

28.27b Sermon on the Mount—Salt, Light, Law (Matthew 5:13–20)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- On a dark-colored card stock strip write the word *salt* using glue. Sprinkle the glue with salt. Do the same on another strip of card stock writing the word *Christian*. Shake off excess to reveal the words.
- Print the pages (found below), “What Is Salt Good For?” and “What Is a Christian Good For?” Mount on card stock. Place beside each other in a pocket chart. An alternative plan is to back the printed page with paper towel, cut apart, and display on a flannel board.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *to glorify*: to make much of; to show off; to praise
- *to fulfill*: to fill full; to complete; to finish totally
- *verily*: truly (“I tell you the truth.”)
- *scribes and Pharisees*: Scribes . . . were the more learned part of the people, who were employed in writing out, and expounding the law; . . . Pharisees . . . were the strictest sect among the Jews for outward religion and righteousness (Gill in Online Bible).
- *kingdom of heaven*: the church, which will eventually meet in heaven
- *righteousness*: right

Scripture: (NKJV)

Matthew 5:13 “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 “Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

19 “Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Introduction/Review:

Last week we began studying a sermon Jesus preached. What do we call this sermon? [Sermon on the Mount.] Why do we call it this? [Because it was preached on a hill or mountain.] The first part of this sermon is called “The Beatitudes.” What does *beatitude* mean? [Blessed.] What does *blessed* mean? [Favored; happy.]

Let’s review what the be-attitudes are [a chart big enough for a small class to see is found below]:

Attitude	Beatitude (Blessing)	Application
Be poor in spirit.	Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	Realize you are a sinner.
Mourn.	They shall be comforted.	Be sorry enough to ask forgiveness.
Be meek.	They shall inherit the earth.	Be willing to be taught, corrected, and to obey.
Hunger and thirst for righteousness.	They shall be filled.	Long to live the right way—God’s way.
Be merciful.	They shall receive mercy.	Show loving kindness toward all people.
Be pure in heart.	They shall see God.	Be 100% for God.
Be a peacemaker.	They shall be called the children of God.	Tell others about Jesus; be a missionary.
If you are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,	Yours is the kingdom of God.	Be joyful when mistreated for obeying God.

Story:

I’m calling the next part of the Sermon on the Mount “Salt, Light, and Law.” See if you can tell why this is a good title.

Salt of the earth

Jesus was attracting crowds wherever He went. Even though He was directing his Sermon on the Mount to the disciples, hundreds of others heard it too. “You are the salt of the earth.” preached Jesus, “but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.”

[Display the visual aids for “salt” and “Christians.”] It is said that there are 14,000 uses for salt. Here are just three: 1. It shows the goodness of food. 2. It cleanses. 3. It preserves from spoiling. If believers in Jesus Christ are called the “salt of the earth,” how are they like salt?

First, how do they show the goodness of God? They are to glorify Him by their actions and words, even their thoughts.

How about cleansing? By influence and example and words, believers want to tell the world about the Saviour who can save (cleanse) from sin. They also want to keep their lives free from sin.

How can believers in Jesus preserve righteousness? By the Word of God—reading it, living it, speaking it. This is our responsibility whether the world listens to us or not.

Salt that is no longer salty is worthless. We read that it has been “common in Syria and Palestine to see salt scattered in piles on the ground because it has lost its flavour” (RWP in Online Bible). Jesus said in this sermon, “It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.” It’s just dirt.

The people of this earth are dying without Jesus Christ. Christians can be salty—influence for good, testify for the Lord, and preserve righteousness. Let them not be as useless as flavorless salt.

Light of the world

Jesus gave the second picture, that of light. Jesus referred to Himself as the Light of the World. Believers in Jesus Christ are lesser lights of the world because the true Light of the World is in them.

Jesus spoke of a light shining from a city on a hill. He said, “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

Can you remember two cities in Palestine that were on hills? One was Nazareth, where some people were going to throw Jesus off the cliff upon which the city was built. Another high city, even though it was by the seaside, was Capernaum, which, ✓because of its height, is said to be “exalted unto heaven” (Matthew 11:23). Jerusalem, also, was set on a mountain. [Show picture of a city on a hill found below.] In the darkness, a city with elevation higher than the surrounding area can easily be seen.

How about Christians? Are they lights to the world, like a city on a hill? How can they be? Just as they can be salt—by showing forth the goodness of Jesus Christ and by being a testimony to His saving grace.

The main thing about light is that it dispels darkness. Wherever there is the least bit of light, darkness goes away; darkness and light cannot coexist.

It’s senseless to try to hide one’s light. As Jesus said, “Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, [do this or show the picture found below] but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.” What would be the purpose of lighting a room with a covered candle? That makes no sense, but sometimes Christians do not let their light for Jesus shine; they hide it “under a bushel.”*

Such hiding of the light is addressed by Jesus, for He said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Does this verse read, “That they may think well of you”? No. It states, “That they may . . . glorify your Father in heaven.” “It is not right to do a thing merely to be seen by others, for this is pride and ostentation; but we are to do it that, being seen, God may be honoured. The Pharisees acted to be seen of men; true Christians act to glorify God, and care little what men may think of them, except as by their conduct others may be brought to honor God” (Barnes in Online Bible).**

Fulfillment of the law

We have discussed being salt and light. Now we will deal with Jesus’ relationship to the Law. Jews were thinking that maybe Jesus would do away with God’s law. After all, in their minds, He had already broken the law of the Sabbath by healing on that day. But listen to Jesus. Will He destroy the law? He said, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

Contrary to the ideas of the Pharisees and scribes, fulfilling the law did not include obeying all the extra conditions and traditions they had invented.

Jesus said, “Assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.” This is the first “*verily*” statement of Jesus found in Scripture (JFB in Online Bible), and it was an important “I-tell-you-the-truth.” [Use the jot and tittle visuals found at the end of this lesson.] Jesus would fulfill every single part of the law, even the dotting of an *i*.

Jesus continued with some warnings: “Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” ✓I wonder that anyone who teaches others to break God’s commandments would be in the kingdom of heaven at all. ✓I think that saying such a person would be least in the kingdom was a judgment of charity—that somehow the teacher was teaching error unknowingly. On the other hand, teaching the true Word brings great reward.

Now, as He continues His comments, listen to this radical requirement given by Jesus Himself: “Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will absolutely not enter the kingdom of heaven.” How could one be more righteous than the scribes and Pharisees? They “were looked upon as super-conformable to the law,” so righteous that “people did not think themselves obliged to be as good as they; it was therefore a great surprise to them, to hear that they must be better than they, or they should not go to heaven” (Matthew Henry in Online Bible).

[Refer to and read the chart for Pharisees’ and Kingdom righteousness found below or a simpler one (landscape orientation) in a separate document, “28.27b Righteousness Chart.”] Look at all that the Pharisees did. They were meticulous in keeping the law. Help! Exceeding this kind of righteousness is

impossible—except by the grace of God. Good news! When a believer comes to Christ, “the righteousness of Christ . . . is imputed to [them] and received by faith” (Gill in Online Bible). Christ’s righteousness is perfect and pure, and it far exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

Thus, we see that Jesus wants us to be salt and light. He came to fulfill the law, and He enables us to be righteous.

*“[T]his was a dry measure that held about a gallon and a half” (Gill in Online Bible).

**“We learn here,

“(1.) That religion, if it exists, cannot be concealed.

“(2.) That where it is not manifest in the life, it does not exist.

“(3.) That professors of religion, who live like other men, give evidence that they have never been renewed.

“(4.) That to attempt to conceal or hide our Christian knowledge or experience is to betray our trust, and injure the cause of piety, and render our lives useless. And,

“(5.) That good actions will be seen, and will lead men to honour God” (Barnes in Online Bible).

Lessons from this lesson:

- Jesus is God:
He came to (and could) fulfill the law (Matthew 5:17).
- We must have the spirit and grace of God to enter the kingdom of God: we cannot, in ourselves, be as righteous as Jesus said to be in this Scripture.
- By God’s grace believers can be “salt” and “light” in this world.

Activities:

- Play dough: salt shaker; light bulb or candle; tablets of the law
- Use the following activities with the song, “This Little Light of Mine” found below. (Most of these activities are found at http://www.sermons4kids.com/letyourlightshine_print.html.)
 1. Before singing the song, hold a lamp with an extension cord and say you will be shining the lamp all around as you sing. However, at first the lamp is not plugged in. Then, the lamp is not turned on. Finally, sing with the light on. Application: we must be plugged into God’s power supply (by being born again) and turned on (by learning about the Lord and worshiping Him).
 2. On the stanza, “Hide it under a bushel? No!” place a fireproof can over the candle.
 3. On the stanza, “Won’t let Satan blow it out,” use a “never-go-out” candle when you “blow it out.” (If using matches, have a small bowl of water to extinguish a match if it burns too close to fingers.) Application: When Satan tries to blow out your life-light, remember that “Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.”
 4. Sing the stanza, “Let it shine ‘til Jesus comes.”
- Sing “We Are the Salt and Light” from <http://larryholdermusic.org/godcares.html>. (At his site the composer gives free access to his worthy musical, “God Cares for You,” for young voices. This musical is based on the Sermon on the Mount.)
- Snack: Give students an unsalted snack like popcorn (or just provide a salty snack). Pass the salt shaker for students to use and remind them of the spiritual application of being “salty” Christians—show the goodness of God, cleanse from sin, preserve righteousness.
- Sing the first stanza of “Jesus Said It on the Mountain” found below and at teachingthebibletokids.org.

- www.sermons4kids.com/letyourlightshine suggests some good, active games for this lesson.
- Review questions: (Game: Student may eat one salty snack. *e.g.*, one potato chip, for each correct answer. Ask simpler questions to be sure all get students get something to eat.)
 1. What flavor-enhancer did Jesus say believers are? [Salt.]
 2. Name one characteristic of salt that applies to believers. [Shows goodness, cleanses, preserves.]
 3. If salt has lost its savor, what is its value? [Good for nothing but to be piled up or stepped on.]
 4. What was the second symbol Jesus used to compare to believers? [Light.]
 5. What cannot be hid? [A city set on a hill.]
 6. How does one *not* light a room? [By putting a basket over the lamp.]
 7. Correct the following statement: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and say good things about you.” [Glorify your Father in heaven.]
 8. What did Jesus say He came to do regarding the law? [To fulfill it.]
 9. Whose righteousness needs to be surpassed in order to enter the kingdom of Heaven? [That of the scribes and Pharisees.]
 10. What is *righteousness*? [Doing right.]

Handwork:

- Do the dot-to-dot of a light bulb (or just use a picture of a light bulb.). Color the bulb heavily with yellow color. Rub a bit of vegetable oil on the yellow color to give it a translucent effect. (Hold the picture up to the window in order to observe this effect.)
- Or have students write their names with glue on a dark-colored card stock strip and sprinkle salt on the glue. Shake off the excess salt to reveal the name.

Memory Verse[s]:

- Matthew 5:16 “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
- Review John 1:1–18:
 - 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - 2 He was in the beginning with God.
 - 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
 - 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 - 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
 - 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.
 - 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
 - 8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.
 - 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.
 - 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
 - 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
 - 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
 - 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

glorify

fulfill

verily

scribes

Pharisees

kingdom of God

righteousness



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sermon_on_the_Mount

Attitude	Beatitude (Blessing)	Application
Be poor in spirit.	Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	Realize you are a sinner.
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Be a peacemaker.	They shall be called the children of God.	Tell others about Jesus; be a missionary.
If you are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,	Yours is the kingdom of God.	Be joyful when mistreated for obeying God.

What Is Salt Good For?

(Some of Its 14,000 Uses)

shows the goodness of food

cleanses

preserves

What Is a Christian Good For?

shows the goodness of God

cleanses himself from sin

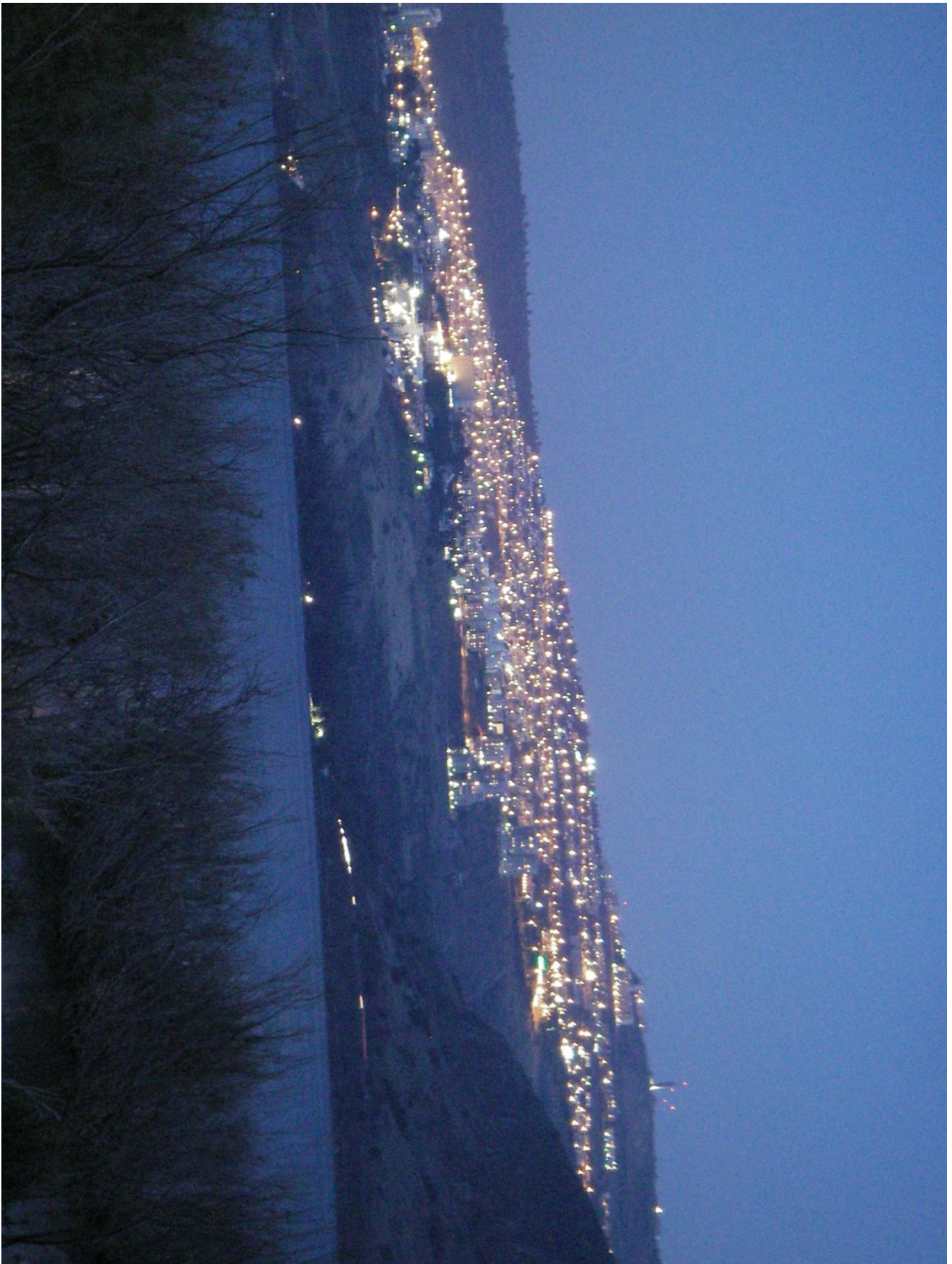
preserves righteousness

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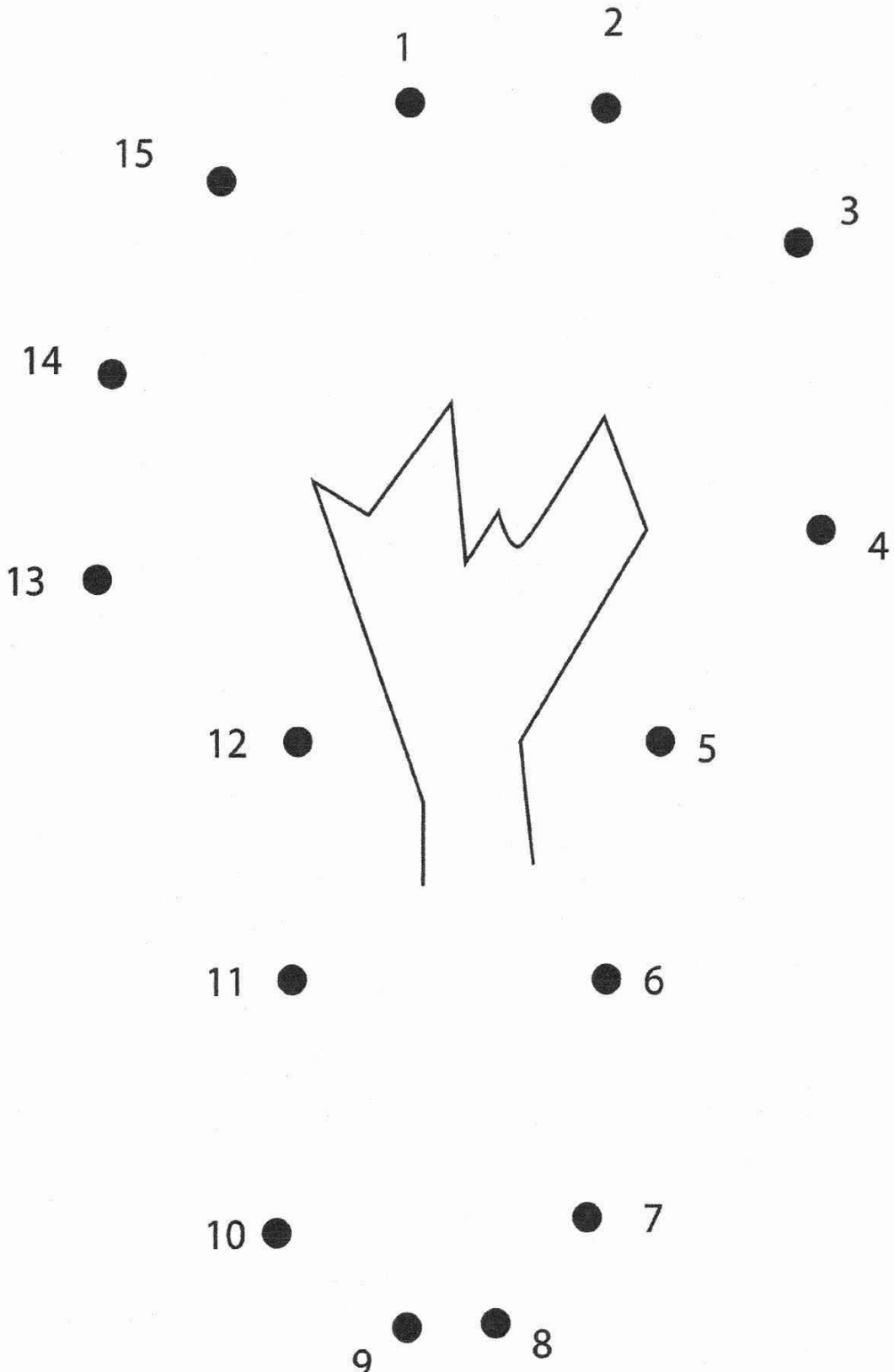




<https://stevesbiblemeditations.files.wordpress.com/2014/01/light-under-a-basket.png>

RIGHTEOUSNESS

PHARISEES'	KINGDOM
is of man	is through Jesus Christ
is imperfect	is perfected in Jesus
is outward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tithing mint and anise • going no farther than a Sabbath Day's journey—2/3 mile • fasting • praying • cleansing 	is inward godliness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love • joy • peace • patience • gentleness • goodness • faithfulness • meekness • self-control
is aimed at the praise and applause of men	is aimed at the glory of God
is prideful of religious works	is humble, saying, "We have merely done our duty"
is disobedient to God's commands for the sake of its own traditions	is desirous to do all the will of God



We Are the Salt and Light

Words & Music by Larry Holder

1. We are the salt and light, liv - ing in the world,
tel - ling of the joy — of the Lord. We have the Good News to tell, of
Je - sus and His love, to share what we have seen and we have
heard. For just as salt re - veals the fla - vor that was mis - sing, and just as
light turns the dark - ness in - to day, We have a task to per - form, we are a
bea - con in the storm; Let us point to God in all we do and say!

2. We are the salt of the world, tel - ling of God's good - ness,

Last time to CODA

From the musical "God Cares For You" larryholdermusic.org/godcares.html
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We Are the Salt and Light (page 2)

C G G7 C C7

Bring-ing words of hope to all we meet. We are am-bas-sa-dors for Christ: In

F C G G7 C *D.S. al CODA*

Him we are the fla-vor that we share un-til our jour-ney is com-plete. For just as

♯ F Dm

We are the salt, we are the salt, We are the light, we are the light, We are the

G G7 C

salt and the light of the world!

Jesus Said It on the Mountain

Marilyn Alexander

Marilyn Alexander

1. "Bless - ed are the child - ren of God." Je - sus said it on the moun - tain.
 2. "I came to the ful - fill the Law."
 3. "Don't brag when you do good things."
 4. "Lay your trea - sures up in heav'n."
 5. "Like the birds and flow'rs don't fret."
 6. "Ask, and it shall be giv - en you."
 7. "False pro - phets will try to trick you."

5 "You are salt and light in this world." Je - sus said it on the moun - tain.
 "You say one thing, but I say the truth."
 "Pray, and God will an - swer your prayer."
 "Serve one Mas - ter; that is God."
 "Judge not that you be not judged."
 "Go to heav'n by the nar - row gate."
 "Build your life on the Lord Je - sus Christ."

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5.

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

Arr. by HARRY DIXON LOES

1. This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon - na let it shine,
 2. Hide it un - der a bush - el? No! I'm gon - na let it shine,
 3. Won't let Sa - tan blow it out, I'm gon - na let it shine,
 4. Shine all o - ver Chi - ca - go, I'm gon - na let it shine,
 5. Let it shine till Je - sus comes, I'm gon - na let it shine,

This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon - na let it shine;
 Hide it un - der a bush - el? No! I'm gon - na let it shine;
 Won't let Sa - tan blow it out, I'm gon - na let it shine;
 Shine all o - ver Chi - ca - go, I'm gon - na let it shine;
 Let it shine till Je - sus comes, I'm gon - na let it shine;

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

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Substitute local name.

Action Songs for Boys and Girls, Volume One, Singspiration, 1944.