

# **FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, TARENTUM BIBLE CLASS**

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## **Discipleship—Dietrich Bonhoeffer Lesson #20—The Sermon on the Mount-The Visible Church-Community**

### **Matthew 5: On the “Extraordinary” of Christian Life**

#### **A. Who we are—Salt (Matthew 5:13)**

- Those being spoken to are those called in the Beatitudes into the grace of following the crucified one.
- So far the blessed have appeared as people worthy of the kingdom of heaven, but obviously at the same time as people unworthy of living, superfluous for this earth.
- Now they are described using the image of the most indispensable commodity on earth.
- They are the noblest asset, the highest value the world possesses.
- Without them the earth can no longer survive.
- This divine salt proves itself by its effectiveness.
- It penetrates the entire earth.
- Thus, the disciples are fessed not only on heaven, but are reminded of their mission on earth.
- Only when salt remains salty is the cleansing, flavoring power of salt preserved and the earth preserved by salt.
- Salt must remain salty for its own sake, as well as for the sake of the earth.

- The community of disciples must remain what Christ's call has made them.
- The fact that salt will not decay guarantees that the community will last.
- “You *are* the salt”—not “you should be the salt”!
- The disciples are given no choice whether they want to be salt or not.
- The other possibility, of course, is that salt loses its taste, that it stops being salt.
- It ceases to be effective.
- Then it really is no longer good for anything except to be thrown away.
- Salt that has lost its taste can never again be salty.
- “Thus there is no greater injury or decay in Christendom than when the salt, which should season and salt everything else, has itself lost its taste”.
- The earth is supposed to be saved by the community.
- But the community that has stopped being what it is will be hopelessly lost.