

Sunday, February 5, 2023

## Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:13-20

*Images are deceiving. Salt and sugar look exactly the same but taste very different. —Suzy Kassem*

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In the first verse of today's Bible reading, Jesus says, "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under foot."

These are tough words, but to understand them, we need to remember that salt has long been a blessing to us humans. It's valuable because of its many uses. In history, salt has been used as currency and fought for in wars. Salt is used to cure and store meats, disinfect wounds, make food, pottery and more. Salt, in general, was loved not for just *one* of its uses but because it had *so many* uses. It was an unexpected blessing in a thousand ways.

Jesus' point is that those who belong to him, who live under his reign and rule in this world, are just like salt. It's incredibly useful and surprisingly valuable — not because we can enhance a great rib eye steak, but also because we can make the kingdom of God known in the world.

We can tell people about God's world through the way we admit our faults, the way we cling to Christ, love our enemies, feed the needy, strive to keep our promises and so much more — which Jesus goes on to outline later in his "Sermon on the Mount."

Members of God's world have a surprising usefulness in this hurting world when we respond to that grace by walking in love.

We are God's "salty" people. When followers of Jesus lose their saltiness, the world misses out on experiencing the kingdom, and we lose out on the joys of being a blessing.

—Matthew Popovits with Timothy Merrill

*Prayer: Sometimes, O God, I must be the salt of the earth. But other times, I need also to be sugar. Help me to be wise and provide what is needed, when it is needed. Amen.*

## Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Exodus 1-4  
**Monday:** Exodus 5-7  
**Tuesday:** Exodus 8-10  
**Wednesday:** Exodus 11-13  
**Thursday:** Exodus 14-17  
**Friday:** Exodus 18-20  
**Saturday:** Psalms 13-15

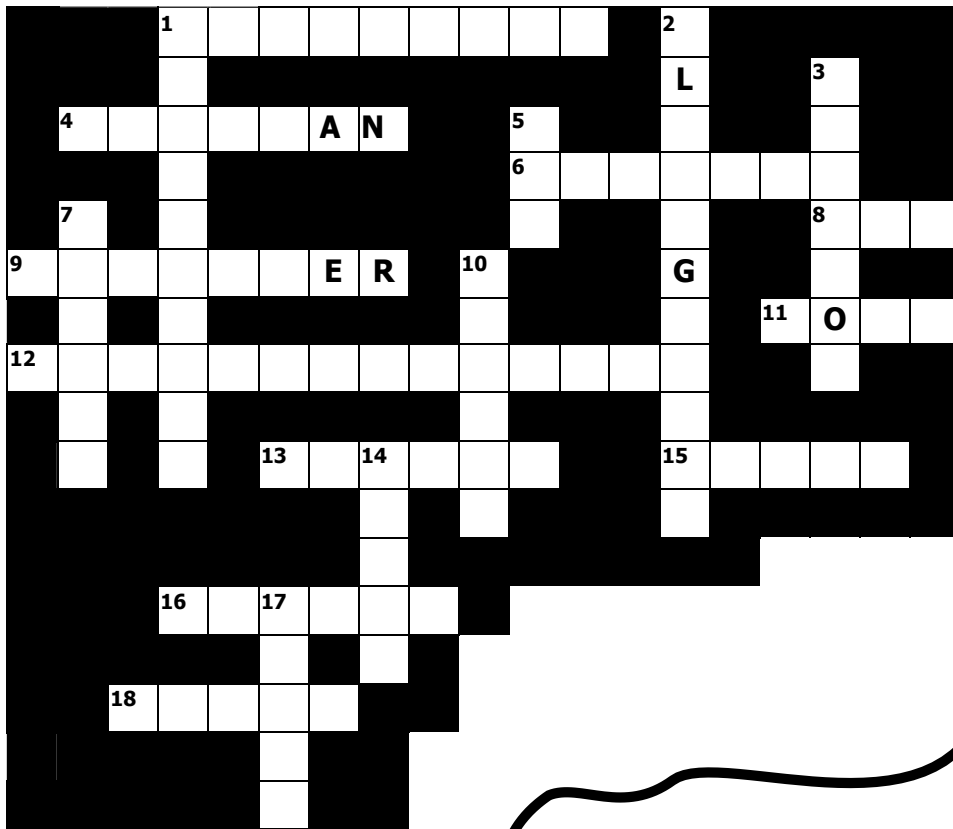
*Verse to Remember*

*You shall have no other gods before me.*

—Exodus 20:3

## CROSSWORD CLEANING!

The theme of this puzzle is cleaning items.



### CLUES

- 1 Across: Type of soap
- 1 Down: Apparatus to clean dishes
2. Vigorous physical effort
3. Used when washing hair
4. Used to hold debris
5. An old or torn cloth
6. Added to water to form cleaning solution
7. To whiten
8. Can be wet or dry
9. A cleaning powder
10. Pail
11. A water tube
12. Used to clean clothes
13. Used to remove dirt on knick-knacks
14. To vigorously rub
15. To brush away
16. Used to clean carpets
17. Fabric
18. Used to sweep

- ANSWERS:**
1. Across — detergent;
  1. Down — dishwasher;
  2. elbow grease;
  3. sham poo;
  4. dustpan;
  5. rag;
  6. ammonia;
  7. bleach;
  8. mop;
  9. cleanser;
  10. bucket;
  11. hose;
  12. washing machine;
  13. duster;
  14. scrub;
  15. sweep;
  16. vacuum;
  17. cloth;
  18. broom.



February 2023						
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