but He knows it all. What happens in that conversation? Jesus makes this woman thirsty for something that's missing in her life. She knows it the minute she begins to have this conversation with this one who was unlike anybody she'd ever met. Finally she says to Him: Sir, give me this water. You have made me so thirsty I need a drink. I need you to give me of this water. Jesus gave her that water. He gave her living water to where she believed. She goes back in the village and says you guys come on out here. This guy made me thirsty and He's quenched my thirst and He can do the same for you. We season and then we create thirst. So those two go together.

The last two to me go together too. Let's look at the last two. The third one is to purify. Salt is to purify. How does salt feel in an open cut? Are you like me? When I have a cut, one of the first things I love to do is go to the saltshaker and just shake some salt into that cut. Don't you like to do that too? If you do that it stings. It bites. Jesus didn't say to us you guys are the sugar of the world. You guys are the honeypots of the world. You just go out there and you be sugar and you be honey. There is some

truth to that from the previous statement that is creating thirst, but the idea of salt is that we would purify. The presence of the Holy Spirit in our life according to what Jesus said in John, the Holy Spirit it is going to come and live within us. Part of what the Holy Spirit is going to do in our world and in and through us is He is going to convict the world of sin and righteousness and the judgment that is to come. What would you call that? How would you characterize that? I'd characterize that as being salt. I'd characterize that as being a purifying agent.

Do you know what Jesus says in John 17:17? He said I'm not praying, Father, that You take them out of the world. No, they're in the world and the world is going to hate them just like it hated Me. In verse 17, He says sanctify them by means of Your truth. Your word, Father, is truth. Set them apart by Your truth. That's the way He ends that little section. Remember we talked about the offering of the Old Testament, in particular the burnt offering. When they brought the burnt offering, they were required to bring salt with it. It was a symbolizing of purity. There was a work that was going on in which God wanted them to understand in this offering there was purity of heart. We don't have a message to share with the world if we don't have purity in our life. It's grievous to see what's going on in our world. It is even more grievous from my vantage point to read of pastors who get caught up in this same stuff and other believers who are more high-profile. It doesn't matter whether a high profile or not, other than the extent to which we influence and are known by the world. But if we don't have purity in the church, we don't really have a message of seasoning and a message of creating thirst. We have to have purity. That was the Beatitude. Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are those who mourn over sin. That is a requirement.

It seems in America today as a church we're far more interested in church growth and the size of our churches than we are in the purity of our churches. We have more mega-churches in the United States of America today than we've ever had in the history of our country. We have groups that report regularly for those who want to know the fastest growing churches, how big they are, how many thousands of people are coming every weekend. Praise God they are if they're hearing the Word and their lives are being transformed. Praise God for that. But if we have a country with more mega-churches now than we've ever had, I would ask where's the major impact of the mega-

churches and the many churches for that matter. It's purity that distinguishes us that sets us apart. It is largely forgotten that God's call upon our lives is that we would be the salt of the earth, and one of the things that salt does is that it purifies.

Then lastly with that I think goes this final one and that is salt is a preservative. Salt is a preservative. Now again the 1st century people heard this a little differently than we do. In the 1st century, they didn't have refrigeration. They didn't have freezers to keep their meat in and keep it until they wanted it. What did they have? They had salt. They had salt and they would rub their meats that they wanted to preserve. It would be either rubbed and/or soaked in a salt-based fluid. Here again is a picture that Jesus is giving to us. Salt keeps things from spoiling because it becomes a preservative. Again it says something to us about the world. It is reinforcing this idea that the world is in the state of decay. It's in decline. It needs a preservative. It says something about us that we are in the world but we're not of the world. Our impact as salt is not going to stop sin. It's not going to eradicate sin. We understand that from our own experience – that we're all strugglers along the way. But it is to slow it down. It is to have a preventive restraining influence on the world that we live in.

2 Corinthians chapter 2 talks about when the restrainer is removed. We won't try to get into what all that means but when the restrainer is removed, which many people believe is the Holy Spirit, the church perhaps even, then literally all hell breaks loose on earth. When the restrainer is removed and taken out. That may very well be a picture here to us of what we are doing today. We're preserving, we're restraining as the people of God. Remember the story in Genesis 18 when Abraham is going to go rescue his nephew Lot in this wicked immoral city in which every imaginable thing is happening. Abraham comes to intercede on behalf of the city and what happens? God, if there are 50 believers, if there are 50 godly people in Sodom, would you spare the city? God said yes, I would. If there are 45, would you spare it for 45? Yes, I would. Would you spare it for 40? Yes, I would. Would you spare it for 30? Yes, I would. Would you spare it for 20? Yes, I would. Would you spare it for 10? Yes, I would. Abraham stopped at 10. We don't know what number God would have said that's too few, but here we have a whole city and if there had been 10 righteous people God would've said they're doing enough by way of restraining the evil in the city that I will not destroy it. They couldn't find 10.

In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul talks about the influence, the impact of a believing wife within a home with an unbelieving husband and what does he say? He says the salt of her life, if you will. The impact of her faith sanctifies that home, sets that home apart in a spiritual sense in the eyes of God. It is a beautiful statement of encouragement to many who find themselves in those kinds of difficult places. Our world has no idea the extent to which believers are preservatives and restrainers of evil in this world. They don't. they have no idea. They mock at the idea. They laugh at the idea. They would literally laugh at the idea that the church, that they don't have a lot of about respect for, that the church is actually a restraining influence against evil. But the Bible says that is absolutely the case. Our culture would be far worse if it were not for the people of God influencing and impacting and salting the earth.

In England, instead of following the French in the bloody revolution and the anarchy that broke throughout all of Europe and France in the late 1700s, it was England that was spared from that. Why? Many people believe and attribute it to the fact that George Whitfield, this incredible evangelist that was used by God, and the gospel swept all through England. Then God raised up Charles and John Wesley and those men salted England with the gospel in a way that many historians would say that is the difference between England and France in the late 1700s. It's the gospel of Jesus Christ. In our own country our Judeo-Christian heritage, the impact that we have had historically on the family and on marriage, we know that's all under attack. Families, laws, government – all of that has been influenced by the salt that God has raised up within His people. Sometimes that influence is passive and it may just be a presence. Have you ever been in a place with a bunch of your unsaved friends and they're talking up a storm about something that probably is inappropriate and you walk in and the talking kind comes down and maybe somebody says ssssh, here they come. That's just a passive presence of restraint. It doesn't always work that way. We know that there are those that could care less about that. Other times it has to be active and has to be vocal and we have to take a stand. We have to be that purifying and restraining influence but either case there's power and effectiveness.

Look with me quickly then of the danger that Jesus addresses here. The danger is that salt isn't going to be salty. Salt that is tasteless. Again, 1st century and 21st

century are very different. We don't have salt that is saltless or tasteless. Sodium chloride is a very stable compound and we have refined it to the point that our salt stays salty. When was the last time you went to the pantry and you took out the salt and said the salt has gone bad? We don't do that. It doesn't go bad. It stays forever in the same state that it's in. That wasn't true in the 1st century. In the 1st century, their salt wasn't that pure. It was filled with contaminants and at some point the salt would become useless. That's what Jesus is talking about here. How does that happen? How does it happen that we would be what Jesus warned about here, that we would be salt that is without any flavor, no longer fulfilling our purpose, no longer having any influence, no impact? How does that happen? I suppose there's many ways, but the way that came to my mind, the number one danger that I thought of was simply assimilation. Assimilation. We become like the world. We live like the world. We act like the world. We talk like the world. Our views of life are increasingly influenced and brought in line with those of the world. We get so caught up in the life that this world offers us that we lose our saltiness. We lose our influence. We lose our impact. We in effect are seasoning that doesn't season anything anymore. We don't create thirst in anybody. We don't purify and we're not a preservative. We're joined to the world. We're in the world and we're of the world. We basically stay in the saltshaker.

God's call in our life is to be an influence in this world, to daily live out the gospel before a watching world. Here's how I want to close today. I want to close with an assignment. We're going to pick this up again Lord willing next week. Here's my assignment. I want you to think of as many ways as you can for you personally and for your family to get out of the saltshaker and into the world. You see, one of the things that happens to us is either assimilation or isolation. Both of them render us without any value in terms of what God's intention and heart was. So very often, if we're avoiding the world in terms of its influence, we may very well be avoiding the world in our contact. I'd love for us to just come up with as many ways as we can. Fire me an email with some of your ideas. How do we as the people of God come out of the saltshaker and into the world. Do you know what? If you don't, you're not going to be the seasoning and the savoring and the purifying and preserving that Jesus wants us to be.

We won't have the influence that He desires. Our intention must be to be out there in the world in contact but not part of the world.

Let's pray. Father God, we are so grateful for Your call on our life, Lord. We're so thankful for the gospel and it's transforming effect in our life. Lord, what an incredible privilege is given to us as Your people that we would be the salt of the earth. Lord, I acknowledge that so often due to the influence of the world, due to isolation from the world, that impact is not there in my life. I pray that Your Spirit would cause me and every one of Your followers here this morning to be intentional in living out our life in such a way that we indeed are the salt of the earth as You've called us to be. We ask this in Jesus's name, Amen.