

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“You are the salt of the earth.”

(Matthew 5: 13)

Jesus says to his ragtag group of apostles that they are the salt of the earth. We all have a great awareness of salt and a familiarity with salt. We know how important it is to us in terms of the food we eat. So many times the difference between something tasting very bland and something tasting delightful is the presence of just the right amount of salt. Cooking a soup and then tasting for just the right blend for our taste buds is a common experience. Putting some salt on a tomato or on an egg just amplifies the taste. Jesus knows that people are very familiar with the importance of salt, and the significance of salt, and the difference that a little salt can make in our diet.

And because he knows and his listeners will know, Jesus turns the phrase around and applies it not to the world of food but to the world of relationships and interactivity and work. There are people whose presence, whose words, whose support, whose encouragement, whose fidelity, whose reliability, whose love truly make a great difference in a situation and in the lives of those around them. Jesus wants us to realize that we have this responsibility and this opportunity as part of our lives as human beings, as God sees us.

But it is the very Spirit of the Lord that enables us and empowers us to be this salt. We cannot, only on our own, become salt for others. It is the Lord's presence in our lives that makes all the difference. It is the Lord's presence in our homes that makes all the difference. Dad is to be salt for his family. Dad, the way you live out being a dad, is what makes all the difference. Mom is to be salt for her children. Mom, the way you are mother to each of your children is what makes the difference. Both are to be salt for their loved ones and for each other but both must depend on the Lord to bestow on them all that they need to live this way—the patience, the wisdom, the forbearance, the courage, the sacrifice, the forgiveness, and the love. Jesus has already won the victory but he wants us to step up, with his help, to make a difference in the lives of those around us. He believes we can do this He says to us—you are the salt of the earth. This is all part of the renewal of the face of the earth. The question is whether we ourselves believe this. The question of the week.