

304. Christians Are the Salt of the Earth.

Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men. *Matt. 5, 13.*

Salt is an active principle; it works and purifies and diffuses its savoring properties. So Christians are the salt of the world, for they are the very pith and marrow of all true moral influence. By their good example Christians bring it about that the children of this world display more natural uprightness and faithfulness in the works of civil and state life. Indeed, Christians are the cause of all divine blessings on earth. If they do what is right for them, they can bring it about that the nation in which they are strewed as a salt does not become corrupt or ruined. Thus God said of Sodom: "If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, I will spare all the place for their sakes"; and He finally agreed not to destroy the place for the sake of ten righteous people. We know that the great city of Nineveh owed its deliverance to the fact that its inhabitants repented; and certainly after their repentance they were true children of God, the salt of that country. In this manner we are also to understand those passages of Scripture in which a nation is commanded to repent and a blessing is promised to such as do this, but a curse is hurled at those who refuse to do so. Of course, only those who repent are Christians. Only they are called the salt of the earth.

If the Christians are not the foundation, the props and pillars, of a nation, its free institutions will be trampled under the ruthless foot of the mob of those who bring about a condition of anarchy. "But if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men," says Jesus. If Christians are not true to their calling, if they no longer testify of Christ and do not confess Him before men, they are good for nothing in the kingdom of Christ and surely will not themselves remain in His kingdom, but be cast out. How careful we should therefore be not to lose our savor as the salt of the world! Let our conversation be honest among them.

Prayer.

Lord, teach us to do according to Thy good pleasure, and Thy good Spirit lead us into the land of uprightness, so that we may walk before Thee in faith, patience, and hope, in godliness, honesty, and forbearance, in meekness, chastity and all Christian virtues; and when we commit sin, chasten us like a father; when our sins cause us anxiety, comfort us with Thy grace, and Thy joyful Spirit uphold us. The unbelieving children of this world find the greatest pleasure in alluring us to sin. How they do rejoice when they succeed in causing a Christian to fall! O Lord, let us not lose our savor as the salt of the world! Amen.

Lives of Christians all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.

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