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Good for Nothin'

By Teresa Hampton

When I was growing up there was an expression used that one rarely hears today. If something or someone did not do what it was intended to do, it was simply, “good for nothin’.” Did you know that Jesus was the first to use that expression? In one of the most powerful, wide-sweeping sermons ever delivered, he taught about aspects of daily Christian living, being what God *intended* us to be (Matthew 5, 6, 7). He spoke of Christian influence by comparing it to salt. Jesus told his followers, *You are the salt of the earth* (5:13).

Salt has a unique characteristic: it changes whatever comes in contact with it. For many years salt was used as a preservative, especially with meat. It was also used to aid in the healing process. Even today, with all the medical advances, nothing helps a sore throat more than gargling with warm salt water. Salt was and is still used for flavoring or seasoning food. But did you know that salt also kills? If snails invade your patio space, sprinkle salt on them and they are sure to shrink away. Salt changes whatever comes in contact with it, that is, unless it is contaminated or loses its saltiness.

These observations beg some questions. Are we allowing the goodness of Christ in our lives to be an instrument in healing the wounds of others? Are we the preserving, saving influence for our families and others that God intended? Are we flavoring or seasoning the world with Jesus’ message of redemption? When we become the salty influence, do we understand that occasionally we will bump into people who shrink away from Christian ideals? They may reject any semblance of religion, or castigate those who believe in the Savior. But, in spite of possible rejection, Jesus expects us to continue to be a salty influence in our corner of the world. In fact, he said if we’ve lost our saltiness, in other words, if we are not being what he *intended* us to be, we’re simply . . . good for nothing.

Today’s Verse: *Salt is good, but if the salt loses its flavor, how will you season with it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another* (Mark 9:50).

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