



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – May 4, 2024

The Lord be with you.

Are you troubled by what you see happening in our country today? I mean, look at the news and it is filled with stories of rioting, lawlessness, hatred, boiling over and we can't help but wonder what can I as one person do about this?

That's what I wanna think about out loud with you for the next few moments as it was also during a time of national distress, a time of war V two rocket attacks on England Luftwaffe bombings and living with the daily threat of invasion that the British Broadcasting Company asked CS Lewis to give a series of radio talks. They said for the purpose of boosting the morale and spiritual resilience of the nation. I think maybe we could all use that today a boost the morale and spiritual resilience. And you know, those radio talks by CS Lewis, they were later made into his wonderful book, *Mirror Christianity*.

And today I'm looking at a page of mere Christianity where CS Lewis takes up the imagery of war. And he says, I read enemy occupied territory. This is what the world is. Christianity is the story of how the rightful king has landed, you might say landed in disguise and is calling us all to take part in a great campaign of sabotage. Well, I think Louis is spot on in recognizing that we are in the midst of a great spiritual battle and that the rightful king Jesus, he has landed and he is calling you and me to take part in his great campaign of sabotage to, to throw a monkey wrench into what we see going on.

And in Matthew chapter five verse 13, right in the middle of the sermon on the Mount Jesus says to a ragtag group of fishermen, farmers, housewives day workers. Jesus says, you, you are the salt of the earth. I think maybe it's a little bit difficult for us in the 21st century to appreciate the meaning the gravitas of what Jesus is saying when he calls that small band of followers, he calls them the salt of the earth. I say that because in Jesus' day salt was actually called white gold as it was so valuable, both for preserving food and for flavoring food.

In fact, Roman soldiers of Jesus stay, they they were paid in what was called solarium, literally an allowance for buying salt. So that our word salary, you know, it comes from the Latin words meaning salt. I mean I say all that simply to express the great meaning the significance of what Jesus is saying to his followers "You are the salt of the earth," standing on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Salt was essential for, for preserving the fish that Simon Peter, Andrew James and John caught. I mean that their fish had to be salted. I would quickly spoil but once salted those fish caught on the sea of Galilee, you know, they were sent as far away as the city of Rome. I mean salt was precious in Jesus' day as essential for



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preserving food and then for flavoring that food. And Jesus is saying today that you and I on this earth, we are to be a preserving force for goodness, for truth in the midst of a culture that is spoiled by sin and decay. And that we are to season, we are to flavor. We are to bring out the Jesus flavor in everyday life, making life good and healthy for those around us.

So we are, I if I might take up the words of CS Lewis, we are to join King Jesus and his campaign of sabotage amidst the corruption, the evil that we see going on around us. And then in this Matthew five passage in the sermon on the Mount Jesus warns he warns that if we, if we lose our saltiness, if we lose our Jesus distinctiveness, if we lose the difference that knowing Jesus makes in people's lives, then we lose our usefulness in today's world.

I'm thinking here of William Penn, a faithful follower of Jesus who founded the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. And he founded Pennsylvania with the prayer with the purpose. He said that that it would be established on the teachings of Jesus. So that on May 5, 1682 William Penn set forth what he called the frame of government of Pennsylvania, in which he said, I read governments like clocks go from the motion, men give them and as governments are made and moved by men, so by them, they are ruined too. Where for governments rather depend upon men than men upon governments. Let men be good and the government cannot be bad. If it'd be ill, they will cure it.

So, as we look at the news of what is going on in our country, I, I think it's clear that Jesus is calling you and me to be the salt of the earth acting as Jesus' preserving force amidst the decay and decline and to bring out the wonderful Jesus flavoring of life. Yes, I'm, I'm only one but I am one. I can't do everything but I can do something. There's something I ought to do I, I can do and by the grace of God, I will do it.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thank you for listening. Until next time.