May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you,

O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

How do you answer when someone asks question, like: “Who are you?” The most common answer is to give our name. We might also tell a bit of family history and the connections that help identify us. Often we’ll tell something about our work, the things we do, and how we spend our time. I cannot, however, think of a single time when I ever answered that question by saying, “Oh, I’m the salt of the earth. I’m the light of the world.” How about you? Have you ever answered that way? Has anyone ever answered you that way? Maybe, but I’m guessing probably not.

Why not? Even if we’ve never said it aloud do we ever think of ourselves that way? Do we know that about ourselves? Jesus knows that about us. Jesus thinks that about us. Jesus even says that about us. It’s right there in today’s gospel.

“*You are the salt of the earth…. You are the light of the world*.” Don’t think this is about somebody other than you. Jesus isn’t talking to particular individuals. He’s talking to the crowds that have followed him. That means they’ve come from everywhere. They’ve come to see this one they’ve heard about. They’ve come to listen and learn, to be healed, and to have their lives put back together. They’ve come in search of meaning, direction, and purpose.

You and I stand among that crowd. We’re one of them. We’ve come today to see this one we’ve heard about. We’ve come to listen and learn, to be healed, and to have our lives put back together. We’ve come in search of meaning, direction, and purpose. Jesus words are: “You are the salt of the earth…. You are the light of the world.” He doesn’t say we should become salt. He says we already are salt. He doesn’t say we are to become light. He says we already are light. We already are what we need to be. We already have all that we need.

There are profound implications to being named salt and light. It means that we are to flavor the world. We are to season and transform human activity in such a way that it reveals God in this world. It means we are to help people better see God’s life in theirs. It means we are to enlighten the dark places of the world.

The Christian life is not lived in isolation from or without regard to others. If we do not flavor this world with Christ we are like salt that has lost its saltiness. If we do not illuminate darkness with Christ’s presence we are like light hidden under a basket. We are useless. We are not living as the people Christ knows us to be.

We can say our prayers and sing our praises to God but if they do not govern and guide our actions in this world they are only self serving words that fall deaf on God’s ears. Perhaps we should spend less time speaking the truth about God and more time doing the truth of God. How do we do that truth?

The prophet Isaiah is clear and concrete about how we do God’s truth. We loose the bonds of injustice, we undo the thongs of the yoke, we let the oppressed go free. It means we share our bread with the hungry, we bring the homeless poor into our house, and we do not hide ourselves from each other. It means we don’t point at another in condemnation and we don’t speak evil of another. We satisfy the needs of the afflicted. In short, doing God’s truth means doing what is right, what is Godly.

The meaning, significance, and purpose of our life are found in the life and well being of another. That is what the many volunteers from non-profit organizations have experienced as they collect, pack, and give food to the hungry poor of our towns. They are not, however, just distributing food. They are distributing salt and light.

The meaning, significance, and purpose of our life are found in the life and well being of another. Every time we offer forgiveness, seek reconciliation, or act with compassion we sprinkle salt. Every time we speak a word of hope, work for justice, or do for another what we would have them do of us our light pushes back the darkness.

Much of our world is dark and tasteless. Too many people live a bland existence amongst the shadows. The world and its people need flavor. They need light. Help us to flavour the earth with righteousness and to reflect the light of Your love in a dark world; through Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. Amen.