

**Always Striving to Become Better ~ February 6, 2011**  
**I Corinthians 2:13-16; Matthew 5:13-20; Psalm 112**

Life is accomplished in a series of steps, sometimes large, but most often small, as we work toward different goals. Most often we hope to make life better as we move along and hope that we will become better people in the process.

Paul reminds us that, in all of our striving to have a better life, we need to have some sort of spiritual balance if we are to become all we should be. He tells those who read his Letter to the Corinthians, that the ability to discern the gifts God gives to us is an important part of life. If we understand what our special talent is we can grow it, into a bright light for others. A light we are called to keep glowing and growing.

One of the best ways to ensure that we keep striving to become better people is to put our bright lights out there before others. Jesus reminds us of the responsibility we bear to live life in the manner in which he set before us. We are not to keep this way to ourselves but to share it with others. When we do this we help people learn what it is we have learned, we help share any wisdom we might have garnered as we have lived life. We enable others to learn from our failures and from our successes. This doesn't mean that they always will follow the direction of our successes, but they will have been offered a roadmap based on our faith to direct them.

We bring great value to others and to the world when we reveal how genuine lives based on the teachings of Christ are led. Being the salt of the earth is a great compliment. Jesus told us we are that salt, we give his words flavor and we preserve the teachings we hold so dear by relishing and sharing our saltiness, in the very best sense.

Being genuine persons means that we are not boastful. We do not seek to put ourselves above others. We understand that the lives that follow those of Jesus are the lives that serve others. Being genuine means that we love wastefully all of God's creation, seeking no return or reward for ourselves. It means that we offer true forgiveness when we have been wronged. It means that we find joy in life even though our struggles. Being genuine means that we always find hope in life, in the midst of any and all darkness.

When we seek to lead genuine, salty lives, we discover that we are striving to become better people with each new day. We find that our relationships with those around us and with God are enriched. This is a process of building on the foundations we have laid. It is a process of keeping our lamp lit and shining for all to see.

We are all blessed to discover that even if our lives have gone somewhat astray, we always have another chance to put things right and move forward again furthering the kingdom of God that grows among us.

Amen