

**2/8/26**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**  
**For Group Meetings from February 1<sup>st</sup> – February 7<sup>th</sup>**

**OUR MISSION:** As a missional congregation we *celebrate* Christ's presence, *invite* people into a growing relationship with Jesus, and *equip* them to *serve* in a broken world.

**Prayer of the Day:** Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**BIBLICAL EQUIPPING TOGETHER:**

**Share:** How did last week's scripture (Matthew 5:1-12) work in your life this week?

**Mission:**

- What was most satisfying about your ministry last week?
- Where do you see God at work?
- How did you participate in God's missional activity?
- How did inviting go last Sunday?

**Hear:** Matthew 5:13-20

**Explore Questions:** (Use these or develop your own.)

1. What are the main characteristics of salt and light according to these verses?
2. Who is the "light of the world" in this passage?
3. What does Jesus say light is not meant to do?

**Connect Questions:** (Use these or develop your own.)

1. When have you felt your faith made a real difference for someone else?
2. What does "losing your saltiness" look like in your own life?
3. What parts of your faith feel vibrant right now? What parts feel flat or routine?

**Memorize this verse:** "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:14)  
What is one small, concrete way you could live as salt or light this week?

**BIBLICAL EQUIPPING APART:**

**Obey:** During this week follow through on your intentions.

**Meditate:** Meditate on Psalm 112:1-10. How does this speak into your life?

**Reflect:** What have I learned in my week of living with this text? What can I share with my group when we next meet?

**Notes for ChristCare leaders:**

It’s a promise, not a command. Jesus isn’t saying, “You should be the salt of the earth and light of the world.” or, “You have to be,...” let alone “You better be,....” Rather, he is saying, you are. As in already are. Even if you don’t know it. Even if you once knew it and forgot. Even if you have a hard time believing it. Jesus is making to his disciples a promise about their very being, he is not commanding, let alone threatening them about what they should be doing. And that’s worth taking some time to consider as so many experience God more like a divine lawmaker and rule-enforcer than generous gift-giver. And because we experience God that way, we tend not to find as much inspiration and energy in our worship experience and faith lives as we might hope.

But in this passage, Jesus is making promises and giving out gifts. You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. This is, like last week beatitudes, sheer blessing. But before getting there, stay with that promise. Think about your life over the last couple of weeks and think of the variety of ways God has used you to be salt and light. Your words of encouragement to others. Your faithful work at your places of employment. The volunteering you’ve done. The prayers you’ve offered or promises you’ve made and kept. Any of these things may seem, in and of themselves, small. But please don’t forget small is what God most often uses to change the world. Once we begin to believe we are salt and light – not simply becoming or hoping to be but actually are – then we are encouraged to continue to be salt and light, letting our light shine so that people will see our good works and give thanksgiving and glory to God.

And that matters, because if ever there was a time when we needed to be blessed with the gifts of salt and light it’s right now. Which is why we need a reminder that we are salt and light and we are blessed to let that light shine all the brighter. We need salt and light in this world. And the crazy thing is that God has already provided it right in and through people who now reside in your company. And those who will be seated around you this weekend. You are blessed. You are salt and light. Already. And God is not done with us yet. God will continue to bless the world through your prayers, words and deeds as Jesus faithful disciples. Jesus is making promises today and we are all about to be changed by them.

**Thanks be to God,**  
Pastor Thadd (tbook@desertcross.org)

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*Traditional version:*

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us  
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power,  
And the glory, forever and ever. Amen

*Contemporary version:*

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those  
Who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial  
And deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the  
power, and the glory are yours,  
Now and forever. Amen