

# TRUTH & RIGHT

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## USELESS SALT

*“Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear,”* (Lk. 14:34-35). This is one of several contexts in the teaching of Jesus where the metaphor of salt is used. If we take a brief look at every instance in which Jesus brought this illustration into view, perhaps it will shed light on exactly what it is Jesus is warning us to beware of lest we lose our effectiveness in the Kingdom. In Mark 9 the disciples are discussing amongst themselves which one is the greatest (Mk. 9:33-34). Jesus confronts them and says that the one who would be first will be the one who is “last of all and servant of all,” (Mk.

9:35). He then takes a child in His arms and starts to illustrate His point, when John interrupts with a question about someone who is not a part of their “circle” who is healing in Jesus’ name. Jesus tells them not to hinder him but rather to embrace and accept the work he is doing to promote the cause of Christ and concludes the discussion talking about salt. *“Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another,”* (Mk. 9:50). In Luke 14, Jesus turned to the multitudes who were going along with Him and talked about the cost of discipleship. Jesus plainly says, *“So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions,”* (Lk. 14:33).

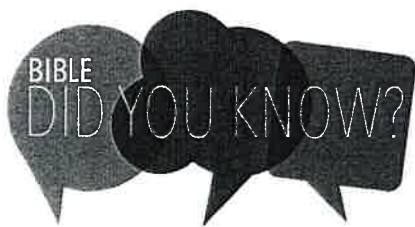
He then concludes,  
*"Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear,"* (Lk. 14:34-35). In Matthew 5 Jesus reveals the focus of the heart of those who enter the Kingdom in the form of the "beatitudes". He then says, *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men,"* (Mt. 5:13). Examining all three of these texts, we see the full depiction of "salty disciples". A salty disciple has no self-seeking ambition. A salty disciple has crucified a dependence-based relationship with worldly possessions in their heart. A salty disciple has filled their heart with a complete desire and need to be a faithful citizen busy at work in the Kingdom of God. What is interesting is all three of these aspects of salty discipleship are depicted in Luke's record of Jesus' use of the salt metaphor. Jesus demonstrates the vital aspect

of suppressing any selfish ambition in Luke 14 by teaching a parable of the honor one receives when they seat themselves in a lower place than they deserve at a wedding feast. *"When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for someone more distinguished than you may have been invited by him, and he who invited you both will come and say to you 'Give your place to this man,' and then in disgrace you proceed to occupy the last place. But when you are invited, go and recline at the last place, so that when the one who has invited you comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will have honor in the sight of all who are at the table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted,"* (Lk. 14:8-11). Jesus further exemplifies this salty quality of one saturated in selfless humility by telling the host who invited Jesus to be careful of only inviting well to do close acquaintances to dinner parties, but rather including the poor, crippled, lame and blind as evidence of a selfless desire to serve others

who cannot possibly repay him back (Lk. 14:12-14). Jesus then emphasizes our necessity to crucify any dependence-based love relationship with possessions or relationships of this world as salty disciples. He does so by telling a story about individuals whose love and dependency for things such as land, oxen and a wife was so great they felt justified to offer them as excuses to decline the invitation to be at the great dinner (Lk. 14:16-24). Jesus makes it plain that a “salty” or effective disciple is one who has crucified their dependence upon worldly possessions or relationships to give their heart completely to the spiritual aspects of Christ’s Kingdom. *“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple...So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions,”* (Lk. 14:26-27,33). Jesus warns us in this text that the biggest threat towards our “salty” effectiveness in doing the

work of the Kingdom of God in this world is a desire for self-promotion and dependency on possessions and relationships for self-satisfaction. When these aspects of our heart are corrupted, there will be no room for the truly satisfying spiritual aspects of the Kingdom to grow in our hearts, and we will be good for nothing as useful servants of the King to promote and invite others to His banquet. *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear,”* (Lk. 14:35).

- Daniel Ruegg



***There are some 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith, but over 2,000 verses on money and possessions. “The love of money is the root of all evil,”***  
***1 Timothy 6:10***

# BIBLE TRIVIA

## C H A L L E N G E

**DIRECTIONS:** After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

**1. Who once refused to wear Saul's armor?**

- a) Aaron
- b) Jonathan
- c) David
- d) Abner

**2. Whose staff budded, blossomed and produced almonds?**

- a) Aaron
- b) Moses
- c) Elijah
- d) Jacob

**3. Who explained the book of Isaiah to an Ethiopian eunuch?**

- a) Paul
- b) Peter
- c) Ananias
- d) Philip

**4. What was the name of the angel who told Zacharias his old wife would have a baby?**

- a) Michael
- b) Gabriel
- c) Clarence
- d) Lucifer

**5. What prophet was fed by ravens?**

- a) Elisha
- b) Elijah
- c) Jeremiah
- d) Joel

**6. Which prophet put a curse on a bunch of young men who made fun of his bald head?**

- a) Elisha
- b) Elijah
- c) Daniel
- d) Isaiah

**7. Which prophet was formerly a herdsman and fruit-gatherer?**

- a) Obadiah
- b) Micah
- c) Amos
- d) Hosea

**8. According to Proverbs 23, what "bites like a serpent and stings like an adder"?**

- a) Egg nog
- b) Unruly child
- c) Contentious woman
- d) Wine

**9. What man watched an angel ascend to heaven in a flame?**

- a) Manoah
- b) David
- c) Moses
- d) Peter

**10. Who asked Jesus to heal his 12 year old dying daughter?**

- a) Gaius
- b) Jairus
- c) Nathaniel
- d) Nicodemus

ANSWERS & VERSES:  
 1) C, Reference: 1 Sam. 17:38-39  
 2) A, Reference: Num. 17:28  
 3) D, Reference: Acts 8:26-40  
 4) B, Reference: Lk. 1:19  
 5) B, Reference: 1 Kgs. 17:4-7  
 6) A, Reference: 2 Kgs. 2:23-24  
 7) C, Reference: Amos 7:14  
 8) D, Reference: Prov. 23:31-32  
 9) A, Reference: Jdg. 13:20  
 10) B, Reference: Mk. 5:22-23