

So in short, salt illustrates holiness, righteousness, faithfulness and the goodness of God. Believers represent Him and reflect His character qualities. We stand for God and we bring His powerful goodness to bear on the world, if we do not allow our witness to become compromised by our exposure to impurities and the conditions around us. In a similar manner, Jesus used light as another analogy. **“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”** (MT 5:14-16)

The Apostle Paul made a reference to salt when he said, **“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”** (Colossians 4:6) Paul is encouraging believers to present a Godly response, to have our words flavored with grace and goodness. Such words maximize the edification of the hearer and increases our influence for Christ Jesus.

In my “Salt Study,” I ran across the Covenant of Salt. Honestly, I’ve heard of it, but I couldn’t you tell much about it. Because of the value and properties of salt, it became a symbol of agreement and commitment. King Abijah’s speech in **2 Chronicles 13:5** mentions just such a salt covenant: **“Don’t you know that the LORD, the God of Israel, has given the kingship of Israel to David and his descendants forever by a covenant of salt?”** Here, Abijah refers to the strong, legally binding promise of God to give Israel to David and his sons forever.

“The Old Testament Law commands the use of salt in all grain offerings and makes clear that the “salt of the covenant” should not be missing from the grain offerings (Leviticus 2:13). Since the Levitical priests did not have land of their own, God promised to provide for them via the sacrifices of the people. He called this promise of provision a “salt covenant” (Numbers 18:19). Salt has always been known for its preservative properties, and it is also possible that God instructed the use of salt so that the meat would last longer and taste better—and thus be of more value to the

priests who depended upon it for their daily food.” (ref: *Got Questions?*)

The Salt Covenant “accented” the mutual agreement and it seemed to be indicative of the blessing and Presence of God. God is in this! We have a tangible reminder of His promise. We have His favor. We have His flavor. **“Taste and see that the Lord is good!” (PS 34:8)** I love the tangible touch points of faith, the symbols in which we share communion in His Presence.

Then I ran across this account of young Elisha. He made his commitment to become Elijah’s servant following the calling of the Lord. He left the farm. He faithfully journeyed with Elijah to Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho and to the Jordan. At the Jordan River, Elijah took his cloak and struck the water. The water divided and they crossed over on dry ground. Then the Lord took Elijah to heaven in a whirlwind. His cloak fell to the ground. Elisha picked up the cloak, stood on the riverbank, struck the water and said, **“Where now is the Lord, the God of Elijah?” (II Kings 2:14)** The waters parted and he walked across on dry ground. As he went back to Jericho, the people said to him, **“Look our lord, this town is well situated, as you can see, but the water is bad and the land is unproductive.” (II Kings 2:19)** The water in the town was toxic and poisonous. It made people sick, even die. The land was barren. It was unfruitful. Possibly it had been a sign of the judgement of the Lord. It certainly, lacked His blessing and favor.

He said to them: **“Bring me a new bowl and put salt in it. Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying “This is what the Lord says: “I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive.” And the water has remained pure to this day, according to the word Elisha has spoken.” (vs.21-22)**

Salt signifies the Presence, Purity and Power of the Lord. He changes lives. He heals and restore. He calls us forth with purpose and we display His favor in the world. We have been redeemed to be redeemers. We have our redemptive story. Through Christ Jesus, we influence others toward their redemptive stories. We permeate the flavor of God in the world. **“You are the salt of the earth!”**

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GRACE COVENANT INTERNATIONAL

June 2024

REDEMPTION STORIES



We had a precious and powerful time at our GCI World Conference 2024 in the Dominican Republic in late April. All of our nations were represented, if you count Missionaries Rob and Lori Mangus (Ghana) as representing our five West African nations. Unfortunately, our African pastors could not secure their visas. The theme of our conference was “Immovable and Abounding!” from I Corinthians 15:58.

“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the Lord’s work, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

The group who is “stepping up” took the fellowship tour to visit the sites in the capital city, Santo Domingo. Pastor Pedro (Peru) preached and prayed in his indigenous representation of the Amazon tribes. Pastor Nancy Garcia ministered powerfully in prayer to Pastor Amalia and others. BIG THANKS to Tyler and Callie Franca-DR for hosting.

We were very grateful for those in our GCI family who contributed to assist in travel and expenses for folks like Antonio and Graciela Chavez-Nepal, Pedro and Amalia Urcia-Peru and others. Thanks to all who supported us with funding and prayer, to make this event possible. As He promises when we gather in His Name, the Lord showed up and showed out for the refreshment of His Children and His

Glory. It was so beautiful to gather our international ministry family together to renew relationships and receive from the Lord. Due to COVID, we had to cancel the event for 2020. So we had a lot of catching up to do. We had a good number that attended for the first time. Our NEX GEN leaders were well represented. Thanks for everyone who served on site to make our conference a wonderful blessing.

More Scenes from the World Conference

Tyler Franca, Josh Goolsby and Pastor Buddy Collins led the sharing in the Men's Breakout group.



Bill and Marie Eddy shared about ministry in Spain. Bill brought the closing conference message.



We were way blessed to have some GCI "grandkids" at the party: Simone and J. J. Harris, Clare Rucker, James, Ruthie and Leah Franca.



A good time was had by all!

Hey Let's Get Real with It!

We have a saying in GCI: "Real ministers!" Cue Makayla and Marquis Harris, new church planters. On May 22nd, the Lord gave Makayla this word: "It is time to take the pivot and give up control of what you think this is supposed to look like. It is time to work in a new pivot that will enable your home to flow in God's rest." Those words above ignited us to stop searching for a building ambiance. To stop searching for a destination after our commissioning before even truly beginning the journey. To stop searching for a blueprint that doesn't belong to us, because there is no oil there. I want to say I wish I knew how much you'd have to die to your unknown self-centered ways in church planting. But, I'm glad I didn't know. I am glad that I didn't know how much God would unravel, undo, and refine my family to take us from a deeper level of faith to faith, glory to glory. He has shaken so much of my selfishness and pity to trust Him and co-labor in this work with my spouse. Home is so sacred and it seemed extremely territorial to open it up more and make it a mission field for others. Yet here we are. Learning to grow as servants. Letting God wreck our hearts before Him first as we pastor others. Loving our neighbors. A sign in the grass that has caused some to stop on a walk and make conversation that has never occurred before, since living here. Revive us right here Jesus, with the portion we are given. And for the weary or discouraged heart that reads this through. Press on, He will keep you in perfect peace (Isaiah 26:3). ~Makayla Harris



"The Salt of the Matter"

By Dallas Elder

"He is not worth his salt!" It became a common expression from ancient Greece, where salt had monetary value. Roman soldiers were paid "salt money" (salarium argentum), from which we take our English word salary. The Greeks called salt "divine" (theion). The Romans said, "There is nothing more valuable than sun and salt."

If you look closely at Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper, you will see that Judas Iscariot has knocked the salt cellar over with his elbow. Spilled salt came to be associated with treachery and lies.

It shouldn't surprise us that salt has references in the Scripture. Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot." MT 5:13

*Salt was connected with purity. Its glistening whiteness made the connection easy to understand.

*Salt was a preservative. It was used to preserve meat from rotting.

*Salt was a seasoning. It was a flavor enhancer. When applied to food, it influenced the taste and made it better.

Pure salt does not lose its saltiness. Salt could lose its valuable qualities, if it was mixed with impurities or exposed to moisture or heat. *Continued >>>*

A Redemptive



This is Rafalina and Gabriel with their children. They live at the DR home of Rick and Carie Bernard, who pioneered DR Missions and served the work for 20 years. Rafalina was 12 years old when she came to live at the Esther House, the girls' home at the Canaan Ministry Center. As a teenager, she helped with childcare at the Bernard's home. She

graduated high school. She helped in our DR Missions ministry in many ways. She went to college and graduated with a degree in Psychology. She is a licensed children's counsellor. When DR Missions Directors Tyler and Callie Franca launch the Solid Ground Christian Preschool in August, Rafalina will be the Preschool Counsellor. Her husband, Gabriel, runs a computer repair business and is an anointed worship leader. What a marvelous example of faith and missionary fruit! It is a beautiful redemptive circle! The redemptive circumference continues to expand. Some give, some pray, some go. It's a Team Effort! **Behold your fruit!**

Meet Our New Missionaries!



It is our great pleasure to introduce the Orellana missionary family. From left to right: Isabel, Guido, Elena, Kim and Sofia. They've served in Ecuador for 20 years. Over a year ago they transitioned from their previous missions organization, took some "Sabbath" time to consider family needs and Lord's leading. Through a mutual ministry friend, we made contact and began conversation. They attended our GCI March Conference in Kansas City. They will continue their touches in Ecuador through Zoom and leading short-term mission teams. You will be hearing more of their story.

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Mark Your Calendar!
GCI Ministry Midyear Conference 2024
August 12-14
LifePoint Church-Oakdale, CA

Our Ignite Ministry Conference will be September 25-28 (Wednesday-Saturday) in Platte City, MO. It will feature seminar sessions and workshops to encourage and equip His servants. This is a great opportunity for sharpening your ministry skills, plus discipleship and leadership development for those in your ministry circle. Make your plans to attend!

SEMINAR SESSIONS:

- ⇒ "Excelling in Your Best Ministry Self" —Dallas Elder
- ⇒ "Transferred to Be Transformed" —Pam Brown

WORKSHOPS:

- ▶ REFLECTIONS ON RESSURECTIONS —Dallas Elder We will explore the biblical "resurrection previews", the actual events and their implications for our future as believers.
- ▶ SEVEN CHURCHES —Barry Claire Pastor Barry travelled to the Island of Patmos and visited the ancient sites of the seven churches of Revelation. Huge insights!
- ▶ CONTEXTUALIZED FAITH Bill Eddy We will learn together how to be faithful to the contextualized faith given to us by those that gathered as described in Acts 15.

Register at www.MSlgc.com or contact our GCI office.