

Mat. 5: 13-16

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.

You are the light of the world.

A city built on a hill cannot be hid.

No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket,

but on a lamp stand,

and it gives light to all in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before others,

so that they may see your good words and

give glory to your Father in heaven.

Meditation:

Salt gets a bad rap in modern times..

Even if you don't have high blood pressure or

some other underlying physical issue,

we are warned against using salt...

but come on!

Who doesn't love salty, hot McDonald French fries?!

But for the ancient people,

salt wasn't just a matter of yummy goodness...

Salt was a matter of life or death.

The Ancients used salt for purifying and preserving

their preciously scarce food.

**And because they lived in a desert climate
their physical bodies needed additional salt just to stay alive..**

**The fire in their ovens was fueled by animal dung
mixed with salt because the salt was catalyst for the flame...**

**Salt was even used in their religious rituals...
it was a means of sealing certain types of covenants and contracts...**

**So salt wasn't something optional...
it was an essential component of their way of life
and their way for life.**

**In today's reading,
Jesus is very direct to those who were willing to listen:**

**YOU are the salt of the Earth.
In other words: YOU are essential for life:
YOU are necessary, YOU are important,
YOU are needed for the survival and the flourishing of the world...**

**No matter what you have been told,
no matter what you have been taught,
no matter what you even believe about yourself:**

**YOU are needed for the life of the world—
every single one of you.**

**How many of us were ever taught that?
How many of us were ever told**

that each of us was necessary for the survival of all of us...

**The primary message of Jesus is the inbreaking presence of
the Kingdom of God here and now...**

the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

Jesus never claimed a unique power or status in order to do all that he did.

He never said:

“Believe in me because of what I just did for you...”

He always said: “Your faith has saved you.”

It was God’s presence in each one of us that heals each one of us..

**Scripture says we each have been made in God’s image and likeness, which
tells me that**

all of our gifts, talents, idiosyncrasies, likes and dislikes

**is a way that offers God, that mysterious, powerful Cosmic Divine Presence a
unique way of being seen and experienced**

in the world.

Each of us...our IQ, our ability to paint, create or sing,

our talent with a hammer, a scalpel, whisk, or dust rag,

our love of children or animals,

our curiosity about the stars or the rivers,

the mountains or the mosquitos,

all of this...

is our unique way of allowing the Presence of God into the world....

and God’s presence is the life of the world...

And therefore, all of us...each of us...

is absolutely, unconditionally

needed for the life of the world...

This day, this afternoon: hear Jesus saying that to you....

**Just as Marianne Williamson often says
our playing small does not serve the world.**

**‘I am not worthy’ has no place in the spiritual life,
it has no place inside one’s relationship with God....
worthiness isn’t even the question—**

**And just in case we don’t get it the first time...
Jesus immediately offers another metaphor, another teaching:
YOU are the light of the world.
You don’t hide a lamp under a bushel basket,
You can’t hide a city built on a hill....
Now...think about it: in Jesus’ day there was no electricity
so when it was dark in the desert....
it was dark: so this is a very powerful metaphor!**

**The purpose of light is to pierce the darkness in order to illuminate,
to enlighten one’s surroundings
to be a beacon for travelers, to offer safety,
the purpose of light is to shine....**

**This afternoon Jesus is telling us,
just as he was trying to convince his listeners 2,000 years ago:
YOU can show the way...
YOU can be a beacon of light to guide a fellow life traveler...
YOU can be a safe refuge in the darkness...
YOU can pierce the darkness of ignorance and fear...
YOU can show the way to a life of grace, peace, joy, hope, and love...**

How then have we been brain washed to believe we are “not worthy”???

Can you find that line coming from the mouth of Jesus anywhere in the Gospels?

Can you ever find an action or a word coming from Jesus that diminishes anyone?

Well, actually you can: Jesus does chastise the Pharisees many times, and Peter one time....

But the Pharisees at the time of Jesus did try to make the people feel small and unworthy... and that's what infuriated Jesus....

Jesus spent his whole life inviting people to live in the presence of the Kingdom God NOW, to give expression to the Reign of Heaven on Earth by the way they lived and the way that they loved....

All human persons were created to be transmitters of Holy, Creative, Loving, Power and grace...

The whole cosmos has been created as a conduit of and for Holy Energy, the Divine Presence... worthiness is non question.

Howard Thurman once said:

“Don't ask what the world needs.

Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it.

Because what the world needs is people who have come alive”

So, what makes you come alive?

What gives you joy?

What do you love to do?

Whatever it is.... do it with your whole heart, your whole soul, your whole

mind in love and in service for the world.....

**Wake up each morning and dedicate your day for the good
all beings in the world,**

Let your light shine.

Do what you love,

be what you love...

Live this life you have been given...with and for love...

**And the world will be a better place...and oh...it's ok
if you stop for a few French fries...amen.**