

Be Good Trouble Part 1

With Chris Harper

We are living in a time when the leading feminist thought says the world needs a man like a fish need a bicycle..."

At best our culture tells you you're useless... more than not, it says you're a problem. My fear is that we believe the lie.

As men we feel useless. As men we do not know what to do with our manhood and our masculinity... We've lost our identity.

In the 1970's it was "I don't need a man." In the 1990's it was "I don't want a man." And today, it's "what is a man?"

Men today are lost. We live in what I call a masculinity-fog. Men don't know their purpose in the world. They don't know their purpose in the Church. Men don't know they are needed.

When was the last time you heard a teacher, a politician, or a preacher say publicly, "*men, we need you.*"

Culture has either outsourced or canceled much of what is means to be a man, and where they have not been able to destroy manhood, they've said, "we don't need you, you're the problem..."

I am here to tell you today, you're a problem, and that's good thing. We need to be a problem.

Look with me at Matthew 5:13...

Notice what Jesus calls us, Jesus says, we are "salt."

Salt is not what we are aspiring to be, it is not what we hope to be, it is not what we one day will be... we ARE salt.

If you are a disciple of King Jesus, you are a salty disciple.

My guess is, you've heard this preached a bunch of different ways. And here's what I think, I think the modern church has missed the meaning.

You've heard that salt is seasoning, salt's purpose is to flavor things. As Christians we are seasoning of life, we bring the flavor of Jesus wherever we go...

You've heard salt creates a thirst, and we should be thirsting for the things of God, and we should be creating that thirst in others...

You've heard that salt heals wounds, and that is what we are, agents of the great physician, we bring healing and hope wherever we go...

And the list goes on... salt can be used a 100 different ways.

The problem is, Jesus never says that He wants his disciples to flavor the world... I don't think the picture here is one of seasoning a ruined plate of food. Adding salt to a horrible meal doesn't make the meal better...

Men, I think Jesus' disciples are exactly what he says they are... I think His disciples are salt of the earth; literally the *Greek* translation reads "salt on the *land*."

Jesus says we are "salt on the land," which is more threatening than it is seasoning.

Jesus doesn't use the word salt the way we use it. Jesus uses it with the history of Scripture in mind...

Think about this, in the OT, God's destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah left behind a mound of sulphur and salt...

Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt.

When Israel broke covenant, when they disobeyed God, Moses warned that the Lord would make ***“the whole land a burning wasteland of salt—nothing planted, nothing sprouting, no vegetation... (Deut. 29:23; cf. Ps. 107:34).***

If you want to defeat your enemy, you cut off his food supply by salting his land. This is how Abimelech beat Shechem, he sowed salt on the land (Judges 9:45)

The Roman army did the same thing in the Jewish Wars of 60 AD, they salted the Palestinian lands...

The prophet Jeremiah would rub salt on newborn babies to kill off any impurity.

Jesus tells us in Luke 12:49 that He desires to bring fire upon the earth, and his disciples fulfill that desire. When Jesus scatters his salty disciples, the world becomes a salty place.

Now you might be thinking, why would Jesus want to do that?

The real question is why wouldn't He do that!?

When a nation's chief domestic product consists of greed, and lust, and oppression, and cruelty, and lies, the nation needs to be salted until every evil thing has withered away—until every root of evil is dead.

Satan is the prince of this world, and Jesus annihilates his harvest by sending out salty disciples who obey God's commands.

When we walk as King Jesus walked, we can't help but choke out worldly fruit.

Jesus commands his disciples to resist the world's desires, resist the world's values, and when we do that, we put salt on evil, we undo evil habits.

This really is what the beatitudes are all about. The Beatitudes, Matthew Ch 5, they make us salty... putting on humility makes us salty... confessing and mourning sin, makes us salty... practicing mercy, creating peace, thirsting for righteousness, joyfully receiving persecution... salty

The beatitudes help us produce and store up salt so that when we go, we go salting the land, we go pushing back against the prince and principalities of this world.

And men this is dangerous - This is dangerous living. The world will see you as a problem.

Our world, our country, is decaying, and dark, it's built on vengeance, and lust, and hatred. Even many of our churches are energized by hostility toward other churches...

And when you, as salty men, live in opposition to this type of world, people naturally see you as a threat to their way of life... and they should... real men, serious Christian men are a threat to this way of life.

When envy and self determine the structure of social life - selfless men are dangerous. Selfless men are a problem.

When disunity, and division, and hate define culture structures, men who reach across the barricades to bless an enemy, they're a problem.

When men who extend the hand of fellowship across racial, political, socio-economic lines, they're dangerous.

They're a problem.

In a world where every sexual inclination demands respect, men who speak with conviction and compassion, who urge the lustful to remain pure, they aren't just closed minded, they're dangerous.

They're a problem.

In a world of full of lairs—truth-tellers are a problem.

Men, it is no accident that Jesus calls his disciples “salt on the land” right after telling them they should expect to be persecuted.

No, we're not adding flavor the systems of the world, we are destroying the systems of the world.

We are not adding flavor to horrible food, we are throwing away that food and inviting people to the King's table... As men we're dangerous. We're a problem.

I love the story in Acts 19... the Apostle Paul goes to Ephesus...

How do you live in such a way to get on Hell's hitlist? You have to develop an ethos of courage.