

# CARY FIRST

BAPTIST CHURCH

## “Lampstand Living”

Matthew 5:13-16

In his book *Simple Christianity*, Chris Heuertz, the international director of Word Made Flesh, writes that one night in particular stands out in all his world travels. While walking the streets of Calcutta, Chris Heuertz and his companions—Josh, Sarah, and Phileena, Heuertz's wife—stumbled across a person lying under a filthy, fly-infested blanket. A three-foot trail of diarrhea was making its way toward the gutter. It was obvious to anyone passing by that the person under the sheet was either dead or dying. Chris Heuertz writes:

My pal Josh tapped the body on the shoulder to see if the person was dead. The body moved. Josh pulled the blanket down from the face that it covered to see a helpless young man, maybe twenty-two years old and visibly stunned by our approach. As soon as he realized we were there to help him, he began weeping uncontrollably. A crowd gathered. He continued to cry.

We didn't have much to work with, but our friend Sarah grabbed a bottle of water and some newspaper. She began cleaning the young man, wiping the diarrhea off with the newspaper and rinsing him with the water. We asked him his name. Tutella Dhas. He was lost, afraid, alone. We tried to get a taxi, but none would stop. The crowd grew. No one wanted to help. Two more friends happened to be walking down the street just then, and were able to find a taxi. They took Tutella Dhas with them and headed off to Mother Teresa's House for the Dying.

As we began to leave I caught sight of a church and its sign less than five feet where we found the dying Tutella Dhas. The sign read, "All are welcome here." It may have been what inspired someone to drop Tutella in front of the church. But was he welcome? People from the church watched as we helped Tutella, yet the gate remained closed. Citation: Christopher L. Heuertz, *Simple Christianity* (IVP, 2008), pp. 61-62

**The church building is not the destination of our spiritual life,  
it is the launching point for our work in God's Kingdom.**

## Scripture

**“You are the salt of the earth.** But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty? It’s no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

<sup>14</sup>**“You are the light of the world.** A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden.

<sup>15</sup>No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house.

<sup>16</sup>In the same way, **let your light shine before others**, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” CSB

## Introduction

Today I want to talk about amending our purpose statement.

Our purpose statement is based on **Acts 1:8** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” CSB

Currently our purpose statement reads—

“Cary First Baptist Church exists to share the love and good news of Jesus Christ—everyday, everywhere, with everyone.”

The amended Purpose of Cary First Baptist Church—

“Cary First Baptist Church exists to **demonstrate the love** and share the good news of Jesus Christ—everyday, everywhere, with everyone.”

**To Demonstrate**— means to show clearly, to prove, to make clear by evidence or reasoning, to teach by example.

In **Matthew 5:13-16** Jesus teaches that those who follow Him are called to Demonstrate the love of Jesus in practical ways—

**The Context of the Sermon on the Mount**— God had not spoken through a prophet or a priest for approximately 400 years.

Jesus was speaking to His disciples—

**He taught about the upside down life vv.3-12**

The title for today’s sermon comes from **Matthew 5:16** that says “. . . **let your light shine before others . . .**”

**“Lampstand Living”** is the understanding that followers of Christ live our lives in full view of everyone.

**“How we live our life is a direct reflection of who we serve.”**

**“Lampstand Living”** is when followers of Christ live in such a way that people experience something different, something unique, something authentic, and something real about us and the difference is the influence of Jesus Christ in our life.

What does **“Lampstand Living”** look like?

It looks like “Charles “Chuck” Colson” — A few years ago, Chuck Colson was standing in a long line in the airport in Jakarta, Indonesia. He and some Prison Fellowship colleagues had been traveling all night. It was now early morning. The terminal was hot and steamy, and they were tired. Chuck wrote in his book, “Being the Body”, “Passport in my sticky hand, I was exhausted and exasperated at the long, inefficient line snaking ahead of us. I was worried we would miss our next flight and the ministry friends who were waiting for us.” But, Chuck adds, “I was also determined not to let my frustration get the better of me. I talked with my friends; we laughed and made the best of a bad and miserable situation.”

Two years later, he received a letter from a businessman who lived in Singapore. The man had been a follower of Confucius, but he sent his children to Sunday school at a Presbyterian church for moral training. One Sunday, as he picked up his kids, he heard the end of the sermon. A visiting missionary held up a copy of Chuck's first book, “Born Again.” On the cover was a picture of Chuck.

A few months later, this businessman was stuck in a long line in the steaming Jakarta airport. Glancing over into the next line, he spotted the same face he'd seen on the cover of the book “Born Again.” This business man was so impressed by Chuck Colson's calm demeanor and cheerfulness that when he got back to Singapore, he got the book, read it, and committed his life to Christ. Citation: Mark Earley, "BreakPoint with Charles Colson" (5-16-03)

Why does **“Lampstand Living”** matter?

Letting our light shine before others reveals the influence of Jesus Christ in our life because of our “good works.”

People see our “good works” and they glorify— give praise to God.

Where does **“Lampstand Living”** come from?

**You are the Salt of the earth**

## **You are the Light of the world**

**We Demonstrate the love of Jesus in our our world by our:**

### **Integrity v.13**

**“You are the salt of the earth.** But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty? It’s no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.” CSB

### **Jesus uses Salt as a metaphor referring to integrity—**

**Integrity—** the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness:

Without integrity, without the quality of being honest, without being morally righteous— we lose our influence (the salt loses its saltiness) and as a result our influence is good for nothing.

**Salt— “halas”—** Salt was used primarily to purify, to preserve, and to add flavor to food.

Three things about salt—

### **Salt is Common—**

A wife had a husband who was an airline pilot, and he often had difficulty locating items around the house. One day he asked his wife , “Honey do you know where the salt is?” Annoyed, and impatient she responded, “Honey you’re a well trained, professional airline pilot— How on this earth is it that you can find Detroit at night in a blizzard, but you can’t find the salt in your own kitchen?” “Well, darling,” he replied, “they don’t move Detroit”

**The world we live in should not have to look for the salt— We are the Salt of the earth.**

### **Salt is Valuable—**

How valuable is salt? More than 50 million tons are required each year to fill our needs. Philosophers Homer called salt divine. Plato called it a "substance dear to the gods." Shakespeare mentioned salt many times in his plays. Perhaps Leonard da Vinci wanted to send a subtle message about purity lost when he painted "The last Supper." In that painting an overturned salt container is conspicuously placed before Judas. In ancient

Greece trades involving the exchange of salt for slaves gave rise to the expression, "...not worth his salt."

Special salt rations were given to Roman soldiers and known as "Solarium Argentums" the forerunner of the English word "salary." The human body contains about 4oz. of salt. Without enough of it, muscles will not contract, blood will not circulate correctly, food will not digest efficiently. Salt is essential for survival. And Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth."

## **Integrity is valuable**

In the July 17, 1966 edition of Time Magazine there is a story title "You Can't Beat The Real Thing." It is a story about integrity.

Who says there's no integrity in the business world? In the spring of 2006, an administrative assistant at Coca Cola's Atlanta headquarters left work with several classified materials hidden in her purse. These materials included recipes for upcoming products, future promotions, and a beverage sample for a product not yet on the market.

With the help of two other employees, the secretary sent a letter to Pepsi—Coke's oldest and biggest competitor—offering to sell the secrets. It was a chance for Pepsi to seriously damage its competitor for a relatively low price.

Immediately upon receiving the letter, however, Pepsi officials contacted Coca Cola's headquarters, which then called the FBI. The Feds conducted a sting operation that netted three conspirators two months later, when they agreed to part with the secrets for \$1.5 million.

"We were just doing what any responsible company would do," said Pepsi spokesperson Dave DeCecco. "Despite the fierce competition in this industry, it should also be fair." Citation: Kathleen Kingsbury, "You Can't Beat the Real Thing," Time magazine (7-17-06), p. 10-11

**Proverbs 10:9** "The one who lives with integrity lives securely, but whoever perverts his ways will be found out." CSB

**1 Peter 2:12** "Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that when they slander you as evildoers, they will observe your good works and will glorify God on the day he visits." CSB

## **Salt is Useful—**

In The Journal of Biblical Counseling, Tim Keller makes the following observation about salt:

One of the attributes of salt is to make food taste better. I don't know about you, but I can't stand corn on the cob without salt on it. When I have eaten a piece of corn on the cob that I really like, I put it down, and what do I say? "That was great salt." No, I say, "That was great corn on the cob." Why? Because the function of the salt is not to make you think how great the salt is, but how great the thing is with which it's involved.

What if you are salt in your small group Bible study? If you're salt, people won't go away saying, "That person really knows the Bible and had all the answers. Showed me up!" No. What happens is when you go away from a small group in which you have been the salt, people don't say how great you were. They say, "What a great group." "What fascinating truth."

This is pretty simple. Salt makes you feel better about life. Christians (Righteous) people make you feel better. But religious people always make you feel condemned. They make you feel worse. Citation: Timothy Keller, *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* (Volume 19, Winter 2001)

**Colossians 4:6** "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person." CSB

**We demonstrate the love of Jesus in our world by our Integrity.**

**We Demonstrate the love of Jesus in our our world by our:**

**Actions vv.14-16**

**"You are the light of the world.** A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, **let your light shine before others**, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." CSB

**Lampstand Living happens when:**

**Our Actions Demonstrate Good Works—**

The phrase translated "**good works**" comes from the words

**Good— "Kalos"**— authentically good, beautiful, morally excellent, pleasant, joyful, agreeable, positive, kind, virtuous and distinctive.

**Works— "Ergon"**— **deeds, action, energy, and effort.**

In this context "**works**" is the demonstration, the deeds, the action, the energy and the effort of "**good.**"

**Luke 6:31-42** "**Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior:** Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for *them*! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that. <sup>35-36</sup> "I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity

the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind. <sup>37-38</sup> "Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. Don't condemn those who are down; that hardness can boomerang. Be easy on people; you'll find life a lot easier. Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity." <sup>39-40</sup> He quoted a proverb: " 'Can a blind man guide a blind man?' Wouldn't they both end up in the ditch? An apprentice doesn't lecture the master. The point is to be careful who you follow as your teacher. <sup>41-42</sup> "It's easy to see a smudge on your neighbor's face and be oblivious to the ugly sneer on your own. Do you have the nerve to say, 'Let me wash your face for you,' when your own face is distorted by contempt? It's this I-know-better-than-you mentality again, playing a holier-than-thou part instead of just living your own part. Wipe that ugly sneer off your own face and you might be fit to offer a washcloth to your neighbor." The Message

Being good means— Be kind, Be generous, Be gracious, Be patient.

The children learned this verse in Bible School this week:

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do." CSB

**Lampstand Living happens when:**

**Our Good works bring glory to God—**

When people see the demonstration of "good" in our life they will see and experience the influence of God upon our life— and they will give glory (praise) to God.

"Cary First Baptist Church exists to **demonstrate the love** and share the good news of Jesus Christ—everyday, everywhere, with everyone."