



## Wednesday Prayer

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany – You are the salt. You are the light.

***"You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 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. Matthew 5:13-16***

This passage will forever hold a place in my heart, a visual of young men, hundreds of teens, coming to grieve and pay tribute to their friend who died by gunfire. The charismatic pastor challenged these young people by saying over and over "You are the salt. You are the light." He inspired them to go into the world, into their everyday lives, and make a difference. To be the salt. To be the light. To make changes that will positively impact their communities.

"As disciples, we have to be the *activity* of God in the world. We are called to live out our identity as salt and light. It is knowledge without action that perpetuates existence of racism in our world. It is knowledge without action that contributes to our silence about sexism. It is knowledge without action that continues to oppress the poor, to ostracize the marginalized, to overlook the hungry." <sup>1</sup>(Dr. Karoline Lewis, Luther Seminary)

Many of you have been on this journey to prevent child sexual exploitation and trafficking for quite some time. You've continued to learn, pray, and actively work in your communities. However, sometimes we have good *intentions* of acting, but as Dr. Lewis goes on to say,

"...the truth about our default setting leans toward comfort, conformity, and complacency when what Jesus really needs from us is to be the salt and the light—the salt that just might sting and the light that just might expose what we do not want to see."

Working against racism, sexism, and all forms of oppression requires that we actively expose systems, laws and cultural norms that keep the status quo. Many are exposing root causes and working for change to end sexual exploitation and trafficking. The work of the Gospel may sting and lead us out of complacency, but it is what we are called to do.

**Dear God, as we work to dismantle systems of oppression, use us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, actively working for safety and justice for all your children. Amen.**

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary\\_id=3156](https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=3156)