

SEASONED WITH SALT

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I am certain you have observed, no doubt, that the discourse in our modern society is horrible. The words people use toward others reflect the wickedness in our culture. This seems to be especially true in the political sphere, as well as the moral wickedness of this generation. Unfortunately, it does have an effect on the Lord's people in His Body. We are tempted to mirror the words and the spirits of people when we disagree with one another. And it is the reaction from our brothers and sisters that is concerning. And to be fair, I have heard and observed it on both sides of the issues, especially among those in the same Body. The extreme things we are hearing and seeing are affecting the Lord's Christians on both sides.

We as Christians have an obligation, and yes, a responsibility to not allow our own words and spirits to reflect those of the world. As the apostle Paul writes in **Colossians 4:5-6**, we should “*walk in wisdom toward outsiders.*” We should let our “*speech always be gracious,*” and we should let our words be “*seasoned with salt so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*” This is a perfect description that should encourage the Lord's people not to allow themselves to be like those in the world.

How can we do this? We can start by loving our neighbors as ourselves. This will certainly help us speak softer words. We can remember the words of Jesus, for He taught us to love and pray for our enemies in Matthew 5. For example, when I have the opportunity to counsel a young couple who are desiring to join in marriage, I urge them to learn to pray for each other. I have learned it is very difficult to hate someone I am praying for! Stephen prayed for those killing him, including the Pharisee named Saul. I would not be surprised to learn that Stephen's words were heard by that same Saul, and perhaps his words were the “goats” that Saul was kicking against. And those same words may have had a positive effect on Saul's obedience to the Lord in **Acts 9**. Those same words also protected Stephen from hating those who were killing him!

I like how Jesus answered His disciples as they were arguing among themselves as to who was the greatest in the Lord's kingdom in **Matthew 20**. He told them, rather than arguing who was the greatest, serve one another! This coincides with what Paul teaches in **Galatians 5:13**. Rather than arguing with others with vile words, we should endeavor to serve one another.

We can also consider the passage in **Romans 12:9-21** as to how we should treat those we disagree with. We should be “*kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love,*” especially those who are our brothers and sisters. Now it is easy to be kind and affectionate toward those we agree with, but this principle also applies (especially applies) to those we may disagree with. “*In honor giving preference to one another.*” How about “*distributing to the needs of the saints?*” Can you imagine the effect this might have if we acted thus to someone we disagree politically or otherwise?

Paul says to “*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.*” And of course, there is a godly principle of “*Do not be wise in your own opinion.*” Yes, these particular passages have a lot to help us speak with gentle and kind words and spirits.

Think about it. Is politics what our life is centered upon? It should not be. Our lives should be about honoring Christ, and Him crucified. Our priorities should be about showing the world a godly example in both our words and deeds. We should prioritize reflecting the “Light of the world” to a lost world. It is easy to prioritize the wrong things.

When Christians are dealing with someone we may disagree with politically, we should treat them in a manner that will encourage them to desire to follow the Lord. When we speak harshly to them or when we call them derogatory names (which has become a common practice today), we are not showing them the “Light of the world,” and they are not encouraged to follow our God.

One final thing to consider. Many of these types of arguments are centered on “rights” we fear the world is trying to take away from us. What important rights can man take from us? Can he keep us from worshipping the Lord? Can he keep us from offering to the Lord our “Living Sacrifice?” Can man keep us from praying? The Lord has granted to us the important rights in this life. What rights God gives us man cannot take away!

We all should work hard so that our words and spirits are seasoned with salt.

Colossians 4:5-6 *Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*