

Light of the World: Salt of the Earth

Teacher Pep Talk: Jesus said “You are the light of the world.” That seems to be an exciting reality and a daunting challenge, all at the same time. It also raises several questions: What does it mean to be the light of the world? Is our light shining? And, if so...How bright is it?

Sometimes we may wonder if our lights are bright enough for anyone to benefit from them. Whatever happens, we must not lose hope or give up. Remember, the stars in the sky may seem tiny and very far away, but travelers depend on them to find their way. Just like the stars up in the sky, we don't always know who's watching us or using our light to guide them on their way. Let's stay as close as we can to Jesus, and trust Him for the results.

You will need: A flashlight/ a candle with matches/ or some other light
Salt (*Also bring Sugar – if you choose the salt/sugar activity.*)
One copy of the activity sheet for each child
Crayons or markers

Major Points: God thinks we are very important
Jesus said that we (His followers) are the LIGHT of the world.
Jesus said that we (His followers) are the SALT of the earth.
By being salt and light we help others and teach them about Jesus

Scripture Ref. Matthew 5:13-16 (Jesus said...)
“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.”
“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

John 9:5 (Jesus said...)
“While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

Memory Verse: Matthew 5:16 ...let your light shine...

FIRE SAFETY NOTICE: If you choose to use a lit candle as an example for light, be sure to check your church's fire safety policy first. **Always ask permission before using open flames!** Be sure to keep the matches put up, out of reach, in a locked cabinet. Place the candle in a candle holder on a table before lighting. Watch for hot dripping wax. Only an adult should be allowed touch the candle or the matches. Extinguish both the candle and matches carefully. Immediately after use, put the matches away in a locked cabinet, out of reach of children.

Lesson:

God thinks we are very important

- Do you ever feel important? (*Wait for answers.*) Do people act like you are important to them? (*Wait for answers.*)
- When people love you, when they are glad to see you, when they teach you things or take care of you, it means that they think you are important. You are important to them! (*Your parents, grandparents, and loved ones think you are very important.*)
- Did you know that God thinks you are very important? He does!
- When Jesus was here on the earth, He used to talk to His followers (to those who believed in Him.)
- He taught them things and told them important things.
- Jesus knew that they were important. He told them how important they were.
- All the things Jesus said to them, He also says to us today.
- Jesus says that we are important to God!

Jesus said that we (His followers) are the LIGHT of the world.

- Jesus taught His followers lots of important things.
- One day He said “You are the LIGHT of the world.”
- Wow! What does that mean? I’m a person. I’m not a light!
 - I’m not a flashlight! I’m not a lamp! I’m not even a light bulb!
 - I’m a Mommy ...not a light bulb!
 - (OR... I’m a Daddy...not a flashlight!)
- Is Jesus calling me a lamp?! Is Jesus saying you’re a light bulb?
- No! 😊 I don’t think that is what Jesus meant! 😊

Jesus said that we (His followers) are the SALT of the earth.

- Jesus also told His followers other important things.
- One day He said “You are the SALT of the earth.”
- Wow! What does that mean? I’m a person. I’m not salt!
 - I’m not even pepper!
 - I’m a person with hands and feet! How about you? (*Yes!*)
- Is Jesus calling me SALT like in a salt shaker?
- No! 😊 I don’t think that is what Jesus meant at all! 😊

So... What is Jesus saying to us?

- So... if Jesus isn’t calling us light, like from a light bulb ... or salt, like in a salt shaker... WHAT is He talking about?
- Let’s see if we can figure it out together. REMEMBER... God thinks we (who follow Jesus) are IMPORTANT!

You are the Light of the World

[NOTE: If you can darken your room some... please do so now. Take a little break and move the class to a new part of the room.]

- Do you like the Dark? (Yes/No) How about when you are walking around in the dark? (Yes/ No) How about when you are trying to FIND something in the Dark? *(It's not easy. Not fun.)*
- *[NOTE: Turn on the flashlight or light the candle.]* What if there was some light... even just a little bit. *(Maybe like a night light.)* That would help, wouldn't it? Then you could see better.
- Jesus was saying that the world is in darkness. People (who don't know Him) are stuck in the dark. *(That's sad. Very sad.)*
- Jesus was saying that we (who believe in Him) are like the light. The light shines in the darkness. And you know that when it is really, really dark even a little bit of light really helps an awful lot.
- We can help people find their way out of the darkness by letting our light shine! We can tell people about Jesus!

[NOTE: If used, extinguish candle and matches carefully!]

You are the Salt of the Earth

[NOTE: If you have some salt, bring it out here. Let the children taste it, if you like.]

- Jesus said we were the salt of the earth. Why did He say that?
- A long time ago... before refrigerators, or freezers, or air-conditioners even... people wanted to keep their food fresh.
- One way they could do that was to cover it in salt. That way the food would stay nice and fresh. It wouldn't go bad, or get rotten! *(Eeewwhh!)*
- Jesus said we are the Salt of the Earth. We are what keep it nice and fresh! We help keep the world from going bad, or getting totally rotten. *(Eewwwhhh!)*
- We do this by helping others and loving them like God loves us.

Being SALT and LIGHT...

- Jesus said that we are the Light of the World and the Salt of the Earth. These are important things. Jesus gave them to us to do.
- We are important to God!

Let's pray and thank God that He has made us the Light of the World and the Salt of the Earth!

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you have made us the Light of the World.
Thank you that you have made us the Salt of the Earth.
Thank you that you love us.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities: *(Choose a few activities for your class!)*

Sing “This Little Light of Mine” – *the children will learn a new song*

This is a wonderful song to do with little children, especially with the hand motions. It is especially fun to see them sing the part about “Don’t let Satan (whhh!) it out.” When they blow, sometimes they look at their finger as if it might really go out. Amazing!

Before Class: Familiarize yourself with the music and lyrics of “This Little Light of Mine.”

During Class: Tell the children you are going to teach them a new song. Have them sit facing you so that they can see you demonstrate the hand motions.

Follow this pattern, or you may repeat the chorus between verses:

(Chorus)

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

(Hold up pointing finger.)

Don’t let Satan blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.
Don’t let Satan blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.
Don’t let Satan blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

(Blow on finger instead of saying the word “blow”)

Hide it under a bushel... NO! I’m gonna let it shine.
Hide it under a bushel... NO! I’m gonna let it shine.
Hide it under a bushel... NO! I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

(Cup other hand and cover finger. Uncover it when you yell “NO!”)

Let it shine ‘til Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine ‘til Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine ‘til Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

(Stand and point to heaven.)

(Repeat Chorus)

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine!

(Hold up pointing finger.)

The Mystery of the Missing Salt – *The children will learn about salt and sugar.*

Before Class: Obtain two similar bowls. In one put sugar and in the other one put a similar amount of salt. Bring along an empty salt shaker and some paper napkins.

During Class: Tell the children you want them to do some detective work for you. (*Deputize them, if necessary!*) Tell them that there is a mystery that needs solving! It is The Mystery of the Missing Salt. Explain that you had a salt shaker full of salt and now it is nearly empty. You need to put salt back in the shaker so that it can be used. The problem is that you know one bowl has salt in it and the other has sugar in it, but you aren't sure which one is which. Ask them to help you solve the mystery!

Rules: You may look at, but do NOT touch, either bowl or its contents.

Ask your detectives questions like:

- 1.) What does salt look like? (*It is white and granular, with hard, shiny crystals.*)
Sugar looks just like that too.
- 2.) What does salt smell like? (*It doesn't smell like much at all.*) Sugar doesn't either.
- 3.) How does salt look in the bowl? (*It sits there in mounds and moves when you shake the bowl.*) So does sugar.

So, which one is which do you think? (*Ask some opinions.*) We don't know for sure yet!

Hey! How are we going to tell the salt from the sugar? (*We can taste it!*)

That's right! Salt and Sugar taste different! We will have to taste them to tell.

Hand out napkins; put a small amount of sugar on each napkin. Have the children taste the sugar. Which one is that? (*The sugar!*) Great! If that one is the sugar, then this one must be... (*The salt!*) Hand out samples of the salt to make sure. (*It is the salt!*)

OK! Good work, detectives! The Mystery of the Missing Salt is solved!

Learning the Bible Verse – *The children will memorize part of Matthew 5:16*

...let your light shine...

Tell the children: The Bible says that we are to be the light of the world. We can't do that unless we let our light shine. The Bible says to ...let your light shine... What does it say we should let our light do? Shine!! When I say "let your light" you say "Shine!!" So... Let your light... (Shine!) Repeat this a few times.

[*Divide the room into two groups. Let one half say "Let your light..." and let the other side respond (loudly) "Shine!!" Switch and repeat.*]

Light of the World – *The children will color the activity sheet.*

Provide crayons or markers and a copy of the activity sheet for each child. Allow the children to color the candle with its flame. Remind them that Jesus said we (His followers) are the Light of the World!

*Jesus said, “You are the
Light of the World.”*

*...let your
light
shine...*

