

Greatness of Heart

Matthew 5:13–20

Salt & Light

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Meditative Prayer

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Candle Holders

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Today's Bible Reading

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Additional Bible Readings

Isaiah 58:1–9a, (9b–12)

Psalms 112:1–9, (10)

1 Corinthians 2:1–12, (13–16)

**Light of the world, be our light today.
Creator of life,
preserve our life this day. Light**

**of the world, we praise you with our hearts,
songs, and minds.**

Amen.

In Matthew 5:13–20, Jesus presents three images – salt, light, and a city on a hill – to help listeners understand their relationship with God and what it means to live according to the ways of God's realm. Salt and light are metaphors used in the Hebrew scriptures to describe covenant and law. David and his descendants are called a lamp before God. Jesus expands the message.

Jesus teaches his followers that they are salt (cleansing, preserving, adding flavour), and light (revealing what is hidden and enabling all to see). God's reign is not only a future promise; it also is a present reality. We participate in that reign as we live in God's ways. Our light shines before others, not so they can applaud our piety but that our works can direct others to give thanks and praise to God. God, through us, gives light to everyone; to "all in the house." The word translated here as house is the word for "the established world" – it is a big house!

For Jews in Jesus' day, the law or Torah was understood as the full content of God's revelation to the people. It was contained in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Hebrew scriptures. Torah included law codes such as the Ten Commandments and many other regulations that governed community life. Some scribes and Pharisees accuse Jesus of not keeping God's law. However, Jesus is faithful to the law's intent. He came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it. Jesus calls us to live righteous lives and to show justice and mercy to all. The concern of the scribes and Pharisees was obedience to God's law. Jesus'

Jesus teach that we are like salt and light as we seek followers must be just as wholehearted in following the intent and the spirit of it.