

Salt, Not Sugar

By: David Burruss

There's a little quote floating around the internet that says, "Your job is not to get everyone to like you. Jesus said you are salt, not sugar." And honestly? That hits home more than I'd like to admit.

We live in a culture that rewards likability. We're taught to keep things light, keep people happy, and avoid conflict. Blend in, stay sweet, don't rock the boat. But if we take a look at Jesus' words in Matthew 5, we see something very different.

"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men." (Matthew 5:13)

That's a strong statement. Salt was valuable in the ancient world. It preserved, it purified, and it brought out the flavor in things. It wasn't just sprinkled on top for sweetness. It had grit. It had purpose.

Jesus didn't call us to be sugar. He didn't ask us to water down truth or coat everything in syrup so that it would go down easier. He called us to be something essential, something bold enough to preserve righteousness in a decaying world.

And that means we won't always be liked.

That's hard for me, because I like being liked. I like keeping peace. But there are moments, maybe more than we'd like to admit, when following Jesus means standing firm, speaking truth, and walking in a way that cuts against the grain of the culture.

Even Jesus wasn't universally liked. In fact, He said:

"And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved." (Matthew 10:22)

That's not a popularity promise. That's a call to perseverance. It reminds me that if I'm always comfortable, always blending in, always saying what people want to hear, then maybe I'm not being salt at all. Maybe I've started losing my flavor.

Salt also stings a bit when it touches a wound. It cleanses, but it can be uncomfortable. The truth of God's Word can do the same. And while our words should always be spoken in love, they shouldn't be diluted to make them more palatable. Real love doesn't hide the truth. It delivers it with grace and courage.

So if today you're feeling the tension between being faithful and being liked, you're not alone. But let this be your encouragement: you weren't called to be sweet. You were called to be salt. Needed. Distinct. Set apart.

And salt that keeps its flavor? It makes a difference.