**The Salt of The Earth**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Matthew 5:11-16**

**Sunday Morning**

**May 15, 2022**

**Matthew 5:11-16**

11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. 12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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. 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, 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.

**11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.**

Saints, “God blesses you when you are mocked and persecuted and lied about because you are my followers.” Jesus was telling his disciples that they shouldn’t be surprised when people mock them, persecute them, and lie about them. Jesus would face such treatment. Later, he explained to his followers that they should expect nothing different.

**John 15:18-21**

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

**Slide 1 of Persecuted Saints>**

**Slide 2 of Persecuted Saints>**

**Slide 3 of Persecuted Saints>**

**Slide 4 of Persecuted Saints>**

**12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

Saints, Jesus described the way the disciples should respond to persecution: “Be happy about it! Be very glad!” This refers to deep, spiritual joy that is unhindered and unchanged by what happens in this present life.

A person with righteous character can rejoice and be glad because of the promise: a great reward awaits you in heaven. The persecution will pale in comparison to the great reward.

Besides that, the disciples had good company: the ancient prophets were persecuted, too. Jesus placed his disciples in a long line of God’s followers who lived righteously and spoke truthfully—only to suffer for it.

Jesus explained that to live and speak for God in the face of unjust persecution, as the ancient prophets did, would bring great reward in heaven.

**James 1:12**

"Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

**Jeremiah 20:11**

"But the LORD is with me as a mighty, awesome One. Therefore my persecutors will stumble, and will not prevail. They will be greatly ashamed, for they will not prosper. Their everlasting confusion will never be forgotten."

**Revelation 22:12**

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work."

**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.**

Jesus’ questions, “But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it useful again?” did not expect an answer, for once salt has deteriorated, it cannot be used as a preservative.

As salt preserves and brings out the best flavor of food, so believers should be the salt of the earth and affect others positively. Jesus told his disciples that if they wanted to make a difference in the world, they would have to be different from the world.

God would hold them accountable to maintain their “saltiness” (that is, their usefulness). We must be different if we want to make a difference.

**2 Corinthians 6:17-18**

17 Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you." 18 "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty."

**Romans 12:1-2**

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**1 John 2:15-17**

15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. 17 And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

**14 You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.**

Saints, Jesus said “You are the light of the world.” As salt makes a difference in people’s food, so light makes a difference in their surroundings.

Saints, Jesus would later explain,

**John 8:12**

"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Saints, you and I as disciples must live for Christ, shining like a city on a mountain, glowing in the night for all to see. They are like lights in a dark world, showing clearly what Christ is like. Because Jesus is the light of the world, his followers must reflect his light.

**John 3:19-21**

19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

**15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.**

Saints, “Don’t hide your light under a basket! Instead, put it on a stand and let it shine for all.” People place lights on stands for them to spread their warm glow. The disciples should continue to reflect the light of their Master, the light of the world.

They must not try to conceal their light any more than they would light a lamp and then hide it. Being Christ’s disciples means spreading the light to everyone with whom we have contact.

**Luke 9:23-26**

23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? 26 For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.

**Romans 1:16-17**

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

**1 Peter 4:16-19**

16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. 17 For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?

18 Now "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" 19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

**16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**

Saints, “In the same way” that a light shines from a stand, Christ’s disciples must let their light shine before others by letting their “good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

Jesus made it clear that there would be no mistaking the source of a believer’s good works. The believer’s light shines not for himself but to reflect the light back to the Father and so direct people to him.

**1 Peter 1:13-16**

13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

**Ephesians 4:17-32**

17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart;

19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But you have not so learned Christ, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. 25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another. 26 Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil.

28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. 29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**