

Time Audit Chronicles: Salt and Light – Believers’ Influence on the World

(Matthew 5:13-16)

Prologue: Making a Difference

The Presswood family kitchen was alive with activity. Ariel was stirring a pot of soup on the stove, carefully measuring in spices from small jars, while Alice stood on a stool beside her, clutching a flashlight.

“A pinch of salt,” Ariel muttered, adding a sprinkle. She tasted the soup and nodded. “Much better. Salt really makes a difference.”

“Salt’s not the only thing that makes a difference,” Ryan said from the counter, watching them with amusement. “Jesus said we’re supposed to be like salt and light in the world.”

Alice shone her flashlight at Ryan, giggling. “Like this?”

“Exactly,” Ryan replied. “Salt adds flavor and preserves things, and light shows the way. Jesus said His followers are meant to do both—to bring God’s goodness into the world and point others to Him.”

Ariel tilted her head thoughtfully. “How are we supposed to do that?”

“Let’s find out,” Ryan said with a grin. “The Time Audit Machine can take us to the moment Jesus taught about being salt and light.”

Alice gasped, clutching Mr. Fluffernutter. “Do you think Jesus will let us try being salt and light too?”

“Let’s go see,” Ryan said, already heading to the garage.

The Journey Begins: A Hilltop Teaching

The Time Audit Machine glowed brightly as Ariel programmed the coordinates.

“Destination: Galilean hillside, 27-29 CE. Objective: understand what it means to be salt and light in the world.”

With a hum and a flash of light, the Presswoods were transported to a sunny hillside overlooking the Sea of Galilee. The air was fresh, filled with the scent of wildflowers and the sound of waves lapping at the shore. A crowd was gathered, sitting attentively as Jesus stood at the top of the hill, His voice carrying over the breeze.

“There He is,” Ryan whispered, pointing to the Teacher.

Ariel opened her notebook, ready to jot down observations. “What’s He saying?”

“Let’s listen,” Ryan said.

The Teaching: Salt of the Earth

Jesus' voice was calm but powerful as He addressed the crowd:

"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." (Matthew 5:13)

"What does that mean?" Ariel asked, scribbling furiously.

"Salt was really valuable back then," Ryan explained. "It wasn't just for flavor—it was used to preserve food and keep it from spoiling. Jesus is saying that believers are meant to preserve what's good in the world and make life better for others."

"But what happens if salt isn't salty anymore?" Alice asked, frowning.

"It's useless," Ryan said. "Just like we're not living out our faith if we don't bring God's goodness to the world."

The Teaching: Light of the World

Jesus continued: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:14)

The Presswoods looked out over the hillside, where a small village sat in the distance, its whitewashed buildings gleaming in the sunlight.

"Why can't it be hidden?" Alice asked, pointing.

"Because it's so bright and visible," Ariel said. "Even from far away."

"Exactly," Ryan said. "Jesus is saying that believers should be like that—our faith should shine so clearly that people can't help but see it."

Jesus added: "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." (Matthew 5:15)

Ariel nodded. "So, if we hide our faith, it's like putting a candle under a basket—completely pointless."

Ryan smiled. "That's exactly what He's saying. Our faith is meant to be shared, not hidden."

The Challenge: Let Your Light Shine

Jesus concluded this part of His sermon with a powerful challenge: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

The crowd murmured in agreement, their faces reflecting the impact of Jesus' words.

"So our good works aren't about showing off," Ariel said. "They're about helping others see God."

“Right,” Ryan said. “When we live the way God wants us to—with kindness, love, and integrity—people see a glimpse of who He is.”

An Example in the Crowd

As the family watched, a man in the crowd stood and approached a struggling woman, helping her carry a heavy basket of goods. The woman smiled gratefully, and those around her began murmuring about the man’s kindness.

“That’s it,” Ryan said, gesturing toward the man. “A simple act of goodness that points others to God.”

“So it doesn’t have to be something big?” Alice asked.

“Not at all,” Ryan said. “Even small acts of love can shine brightly in a dark world.”

Returning Home: Shining in Everyday Life

Back in the garage, the Time Audit Machine powered down, and the family reflected on what they had witnessed. Ariel flipped through her notes, while Alice shined her flashlight at Mr. Fluffernutter, giggling.

“Jesus wasn’t just telling people what to do,” Ariel said finally. “He was showing them how to live in a way that makes a difference.”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “Being salt and light means living out our faith in a way that shows God’s love and goodness to others.”

Alice tilted her head. “Do you think we can shine like that too?”

Ryan smiled. “You already do, Alice. Every time you’re kind, every time you help someone, every time you show love, you’re shining His light.”

Reflection: Bringing God’s Goodness to the World

That evening, Ariel read aloud from Matthew 5:

“‘Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.’”

The family sat quietly, reflecting on how simple actions could have eternal impact.

“Jesus called us to be different,” Ryan said. “To stand out in a way that points people to Him. It’s not about being perfect—it’s about living in a way that shows His love.”

Alice held up her flashlight proudly. “I think we can be lights too!”

“And salt,” Ariel added with a smile. “We can make life better for the people around us.”

Takeaway: Living as Salt and Light

The teaching of salt and light is a call for believers to bring God’s goodness into the world and reflect His love in everything they do. As salt, we preserve what is good and add flavor to life. As light, we shine God’s truth and love into a world that desperately needs it. Through our actions, we have the incredible opportunity to point others to Him, becoming part of His greater plan to bring hope and redemption to all.