

## February 6, 2011 "Throw The NaCl" Matthew 5

On this Scouting Sunday, Super Bowl Sunday too, I am reminded that I used to be a Boy Scout. I only made it to Second Class, but I learned to appreciate all that Scouting does. Part of the Scout oath deals with a willingness "To help other people at all times." I like it. A Scout is a person of action beyond camping, Jamborees, and the rest, with a dedication to God, the USA, and to helping people. We often picture Scouts helping old ladies across the street. I like the idea of action for others.

I like the story of the little girl visiting her grandparents on a Sunday. Being the Lord's Day, there was no activity around the house. You couldn't run, watch t.v., pick flowers, and swing on the swing or anything on Sunday. She was allowed to walk slowly to the front gate. As she did, she saw an old mule with its head bowed and eyes shut. She said, "Poor fellow, have you got religion too?" Sadly, many see Christians that way. Faith needs to be more than how pious I am. Christianity isn't supposed to be the faith of stick-in-the-mud people or old fuddy-duddies. In Matthew 5 when Jesus calls us to be salt and light; there is action involved there.

It has been said that if the house is dark, you can't blame the house; where's the light? If the meat is rotting with bacteria, you can't blame the meat; where's the salt? If the world is a dark, cold place, stinking from corruption, violence, pornography, abortion, and lack of respect for one another, you can't blame the world; where's the church?

Like the Scouts teach us, as His church on earth, God wants us to do something with our faith. He has chosen each of us who trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior Who died and rose for our salvation, to be salt and light. With Jesus as the Light of the world, John 8, we reflect His light to those around us like reflectors on the highway reflect headlights and keep people safe.

The storm of 2011 teaches us about the importance of salt. As we have seen big time this week, salt melts and salt gives traction. Snow can be like our sins. A little seems like fun, but a lot becomes deadly. Lots of snow can be a burden that causes the loss of power, leaves us in the cold, and causes us to slip, fall, and even death has occurred. We've seen that at Concordia with three members breaking wrists, and others falling and hurting their heads. Salt melts ice and snow just as the message of Jesus as Lord and Savior can melt cold hearts filled with sin. The cross of Jesus brings heat to the snow of sin and the ice of iniquity only when it is shared with others.

Salt also gives traction to the roads and sidewalks. Sliding in the wrong direction can be painful and expensive. Sliding cars can be dangerous to the driver and others. As we share God's Word with people in our lives, they can find traction and a way to hold on for their lives. The traction that God gives us through His Word brings hope to the hopeless, a song to the sad, and worth to those feeling worthless.

Because God is Good...All The Time, He wants us to reach out as salt and light. A Peanuts cartoon shows Peppermint Patti telling Charlie that on the first day of school she was sent to the principal's office. "It was your fault, Chuck," she told him. "How can it be my fault? You tell me that everything's my fault." She replied, "You're my friend, right Chuck?" You should have been a better influence on me." That's what salt and light is all about; the influence we can have on others. Amen...pastor matthews