**Week of July 7, 2019**

**Matthew 5:13-20**

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt has lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot\* be hid. 15 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. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. 17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till\* heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till\* all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever\* therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed\* the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

**Understanding the Scriptures**

In today’s lesson we continue with Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. The first section (last week’s lesson) dealt with salt and light. The second section which incorporates today’s scripture deals with the Christian’s relationship to the law.

Salt has many uses; the most common is its preserving effect and flavor, God’s followers re to be flavor whenever they go, becoming an active Christian influence. When salt loses its flavor, it is good for nothing. Anything that becomes bland and unusable is often destroyed or thrown away. Such is the case with Christians. If Christians lose their spiritual influence in the world, they are not taken seriously and will be trampled by this world.

The “light of the world” refers to Jesus’ disciples’ having the kingdom life within them as a living testimony to those who do not yet have the light. Light brings hope to a dark world. Jesus used a metaphor in verses 14-15 to describe a city that is on a hill. It is hard to hide that city. When one lights a candle, Jesus said that candle is not meant to be hidden but seen as a shinning light.

Likewise, Christian men and women ae to shine their Christian light so that others will look upon them and see the “light” and glorify God. Jesus shifts to the relationship of the Christian to the Law. In a picture and testimony of His divinity, Jesus affirmed that He did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it. The Law or Torah refers to the first five books of the Old Testament. Finally, Jesus referred to two distinct groups – scribes and Pharisees. Jesus condemned them because inwardly their hearts were not pure, but outwardly they performed religious acts.

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