

The Bulletin

Meeks St. Church of Christ

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“Has The Salt Lost Its Savor?”

by Bubba Gardner

Evil is everywhere. It is all around us. It's in the workplace and in the schoolhouse. It's in the neighborhoods and in the media. It's even in the church and in the home. It is, indeed, a very clear and present danger.

But ours is not the first generation to be shrouded in darkness. Noah was a *"preacher of righteousness"* (II Peter 2:5) in a day when *"the wickedness of man was great on the earth"* (Genesis 6:5). Gideon and Eli were honorable judges during a time when *"every man did what was right in his own eyes"* (Judges 17:6). Josiah *"walked in the ways of his father David"* while his father Amon *"multiplied guilt"* (II Chronicles 33:23). These and other heroes of faith did not use their unfavorable surroundings as an excuse for bad behavior. Rather, the presence of evil became an opportunity for them to show what was good.

Jesus addressed this principle in the Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) describe what the kingdom citizen must look like on the inside: *"poor in spirit"* and *"pure in heart."* In the next section (Matthew 5:13-16), He pictured what we must look like to everyone else: *"the salt of the earth"* and *"the light of the world."* How fitting that Jesus used two common items that everyone has in their house. And they describe something that everyone has in their life -- influence.

What can Christians do concerning the evil that is all around us? Shelter in place? Keep to ourselves? Remain shut in and shut out? Not hardly. In fact, Jesus' admonitions suggest that we spread out.

Be Distinct

Salt has a peculiar taste. It is immediately recognizable. The food at the restaurant (notice I didn't say at my house) is usually judged as having too much or not enough salt. When Jesus said that we are the *"salt of the earth"* (Matthew 5:13), one of the things that metaphor recommends is that we have a distinguishing flavor all of our own.

Now, this is not about being different just for the sake of being different. This has nothing to do with weird hairdos and eccentric clothing that serve only to draw more attention to the person than to the cause they represent. This is about being different for the sake of being right. That is, after all, how we make a difference. When evil abounds, good is easily detected.

But what good is salt that is not salty? When you can't tell the difference between the flavor and what needs flavoring, we have lost our effectiveness. "Low salt" is fine if you're on a diet, but when it comes to a world that is starving and thirsting for righteousness, get out of the shaker

and into the soup. Leave a taste in someone's mouth that causes them to say, "We could use a little more of that." Christians, of all people, ought to be worth their salt.

Be Seen

Lights are meant for shining. They are to be beaming from a lampstand, not hidden under a bushel. You can't be "*the light of the world*" (Matthew 5:14) when you stay in your house all the time. You have to shine like a city set on a hill.

Darkness is not a power that opposes light. It is merely the absence of it. And it doesn't take much light to cancel it out. One candle can brighten a whole room. One flashlight can illuminate an entire tent. What do you think one Christian can do? When you shine in your dark corner of the world, you enable others to see. You give them enough light to finally find the way out, the way to Him who gives life and light. But if you are not where you can be seen, the rest of the world remains turned off, too.

You have a little light. Let it shine. All around the neighborhood. All the time. Let it shine. If you hide it under a bushel or let the devil blow it out, you extinguish your purpose and responsibility as well. You shut your own eyes to the "blessed gospel light."

Be Good

"You" are the salt of the earth. "You" are the light of the world. These are individual responsibilities. You can't depend on others to do them for you. Just as salt has a distinct taste, you have a peculiar circle of influence. Just as light spreads and extends, you have a unique area where only you can shine. Don't wait for other people to overcome evil with good. Be good yourself.

That is what the world should taste. That's what they should see. "*Your good works*" (Matthew 5:16). They've already seen plenty of bad ones. All they have to do is look around to observe those. Let them see in you someone whose behavior is not influenced by what's around him but by what's inside him. Peter encouraged the "*aliens and strangers*" of the First Century, those who didn't fit in with their surroundings, to "*keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles*" (I Peter 2:11-12).

If your attitude is where it ought to be, your conduct can't help but follow suit. Good works will "*glorify your Father who is in heaven*." Through us, they get a taste of Him. Our light reflects back to Him who is Light. We're not in this for our glory. We just want to help people find their way to glory.

What can Christians do? Just be what you are meant to be. It's what will make a difference.

(*Biblical Insights*, July 2007)

“A Young Soul Winner”

by Jefferson David Tant

“Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19) Nancy Harber was only 14 (well, almost 15), and at this young age had already experienced one of the greatest joys of life — something that many members of the church will not experience in a lifetime. Let me tell you about it.

Many years ago I was with the Hazelwood church in St. Louis holding a gospel meeting. On Monday evening Nancy Harber invited one of her school friends over to have dinner and attend services with us. Candy had never attended services before, but she knew something about the church because Nancy had been talking to her at school.

We had a pleasant visit at dinner (Bob and Brooksie Harber were my hosts for the week). After church Candy expressed an interest in returning the next evening. Also at the service, Monday night was Robyn, another school friend of Nancy's. Robyn had been attending services for the past

few months—also at Nancy’s invitation. After services Tuesday night, Candy had some questions for me concerning differences between the Lord’s church and the denomination of which she was a member. We talked for a good while. In the meantime, I was also becoming acquainted with Robyn, as we provided transportation for her almost every night.

Candy could not return until Friday night, but Robyn came each night. After giving careful thought to the lesson Friday night, Candy told Nancy during the invitation song that she wanted to be baptized but wanted to wait until next week. Nancy replied, “There may not be a next week.” She then turned to the song, “Why Not Tonight,” and asked Candy to read the words. Candy then came forward to request baptism. There was much rejoicing, both on Candy’s part and on the part of the disciples there. Many tears of joy were evident.

Then we returned to the home of the Harbers to engage in a late-evening Bible study with Candy and Robyn. We had barely gotten started when Robyn expressed her desire to be baptized also. We went back to the church building to assist her in her obedience to the gospel of Christ. More rejoicing. Then back to the house for more Bible study.

You know what Nancy’s great joy was, don’t you? If you have never won a soul to Christ, let me tell you that it is truly one of the greatest joys you can possibly experience. There is no way to describe it adequately.

Nancy Harber was a lovely girl. Not just because she had lovely red hair and a radiant smile, but because she was a soul winner for Jesus Christ. She knew what it was to “*remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth*” (Ecclesiastes 12:1). She was not ashamed to stand up for Jesus and let others know she was a Christian. She was not afraid to talk to her friends about the Bible. She did not let school activities or social life interfere with seeking first the kingdom of God.

Therefore, her example was consistent with her teaching. Thanks to this, two 15-year-old girls were cleansed from their sins by the precious blood of Christ. Thanks, Nancy, for the encouragement you have given me, and for the example, you set before all who may read this.

I hope this publicity will not embarrass you too much. And I am thankful for Nancy’s parents, for the example and training they have given to their children. May their tribe increase. Nancy is now Nancy Picogna, the wife of Greg. They are the faithful parents of four. Bob and Brooksie have gone to their reward, but their legacy is still living.

Young readers, truly “the fields are white unto harvest,” even among your schoolmates. Are you taking advantage of the wonderful opportunity?

Lesson for this Sunday: “Changes”

Lesson Text: Daniel 2:19-21.

I. Things That Change.

A. Life Changes- Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

B. Technology Changes- Genesis 11:3.

C. Cultural Changes- Genesis 10:31.

D. Language/Words Changes- Genesis 11:9.

E. Career or Occupational Changes- Luke 19:2; Acts 18:3; Acts 19:24-25.

F. Law of Moses To The Law of Christ- Jeremiah 31:31-32; Galatians 3:23-25.

(1) Priesthood- **Hebrews 7:12.**

(2) Food laws- **Acts 10:9-16.**

(3) Festivals- **John 4:20-21.**

(4) Circumcision- **Galatians 5:6-9.**

G. The Way God Speaks to Man- Hebrews 1:1-2.

II. Things That Should Not Change.

- A. God's Ways- **1 Kings 12:26-33.**
- B. God's Word- **Galatians 1:6-9.**
- C. Man's Faithfulness- **Proverbs 23:23; 1 Timothy 4:1-3.**
- D. Love For God- **Matthew 24:12; Revelation 2:4.**

III. Things That Need To Change.

- A. Unbelief to Belief- **John 20:24-27 and 20:30-31.**
- B. Ignorance to a Knowledge of Truth- **1 Timothy 1:13; Acts 26:15-18.**
- C. The Christian Who Strays From The Truth- **James 5:19-20.**
- D. The Sinner To Being a Saint- **James 4:8-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.**

IV. Things That Will Never Change.

- A. God's Character- **Malachi 3:6; James 1:17.**
- B. God's Love For Man- **1 John 4:8-9.**
- C. God's Word- **Psalms 119:89; 1 Peter 1:23-25.**
- D. Man's Accountability To God- **Hebrews 9:27; 2 Peter 3:3-5.**
- E. Man's Need For Salvation- **1 Timothy 2:4.**
- F. Man's Eternal Destiny- **Matthew 25:46.**

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Clois Wright, and Dan & Linda Hunt, Mollie Harris, David Taylor, Gary Doles, Joe Felks, Randy Beaty, Sam Johnson, Sherry Doles, Melissa Felks, Star, and Roy Robinson, Jerry Trimble, Karen Kennemur, Doug and Pat George, and keep others in quarantine in our prayers!

Those Who Serve:

Announcements:	Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Lee Busby <i>Daniel 2:19-21</i>
Song Leader:	Paul Busby
Lord's Supper:	Fred Johnson
Preaching:	Brian Meade
Sermon:	<i>"Changes"</i>
Closing Prayer:	Paul Johnson