

SALTLESS SAINTS

or

GOOD FOR NOTHING!



TEXT: *Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

THESIS: To show how Christians & the Church has lost its testimony & witness to a lost world.

INTRO.: A. Jesus likened believers to salt. Salt is one of those necessities of life. Without it many things are bland & tasteless. Believers are to provide for the world what salt provides for food. Salt makes things more palatable - believers are to make living in the world more palatable for the unsaved by getting them saved & thus giving them a purpose in life. Salt makes some things sweeter (*watermelon, for example - don't knock it if you haven't tried it!*). Believers are to make life sweeter for others by their works & gifts. Salt is a preservative & keeps things from going bad. Believers are to do all they can to keep biblical morality in society (e.g., homosexuality, abortion, etc.). When a believer stops doing this he is **“good for nothing...”**

QUOTE: Matthew Henry: *“Salt is the remedy for unsavory meat, but there is no remedy for unsavory salt.”*

B. We, as Christians, & collectively as a church are in danger of becoming **“good for nothing...”!** We are bordering on becoming **“SALTLESS SAINTS.”** Here are some of the symptoms...

I. SYMPTON #1: CONFUSION

A. Failure To Discriminate: (Lack of Discernment)

1. Discerning Christians are an increasingly rare breed today.
2. Doctrinal uncertainty has neutralized & paralyzed churches & Christians.
3. Unholy alliances between doctrinally diverse groups prevails.

ILLUS.: The blasphemous ecumenical movement unites the cults, sects & denominations trampling underfoot doctrinal distinctions. Building stronger homes takes precedence over doctrinal purity. At a regional ecumenical conference in Portland, Oregon, Bill McCartney asked:

“Promise Keepers doesn't care if you're a Baptist. Are you born in the Spirit of God? Promise Keepers doesn't care if you're Pentecostal. Are you born in the Spirit? Now hear this! Promise Keepers doesn't care if you're Roman Catholic. Are you born in the Spirit?” The problem w/the unqualified question is that it can mean whatever you want it to mean. To each of the above it has a different meaning. This philosophy fits w/the spirit of the age that minimizes objective Biblical truth in favor of subjective experience.

As for me - I am a promise keeper, therefore I cannot support Promise Keepers and their ecumenical ilk! I have kept promises I made to the Lord when He saved me in 1956 so I cannot support any group, regardless how well meaning, which is contrary to His Word. I made promises to my wife when we were married in 1960 so I cannot change at any point in our union. Thus I can't support P.K. which seeks to substitute unscriptural psychology & self-esteem programs into the family. I made promises at my ordination in 1963 so I cannot support P.K. which claims that doctrine is less important than unity. I made promises to this church & agree with its Doctrinal Statement & Covenant so I cannot support P.K. which usurps the authority of this local church & espouses things contrary to both. Stay tuned...

II. SYMPTOM #2: COMPROMISE

A. Removing The Reproach: (Fear of Controversy)

1. Synthesis is the reigning principle of the day:

- a. To synthesize simply means to put different things in the same pot & mix together until a new material has been produced.
- b. The original ingredients totally lose their identity: result - a synthetic (“not real”)!
 2. The idea is to remove anything offensive to “reach” as many as possible.

ILLUS.: Promise Keepers again, re: homosexuality. Officially P.K. states that it “*shares the same historic & biblical stance taken by Evangelicals & Catholics*” yet they conclude that this “abomination” (KJB) is “*a complex & potentially polarizing issue to be understood in the context of psychology and genetic research...(& that) homosexuals are men who need the same support, encouragement & healing we are offering to all men...we, therefore, support their being included & welcome in all our events.*” **What ever happened to condemning sin, calling for repentance & receiving the Savior???**

The success of P.K. & E.C.T., etc. is the large crowds & “decisions”. But even a broken clock is right twice a day!!! Ends do not justify the means...there is a right (Bible) way & a wrong (man-centered) way to get the Gospel out.

3. The seriousness of the situation cannot be overstated; right & wrong, good & evil, light & darkness have become non-issues.
4. All distinctions are removed & everything is thrown into the pot & mashed together.

ILLUS.: I once had a friend who mixed all his food together on a plate before eating it! He said it saved time. It was all I could do to sit at the same table with him! Steak, potatoes, butter, a salad w/dressing, along with a glass of cold grape juice is my idea of a tasty meal, but I don’t want it put into a blender, mixed together & then have to drink the concoction!

5. Sound doctrine or our view of sin is not determined by consensus, but by God’s Word.
6. The fear of controversy & failure to stand on the truth is a sure pathway to spir. demise.

III. SYMPTOM #3: COUNTERFEITS

A. Personality Over Truth: (Pleasing Men, Not God)

1. TV not only elects Presidents, but it also popularizes preachers!

ILLUS.: The high priest of selfism,(now deceased) Robt. Schuller writes: “*For the church to address the unchurched w/a theocentric attitude is to invite failure...I believe that the decline (in church attendance) is the result of our placing theocentric communications (God’s Word) above the meeting of the deeper emotional & spiritual needs of humanity.*”

Someone correctly quipped: “When small men cast long shadows it is a sure sign the sun is setting.”

2. The popularity of charismatic preachers & entertainment-centered ministries is due largely to TV influence.

ILLUS.: Does God threaten to kill a preacher if he fails to raise millions of dollars (Oral Roberts?) Will I get a 10-fold return on every dollar I send to a TV evangelist? Am I a “little god” who can command the big God’s angels to do my bidding? NO!

IV. SYMPTOM #4: COMPLACENCY

A. Apathy Replaces Activity: (Service Demands Dedication)

1. American Christians have no shortage of information, what we lack is inspiration & dedication!
2. Jesus told His disciples to “*watch & pray*” - instead they slept & snored!

ILLUS.: Someone advertised the formation of an “Apathy Club” on a college bulletin board. It gave the time & meeting place. When the hour came for the meeting no one showed up. The reason? Lack of interest!

Frankly, I too have to fight apathy & complacency & my flesh wants to give in to fatalism. In my devotions recently, I perfunctorily prayed for revival. As soon as I caught myself I realized that I was simply mouthing words & didn’t believe it was possible. I had to confess my unbelief as sin & pray fervently again for revival in my life & in our church.

3. Repentance must precede the revival we long to see; sin must be judged, confession, brokenness & turning back to God is what is needed.

V. SYMPTOM #5: CONTENTION

A. Division Instead of Unity: (Strife Vs. Solidarity)

Mk.3:25 *And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.*

1. Many churches are in a state of constant civil war!
2. Griping, sniping, criticizing, complaining & nitpicking have done more to discredit the work of God than the cults & sects & denominations.

Jn.13:34-35 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

ILLUS.: Parents who specialize in belittling their pastor, the Christian school & staff, etc. should not be surprised if their children are never saved nor ever volunteer for Christian service.

3. As w/all sin, contention is merely a symptom of a deeper problem.
4. Without the power of God's Spirit, it will be impossible to keep the balance of truth & love.

QUOTE: Evang. Harold Vaughn: *"You can be doctrinally right in the flesh & you can be compassionate in the flesh. But you only do both simultaneously in the power of the Holy Spirit. The world will never take us seriously until the devil does. The devil will not take us seriously until God does. God will not take us seriously until we take Him seriously!"*

CONCL.: The above symptoms can only produce a devastating disease which can only be cured by deep revival among God's people in the church. **"SALTLESS SAINTS"** are **"good for nothing..."** They are valueless to the world & to the church as well. The text Script. offers no remedy for savorless salt, but if you have not lost all your saltiness (testimony), ask God to help you to be revived **NOW!**

Let's get rid of **CONFUSION, COMPROMISE, COUNTERFEITS, COMPLACENCY & CONTENTION** and put the salt back into Bible Christianity!