

if a new life of holiness shall arise out of the victorious conflict with the old man Adam. Resolve this teaching into the insipid view that the new life, with its personal assurance of salvation, is developed out of itself, within the congregation, and that every member of the Church, because of his received Christian training, is entitled to it as a matter of course; and this teaching will likewise be reduced to a worthless salt, incapable of truly regenerating the heart.

But not alone the doctrine, the life also of the entire man may become a powerless salt. The illustration in our text is applied to persons, to the disciples of Christ. They are warned by the Lord, when He says: "But if the salt hath lost its savor," and justly so. In his inner being and outer conduct, the Christian may lose his savor of salt, if he become affected with the spirit and maxims of the world. Failing to preserve the received power pure and entire, and to exercise the grace, will surely lose the salt its savor. The spiritual life is enfeebled; prayer and worship become a dead formality. All serious striving after spiritual growth is weakened, and thus all blessed activity ceases. In the place of the spiritual power and boldness of testimony there are manifest a world-wise prudence and a man-fearing spirit, that grow more and more timid, until at last they are not willing to be exposed even to a cross look for the Lord's sake.

Behold the formalistic, the world-conformed Christians, among them many that were formerly possessed of salt-power, and at one time standing in the glow of their first love—are they still a salt, acting on the corruption of their surroundings? Observe many Christian Associations that in the beginning worked very effectively, gradually giving way to the enfeebling and destructive influence of their worldly-minded members, or before the scorn and opposition confronting them on all sides! How soon did they ground their arms! How soon did they resemble useless and worthless salt!

Hence the question of self-examination: Have not many of our powerful spiritual impulses become dulled by reason of our unfaithfulness?

Our text presents the same truth in the additional question: Is our light upon a candlestick, or under a bushel? "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." As a city built upon an eminence, like Jerusalem, cannot be hid from view, but of itself attracts attention, and must draw all eyes to itself; so the disciples of Christ will attract the eye of the world. The kingdom of God is also an eminence, and a disciple standing upon the same occupies too elevated a position not to attract the gaze of the world upon himself. The Church of Christ is no secret institution. The light of a pure walk and conversation will burn bright and clear, visible at a great distance, enlightening the dark world. And whosoever has received light must not conceal his light, whether large or small, so that it remain of none effect; but rather let it shine openly for the use and benefit of all. Do we fulfill this part of our calling? Are we really bright and burning lights, or blazing and soon dying out? Are we strong, enduring lights, in faith and love to God, continually nourished from above with the oil of the Spirit? And does our light stand free and firm upon the candlestick, a protection to the good, a warning to the evil? Or do we place it under a bushel, whether it be enslaved by commandments of men, or timid and yielding under a sense of fear? Do we shine unto those who are in our own homes, to our nearest surroundings, as an example unto them in faith and good works? And when our light does shine, does it shine to our own honor or to the honor of our heavenly Father? This also is a question for self-examination, which the Lord presents to us when He says: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see"—*not yourself, your own person, but—"your*