

Reflections for Lent

Week Two

Matthew 5:13-16

“Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt seasoning that brings out the God flavours of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You’ve lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.

Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colours in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.”

When we want to stress a person’s worth we often say that he or she is the salt of the earth. In the ancient world, salt was highly valued. The Greeks called salt divine. Salt performs two important functions. It is the commonest of all preservatives. It keeps things from going bad. For millions of people in the world, salt still has this purpose. In the second place, salt gives taste and flavour to food—our meals may look good, but without salt they can be very

bland.



Samal Badjau kids in an island off Tawi-Tawi (Southern Philippines) proudly gather the dried, salted fishes caught by their father before they are sold in the market.

Ancient oil lamps generally came in the form of a small clay bowl in which oil was burned using a wick made from flax fibre. These lamps were the most common form of lighting in ancient times. The main fuel source for these was olive oil as it was extremely plentiful. Sometimes other oils such as sesame seed would be mixed with the olive oil, meaning light as well as fragrance would fill the room.



What do you believe about why you are here? Read the passage from Matthew (overleaf) again. What, if any, difference and similarities are there between Jesus words and your thoughts?

Playing small doesn’t serve the world. There’s nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us... And, as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

Nelson Mandela

God our Creator
you made the great lights in our sky:
the sun to rule in the day, and the moon and the stars in the night
- all because your great love lasts for ever.
Our sun and moon and the stars that you call by name
all give you praise, because they do what they were created to do.
Lead me, Father, to reflect the light of Christ your Son
and so live fully as, in your love, you created me to do. Amen.
(Psalms 1367-9, 1474, 1483) Nicholas Hutchinson

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