



The Sermon on The Mount
Bible Study Session 3
Matthew 5:13-16



Study By
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Greek NT

5.13 Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς· ἐὰν δὲ τὸ ἅλας μωρανθῇ, ἐν τίνι ἀλισθησεται; εἰς οὐδὲν ἰσχύει ἔτι εἰ μὴ βληθὲν ἔξω καταπατεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων. 5.14 Ὑμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου. οὐ δύναται πόλις κρυβῆναι ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη· 5.15 οὐδὲ κεινοῦσιν λύχνον καὶ τιθέουσιν αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τὸν μόδιον ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὴν λυχνίαν, καὶ λάμπει πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ. 5.16 οὕτως λαμψάτω τὸ φῶς ὑμῶν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅπως ἴδωσιν ὑμῶν τὰ καλὰ ἔργα καὶ δοξάσωσιν τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν τὸν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

La Biblia de las Américas

13 Vosotros sois la sal de la tierra; pero si la sal se ha vuelto insípida, ¿con qué se hará salada otra vez? Ya para nada sirve, sino para ser echada fuera y pisoteada por los hombres. 14 Vosotros sois la luz del mundo. Una ciudad situada sobre un monte no se puede ocultar; 15 ni se enciende una lámpara y se pone debajo de un almud, sino sobre el candelero, y alumbr a todos los que están en la casa. 16 Así brille vuestra luz delante de los hombres, para que vean vuestras buenas acciones y glorifiquen a vuestro Padre que está en los cielos.

NRSV

13 You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15 No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

NLT

13 You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it useful again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. 14 You are the light of the world -- like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see. 15 Don't hide your light under a basket! Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all. 16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

The Outline of the Text:

I. You are the salt of the earth, v. 13

What did salt do in the ancient world?

How are disciples to be salt?

What danger exists in failure to be salt?

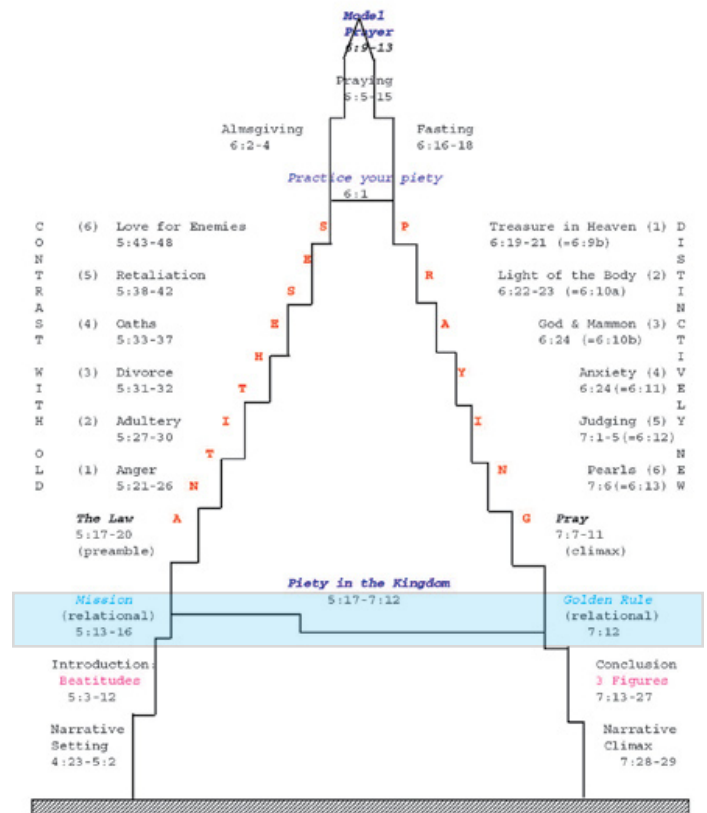
II. You are the light of the world, vv. 14-16

What did light do in the ancient world?

How are disciples to be light?

What danger exists in failure to be light?

The Literary Structure of the Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 4:23-7:29



Source: Lorin L. Cranford, *Study Manual of the Sermon on the Mount: Greek Text* (Fort Worth: Scripta Publishing Inc., 1988), 320. Adapted from Gunter Bornkamm, "Der Aufbau der Bergpredigt," *New Testament Studies* 24 (1977-78): 419-432.

Diagram of the Sermon on the Mount
Mt. 5:13-16

13 ^{5:13} **You are the salt of the earth**
but
if the salt loses its saltiness,
by what means

14 **will it have its saltiness restored?**

15 **It is good for nothing**
having been tossed out
except...to be trampled down
by the feet of men.

16 ^{5:14} **You are the light of the world.**

17 **A city cannot be hidden**
set on a mountain

18 ^{5:15} **do they light a lamp,**
and

19 **do they place it**
under a measuring basket,
instead,

20 **they put it on a lampstand,**
and

21 **it gives off light to everyone**
in the house.

22 ^{5:16} So
let your light shine
before men
so that they may see your good deeds,
and
they may glorify your Father,
who is in Heaven.

Summary:

In this pericope,¹ the mission of discipleship is set forth by Jesus: *to impact the world around us*. The thought structure of the text is clearly divided into two parallel emphases: salt (#s 13-15) and light (#s 16-22). The synonymy parallelism between the two core declarations (#s 13 and 16) argue for interpretative interaction between the two points. One essential point is being made by both declarations: disciples are to impact their world. Salt stresses influence and light stresses illumination. Both emphases begin with the declaration that disciples are -- not might be -- salt (# 13) and (# 16) light now. Both are then followed by warnings against refusal of these mandates: #s 14-15 and #s 17-21. The light theme is extended with an application in statement 22.

¹Pericope = natural unit of text.