



Links Players

Salt of the Earth

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. (Matthew 5:13, NIV)

Except for one now-former PGA Tour Player, golfers have a reputation for honesty. How many sports can you think of in which the participants report themselves for infractions? I can't really picture a hockey player tripping an opponent, giving himself a dope slap, and then voluntarily heading to the penalty box.

Golfers typically exemplify not just honesty but decorum and general decency—other than in a few rare exceptions. All these traits define a person as “salt of the earth” in common parlance.

But the notion of being “salt of the earth” has undergone some linguistic drift in the millennia since Jesus coined the phrase.

The fact that he describes salt that has “lost its saltiness” as being good for nothing but to be “thrown out and trampled underfoot” bears a striking resemblance to the historical trajectory of mankind. We were created by God and placed in Eden as the crown of creation. We later succumbed to Satan's temptation, which resulted in the “salt of the earth” having lost its saltiness. Subsequently, we were thrown out and “trampled underfoot.”

The only time I expect to be thrown out and trampled underfoot is when I'm occupying my cemetery plot. I have this ending coming to me since, as a sinner, I qualify as salt that has lost its saltiness.

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He was “salty salt” who submitted himself to being “thrown out and trampled underfoot.” In so doing, he picked up the tab for the sinfulness of all the other salt.

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But this flavoring is what Jesus' earthly ministry was all about: resolving the issues related to the fall of mankind.

When Jesus asks, “How can it be made salty again,” he's hinting that, in the months that are to follow this Sermon on the Mount, he'll provide the answer. The answer to our flavor problem is simply to believe that he is indeed God's Son.

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To believe this truth and to trust Him is to ensure that our being “thrown out and trampled underfoot” won’t be any more permanent than his was.

(This may not have a lot to do with golf unless there is golf in the afterlife. Unfortunately, commentators are divided over the question of which afterlife destination has golf—an opinion that is likely related to how many three-putts surfaced in their most recent round.)

Prayer: Thank you, Heavenly Father, that our “saltiness” has been truly restored by the atoning work of your Son, in whose Name we pray.

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