**Isaiah 58: 1-12; Psalm 112: 1-9; 1 Corinthians 2: 1-12; Matthew 5: 13-20**

**Let us Pray,** May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be now and always acceptable in your sight, O Lord our Rock and our Redeemer. **Amen.**

Once a Human Resource Manager of a company called his newly appointed staff into his office a few weeks after this staff was appointed. Showing his application, the HR Manager asked, “What is the meaning of this? When you applied for this job, you told us you had three years experience. Now I have discovered that this is the first position You've ever held.”

This newly appointed staff replied with a smile, “It is true, in your advertisement you said you wanted a person with imagination.”

When we make our CV/ Resume, we usually try to explain ourselves. In order to make it simple and more impressive we use some adjectives. We add - Able; to give an impression that we are able to handle multiple tasks on a daily basis.

We write “Creative;” to give a sense that we use a creative approach to solve problems.

And we add many adjectives such as Dependable, Energetic, Flexible, Hardworking, Honest, Innovative, Motivated, Reliable, Sense of Humour and Imaginative. All these adjectives will help describe ourselves.

But today morning, Jesus Christ says to us that we must focus on two very important adjectives to explain our Christian life; “salty” and “shining.” Jesus Christ invites us to listen to his sermon, which he had delivered on the mountain to find these two significant adjectives to manifest God in our everyday life.

The sermon on the mount begins with a surprising set of blessing that are given to God’s people. Matthew 5 begins with Jesus’ introduction to God’s kingdom and its staggering blessings. Through announcing God’s kingdom, Jesus promises comfort, inheritance and satisfaction. Jesus offers seeing the living God. Jesus offers the status of being adopted as God’s children, and he rounds off these blessings with the unshakable certainty of possessing the kingdom, even when we experience difficulties and persecution in this world.

We must proclaim the kingdom of God even when we face difficult situations and persecution. In order to gives us strength and hope Jesus Christ says in 5: 11 that, “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. When we decide to follow Jesus, then, no turning back.

Therefore, Jesus says to us, “you are the salt of the earth” and “you are the light of the world.”

You are the salt of the earth. What does this mean? During Jesus’ time, salt was a very highly prized commodity, and the Roman army was paid in salt. The origin of the word salary is from the Latin word Salus, which means salted. It was precious. We know that salt is a vital nutrient. It is a purifying agent, and it provides a satisfying taste.

People really depended on salt to survive – because it was needed to preserve food in a hot climate, for dried meet and fish. It was also used to clean wounds. New-born babies were rubbed in salt to prevent disease. It is still used in medicine, even if some people with high blood pressure have to give it up. Doctors still irrigate wounds with a sterile saline solution – they hydrate patients with a saltwater IV.

Some recipes taste awful if we forget to add one little pinch of salt. This is the kind of useful salt, precious salt, that Jesus wants us to be. He wants us to share a bit of our best selves wherever we go, to bless and heal the world.

We are called to be salt to our world to preserve it from the destructive forces of greed, injustice and lust. We are asked to be salt in the world transforming it through Christian values such as sharing, caring and nurturing.

Jesus gives us a second image in Mathew 5:14, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.” Jesus speaks about the light we are supposed to be. It is the fact that light alone is useless. A light is not light if cannot be seen and illumine its surroundings.

There is a story of a man whose job was to be on the railroad tracks and warn with his light, the upcoming train, of the bridge that had been damaged. At the night when the train came, the man showed his lamp. But the train went right into the ditch. The man was taken to the court because they wanted to know why the train did not pay attention to this man who was to warn the train of the danger ahead.

The judge asked, “Where you on duty on the night that the train had the accident?”

The man replied, “Yes Sir.”

The Judge once again asked, “Did you have the lamp with you?”

The man replied, “Yes Sir.”

The Judge asked the last question, “Did you wave your lamp to the train?”

The man replied, “Yes Sir.”

So, the man was not held responsible. Later as the man went home, he told his friend, “I am glad that the Judge did not ask me if my lamp was on.”

Light becomes useful when it makes us see things other than itself: the world around us. As Christians, we should make things visible, we should light up possibilities, and we should brighten our world. The testimony of love, kindness, and peace that emanates from our lives, which will illumine the way for countless others, some we know and some we will never know.

Jesus Christ wants us to be the salt of the earth and to be the light of the world to live his life freely, to walk his walk, and to talk his talk. Just as Saint Paul handled his life, we should claim, “I live, not, I but Christ lives in me.”

Jesus inspires us to extend our light and salt to the homeless, refuges, poor and the marginalised, people suffering from natural calamities and epidemics. When we let our light shine, people around us will see the light. When they see our shining life, people can see the truth and respond to it. And in this way, when the salt is being poured out, people around us will taste and see that God is good. They will give glory to our Father who is in heaven.

Jesus gives us the staggering blessings of his kingdom to add two adjectives in our Christian life: salty and shining. May the Holy Spirit enable us to taste the blessings of God’s Kingdom and to preserve and illumine our world, **Amen.**