Grace and peace from God our Father and the source of light to the world Jesus Christ. Amen.

Jesus uses common elements for illustrations to communicates about God and the kingdom. We see him use bread and wine which are part of communion, water and fire, which is part of our baptism and heals with mud or saliva. Salt contains both sodium and chloride and is necessary for life. The human body requires a small amount of sodium which conducts nerve impulses, contracts and relaxes muscles, and maintains the proper balance of water and minerals. We need about 500 mg (about ¼ of a teaspoon) of sodium daily for these vital functions. If we do not get enough salt in severe cases, low sodium levels in the body can lead to muscle cramps, nausea, vomiting and dizziness. Eventually, lack of salt can lead to shock, coma and death. On the other hand, too much salt can lead to hypertension or high blood pressure.

Salt is not an element useful to itself but is necessary for human life. The value in salt comes in its application on other things: sustaining life, enhancing flavor, serving to preserve. So, likewise, the followers of Jesus, the Christian community, is told they are ”the salt of the earth” and are called to exist for others. Collins Dictionary tells us the term “Salt of the Earth” describes someone you have a lot of respect for as they are the people who deal with difficult or demanding situations without making any unnecessary fuss. Merriam-Webster says the salt of the earth is a very good and honest person or group of people. Yet, Jesus cautions salt can lose and have no value. If we as Christians we make no effort to serve our community we have little value to God. The same is true if we are too much like the world by blending in with others We are to be in the world not of the world. {Matamatas Ghandi 1930 230-mile salt march prohibition from selling salt} When we affect others positively, just like salt we can bring out the flavor, be valuable in sustaining life and can help others to preserve their life.

Jesus also tells the community of followers that they are “a light to the world.” **In the same way physical light dispels darkness, so too should Christians live as shining witnesses of God’s light in a world darkened by sin. We will be singing later this little light of mine which is mindful of our baptism and baptism candle and promise.** Our actions as “the salt of the earth” will allow humans to see the source of the light. Christ tells the Christian community they are a light unto the world when in ancient times at nightfall, it was dark. Think about being in the woods far away from the city and how dark it is. when the stars millions of miles away are so visible. In those times the belief was light came from within, that light came from our eyes. Jesus tells us, the light is not simply to allow others to see whatever they wish but it is for others to witness the acts of justice that Jesus’ followers perform. It also allows the audience to recognize the cause of our good works and brings glory to God. Think of the light on a lampstand as the cross of Christ.

We should not hide our faith in God from others. We should not be ashamed, shy, or selfish. To do so means we are hiding our light under a bushel basket. We should not just go along with what others are doing even though it might not be the right thing. Also, we can dim the light when we ignore the light and let sin and darkness creep into our life. **Jesus invites us to shine forth his light like a lamp for others to see, so that they may also come to God and move away from darkness.** Also, we do not tell others about the light or ignore the needs of others, contrary to what Jesus has taught us. We do not shine the light on our good works for our purpose but rather to the glory of God. Our goal as the light of the world is to glorify Him and bring His hope to all who are searching. Being a light in this dark world is not always easy, But, it is important that we keep shining his light as we share the love that you’ve found in Jesus Christ. This week God provides the mission in Isaiah—feed the hungry, care for the homeless, clothe the naked. Upon accomplishing this mission God tells the people, “Your light shall break forth like the dawn.” During the dark days of Epiphany, we can continue to shine our light on Christ. We are indeed created in God’s image; therefore, the spark of the divine is alive in all of us. The light shines through us as we live out God’s mission for our lives each day. As Epiphany continues, we should all be prepared to let our light shine and share the good news.

Paul notes that he came to Corinth “in weakness and in fear and in much trembling” (2:3), giving credence to his notion that the that Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit workis for good through him and will give him the right words, not he alone doing good things.

Finally, Jesus tells us he did not come to abolish the law. God’s law was given as an act of to help people love their God with all their heart and all their mind. The religious leaders had added many more rules to the 10 Commandments and had loopholes when they did not obey these. Jesus explains obeying the law is more important than explaining it. Jesus did not overturn the commandments but obeyed them and asked others to do the same. Go forward and be the salt of the earth and put your light on the lights tend of the cross and let your light shine for others. Amen.