

A landscape photograph of a valley with a winding river, overlaid with a semi-transparent circular graphic containing silhouettes of people. The text 'THIS IS GRACE' is centered in white serif font.

THIS IS
GRACE

THIS IS GRACE

G= Grow

R= Relate

A= Attract

C= Challenge

We want to challenge people to grow with clear and practical teachings. We become more like Jesus as we receive God's challenges in life and make the changes His truth requires.

THIS IS GRACE

Luke 14:25-34

A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else. Your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters-yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, you cannot be my disciple. But don’t begin until you count the cost.” For who begins construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?

THIS IS GRACE

Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. They would say, “There’s the person who started that building and couldn’t afford to finish it!” Or what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down with his counselors to discuss whether his army of 10,000 could defeat the 20,000 soldiers marching against him? And if he can’t, he will send a delegation to discuss the terms of peace while the enemy is still far away. So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.

THIS IS GRACE

“Salt is good for seasoning. But if it loses its flavor, how do you make it salty again? Flavorless salt is good neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. It is thrown away. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!”

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Jesus challenges us to become a disciple and to become salty!

THIS IS GRACE

Matthew 5:13

“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.”

THE 4 WAYS WE SHOULD BE SALTY

- As the salt of the earth, you get to flavor the world around you.
- You also get to preserve the world around you.
- Sometimes, you will irritate people, but when your real intent is to bring healing, that means sharing the truth that stings in a loving way.
- And you also get to permeate the world.

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

- **It seasons**

It makes things taste so much better.

“Sodium is an extremely active element found naturally only in combined form; it always links itself to another element. Chlorine, on the other hand, is the poisonous gas that gives bleach its offensive odor. When sodium and chlorine are combined, the result is sodium chloride—common table salt—the substance we use to preserve meat and bring out its flavor. Love and truth can be like sodium and chlorine. Love without truth is flighty, sometimes blind, and willing to combine with various doctrines.

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

On the other hand, the truth can be offensive, sometimes even poisonous. Spoken without love, it can turn people away from the gospel. When truth and love are combined in an individual or a church, however, then we have what Jesus called “the salt of the earth,” and we’re able to preserve and bring out the beauty of our faith.”

David H. Johnson

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

- **It preserves**

The difference between seasoning and preserving something is the amount you use changes.

To preserve your faith you need to read the word, pray over the word, and apply the word. But, of course, this will make you extra salty.

Isaiah 40:8

“The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.”

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

Matthew 24:35

Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will never disappear.

God's word is eternal.

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

- **It kills**

If you want something seasoned-you sprinkle

If you want something preserved-you toss

If you want something killed-you dump

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

Matthew 16:24-25

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me. If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

Our message to our contemporaries is to grasp the parallel, which is woven deeply into both Testaments, between the human call to bear God's image and Israel's call to be the light of the world. Humans were made to reflect God's creative stewardship into the world. Israel was made to bring God's rescuing love to bear upon the world. Jesus came as the true Israel, the world's true light, and as the true image of the invisible God. He has laid the foundation, and we must build upon it. We are to be the bearers both of his redeeming love and of his creative stewardship: to celebrate it, to model it, to proclaim it, to dance to it.

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

As the Father sent me, so I send you; receive the Holy spirit; forgive sins and they are forgiven, retain them and they are retained. That last double command belongs exactly at this point. We are to go out into world with the divine authority to forgive and retain sins. When Jesus forgave sins, they said he was blaspheming; how then can we imagine such a thing for ourselves? God intends to do through us for the wider world that for which the foundation was laid in Jesus. We are to live and tell the story of the prodigal and the older brother; to announce God's glad, exuberant, richly healing welcome for sinners, and

THE 3 REASONS FOR THE SALT CHALLENGE

At the same time, God's sorrowful but implacable opposition to those who persist in arrogance, oppression and greed. Following Christ in the power of the Spirit means bringing to our world the shape of the gospel: forgiveness, the best news that anyone can ever hear, for all who yearn for it, and judgment for all who insist on dehumanizing themselves and others by their continuing pride, injustice, and greed."

N.T. Wright *The Challenge of Jesus*