

## **Matthew 5:13-16 – Your Influence In God’s World**

TSK, Gill, Reinecker, Poole, Pulpit, Handfuls, GreekLexicon, Geneva, Calvin, Robertson, Trapp, JFB, Clarke,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Do you want your child to change the world? Do want him to make such an impression that the whole world feels the benefit of his work? May be you want him to be the one who finally develops a cure for cancer...or be a painter whose paintings the whole world desires...maybe become Prime Minister of Canada! But I want to challenge you not to think so low! Think much bigger than that! Think about changing the world.

You will hear today how Melinda and your children can influence the world for eternity!

Our headings are:

**What enables you to influence the world**

**What efforts can you use to influence the world**

**What effect can you have on the world**

Our goals are: **That you will make sure that you and your children are ready to spread their influence in the world for Savior whose they are by blood and baptism(洗礼).**

### **What enables you to Influence the World**

#### **1. You know what came before the Lord challenged his people to be salt on the earth: the**

**Beatitudes** 八福. These described what the Christian should be like...the high standard of righteousness that God expects from his children. Believers and their children must be **poor in spirit** 虚心的, 灵里亏缺的 and see their need for the Savior. They must **mourn for their sins** when they see their poverty in spirit. They must **humble themselves** when they are saved. They must then **crave spiritual nourishment** 渴求属灵的滋养. Having received spiritual nourishment, they must **show mercy**, they must **live pure lives**, they must **pursue peace** – peace between God in heaven and sinners on earth, and they must **prepare to endure persecution** 逼迫. These things reflected a perfect righteousness.

#### **2. But you know that that perfect righteousness was not achievable by man.** That left man helpless, but not hopeless. The perfect righteousness that God demanded of you was fulfilled in Christ. God credited Jesus’ life and death to those who looked to him for help, knowing that they could not live up to his holy standards.

**Jeremiah 33:15** ‘In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David A Branch of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 16 In those days Judah will be saved, And Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’

**Jeremiah 51:10** The LORD has revealed our righteousness. Come and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God.

**Philippians 3:9** ...and be found in Him, **not having my own righteousness**, which is from the law, but that **which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness** which is from God by faith;

3. Because you hold on to Jesus and God now counts his righteousness as yours, **you must now reflect him to the world and declare him to the world.** And that is where our text begins today.

### **What Efforts can you use to Influence the World**

13 "You are the **salt of the earth**; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. (你们是世上的盐；盐若失了味，怎能叫它再咸呢？以后无用，不过丢在外面，被人践踏了。) 14 "**You are the light** of the world. **A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.** 15 "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket (斗，篮子), but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and **glorify your Father in heaven.**

#### **1. The Lord then called Christians "salt" of the world and outlined what duties Christians have as salt.**

**But why does the Lord call Christians salt?** Salt, is necessary for the sustaining of life. Saline solution, so necessary to supporting life for patients in hospital is largely a salt and water solution. Salted pork and salted fish were staple food of the slaves in the West Indies. Salt is used on fish when they get smelly. Salt is used to preserve meats and fish. So Christians are the means by which the world is preserved –to preserve it from rotting in hell. Yes, salt is unassuming. No one boasts "I have salt in my house." Yet, the unheralded salt blesses the house. So are Christians.

**There is a background here:** Long ago when 2 people made a covenant they would put a pinch of salt on each other's tongue. (This was long before paper and pen for legal documentation.) Putting salt on each other's tongue was a picture of preserving the veracity (真确性) of what the 2 covenanters (立约者) spoke to each other. In our passage, Jesus was teaching that Christians were salt. (Numbers 18:19) **As salt, you are in the gap between the Lord and the sinner.** You confirm what God says to the non-believer (and so preserve his life from God's judgment). The Pharisees lost the positive life-giving effect they should have had on the people. Today, a loose minister who is not faithful to the Scriptures can easily be the worst person on earth since he lets men die from weak preaching.

Leviticus 2:13 `And every offering (奉献) of your grain offering you shall season with salt; **you shall not allow the salt of the covenant of your God to be lacking from your grain offering.** With all your offerings you shall offer salt.

No one puts salt on salt. It is always in an environment that doesn't have it.

#### **2. Practically, how can you be salt?** You spread your knowledge of God's Word to the world, and you live like real children of God.

2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. Let the grace of Christ spread through your words.

Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

Mark 9:50 "Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season it? Have salt in yourselves, **and have peace with one another.**" It takes

effort to be seasoned.

And you can do this quietly...like salt effectively works...without much fanfare...and accomplish much for Christ. Though you may be insulted, mocked, or persecuted you must continue to be salt.

### **3. The Lord then called Christians “light” and he outlined your duties as light.**

**Why this illustration?** To grasp this you must try to go back in time before artificial light and think how men loved for sun light – the light of the world. The night would have been completely dark at nights and fear of the bandits (强盗) cause watchmen to long for sunlight. Consider the consistency of this call.

**Ephesians 5:8** For you were once darkness, **but now you are light in the Lord.** Walk as children of light

**You are called to be light because people are** groping (摸索) about in the dark.

**You are to be light before the whole world.** There are no secret lights. Lights are for display. After all, what happens when you put a candle under a bowl or basket?

### **4. Practically:** You are to shine your light by faithful preaching, teaching, and good living. Henry wrote:

“The disciples of Christ must not muffle themselves up in privacy and obscurity (模棱两可), under pretense of contemplation, modesty, or self-preservation.” **So even though you might not be a great or perfect light-a great orator,** you are to shine. God uses even imperfect saints to bring honor to himself. **This is such a critical need. Yet many Reformed churches have tried to run as far away from shining in the cities** – especially to ethnic peoples. Sometimes our **covenant theology** has been used as an excuse to hide from the world and not be salt and light. Some think that being around unbelieving kids might pollute their kids. And think how **cowardly ministers** are afraid to unsettle people and refuse to spread the Gospel and promote submission (顺服) to Christ. To hide your light where no one can see you is contrary to faith! It is evidence of either selfishness or fear! Both of which Christ died to destroy.

### **What effect can you have on the world**

#### **1. You are to be salt and light so the world can be saved and not rot in hell.** You are to shine your light so others will find land if they are lost at sea. In other words, lead men to salvation. **But the ultimate goal of being salt and light is to cause men to glorify God. And they will only glorify God when they see the excellency of Christ shining in you.** You shine so Christ will shine.

**1 Peter 4:11** If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles (圣言) of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, **that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ,** to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

It is true that light does not scream anything, but its silent work is most beneficial. So you may not be a loud preacher, but you can bring good to non-believers and glory to your Savior.

#### **2. Practically, now: Do you see how directionless the world is today?**

**They think that you can get peace in North Korea** by bribing them with money. **They think they can stop suicides** by making people feel good about themselves. (It is interesting that suicides have increased with promotion of self-love. It is the No. 1 cause for death among young people other than accident. **Think about the young people addicted to drugs and alcohol.** Think about the world’s obsession with adultery (奸淫), hoping to fill a void 填补空虚 in their lives.)

**The truth is, the world is a ship without a rudder (船舵) and they need clear directions.**  
The world knows that the things the Devil offers have no taste to the soul. **The world needs the Gospel so it can have something savory.**

And when this happens, **you will see more people die to themselves** and live to worship and work for God. **You will bring glory to him.**

You will see young people stop obsessing about education only or entertainment only and **standing up and identifying that they believe in Jesus** and testifying they will love his law and walk in his way, regardless of the pressures and mocking around them.

You will see Christians **standing up for right to life, oppose perversion, challenge the state** in the right to raise their children according to God's law, working in jobs that will not force them to break the Sabbath (安息日), promote proper justice, and displaying a contentment (满足感) that makes the mouth of the non-believer drop! That is what it means to be a light to the world.

**3. So if you want your children to have real and lasting influence on the world, train them to be salt and light.** The trouble is, most people want their children to change the world but they ignore the most important way of doing so! But you are not to lose sight of your work. Live as a Christian, raise your children in the covenant, and influence others and bring them into the covenant.

**4. If you are light, don't hide. That makes no sense. That shows you don't understand what you have in your possession or that you don't understand your duty. If you are salt, use what you are. Don't hide yourself on a shelf.**

### **Conclusion:**

Christ kept God's law perfectly for you and he renewed and credited his righteousness to your account. Now being renewed in your 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, you are to spread his influence around the world for his glory.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

While it is okay to desire that your child discovers a cure for cancer or be the world's greatest painter, don't set the bar so low.

**If you want them to truly influence the world in the most remarkable way, and influence it for eternity, you have to start to teach them they need to receive what Christ offers** – his righteousness.

Let them see the **Lord Jesus suffering in his life** and on the cross for their sake.

With that in their souls they can influence the world by being salt and light.

And when they do so, they will bring much glory to Jesus.

Finally: If you are not a Christian, let me shine a little light for you today. Your body may be in light but your soul is in darkness and at the door of hell and you are opening it. But if you surrender to Jesus and stop fighting to go in the door, he will bring out from the brink of disaster and give you new life. You see, Jesus died as a substitute for sinners.