

“The Salt of the Earth”

By Elder David Pyles

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. – Mt 5:13

We can confidently say on the authority of this text that the contribution of the humble, obedient Christian to the preservation of the world is far greater than perceived. According to Jesus Christ Himself, such are the very salt of the earth. This of course alludes to the ancient practice of preserving meat by curing it with salt. This was commonly done before modern refrigeration methods were developed. The application of a small amount of salt could prevent the meat from rotting. Even so, a few obedient Christians can be a preserving influence on a society that would otherwise rot. Christian acts of kindness, mercy, forgiveness, self-sacrifice, etc. have reverberating effects. They are like the ripples produced by a stone cast into a pond. The ripples move far beyond the point of the initial event. Their total effect is far beyond what any perceive. Indeed, they are the reason for which the world is preserved.

Peter stated that the second coming of Jesus Christ could be far into the future relative to his own times, and this was essentially because of the extraordinary preserving influence of a few saints upon the world. He said:

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. – 2 Peter 3:8-10

That is, the second coming will not occur until God has finished gathering His people to Christ and salvation. Hence, the prospect of new saints is the reason the world is preserved. I have heard a few ministers foolishly state they did not want Christ to return at present because there were so many people they wanted to save. Upon hearing such statements, I wanted to ask: “What if there were only one?” Examples such as Noah, Moses, David, etc. show that God will preserve many on account of very few. The fact is that people come to Christ when they drawn by God the Father (Jn 6:44), and they are drawn by God the Father because they were

chosen to that end (Jn 6:37). The day comes when God will have drawn all His chosen people, and were the world to continue indefinitely beyond that point, not a single person would turn to Christ. This is when the world will end.

Isaiah said, *“Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah,”* (Isa 1:9-10). So the planet is preserved on account of witnesses who are left in it by the Lord. The number of these may at times be many, but God would preserve the world on account of only a few. This is why they are called the “salt of the earth.”