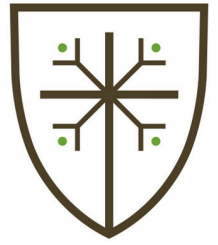


SERMON NOTES



BREAKING INTO OUR
MONOLOGUE
EPIPHANY 2026 SERMON SERIES

February 8, 2026

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Turned Upside Down to Bless"

PREACHER

Rev. Josh Keller

TEXTS

Isaiah 58:1-5

1 Corinthians 2:1-9

Matthew 5:13-20

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you find yourself erring on the side of being more salty (self-righteousness) or being more light (diminishing God's influence in favor of yours)? What are some ways you can practice meekness and poverty in spirit instead?
2. What are some ways you can be visible and different in your day-to-day life?
3. What are some existing challenges to being salt and life in your day-to-day life?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

Josh examined Jesus' words following the Beatitudes in the continuation of our Epiphany sermon series. These words are a call to be the salt and the light.

Salt and Light

To understand the calling of being salt and light, it is important first to define salt and light. Salt's primary function is to preserve against decay. It is different from what it preserves, and that difference staves off rot. Light provides illumination in the dark. Both salt and light are successful when they are oriented towards others. There is no clear, step-by-step guide about how to be the salt and the light, but the broad calling accounts for the different areas of life where God needs his followers to be salt and light. There is, however, a clearer definition of what failing to be salt and the light. When salt is absent, preservation is lost. When light is hidden, the darkness pervades.

Salt Versus Light

In our world of sinful decay and darkness, it is tempting to pit salt and light against one another and ask which is more important. In reality, both are necessary. Also, in our world of sinful decay and darkness, we can err by being either too salty or too bright a light. This imbalance can result in self-righteousness in our distinction from others when acting "too salty," or too much focus on our own influence, but not enough attention on God's influence when being "too light." The remedy is found in the preceding Beatitude passages. "Blessed are those who are poor in spirit" can be understood as an awareness of our imperfections, an acknowledgement of our need for God's perfection, and, ultimately, a cure for a self-righteous attitude. "Blessed are the meek" can be understood as a realization that our impact pales in comparison to God's.

Fulfilled

Jesus calls his followers to be salt and light, yet the calling is not something we as followers fulfill but something Jesus accomplished on the cross. Jesus came to fulfill the full letter of the law through his perfect righteousness—perfect righteousness that he eschews on the cross as his body decays and the world grows dark. He offers this righteousness to us as a gift since that is something we can never fulfill on our own.

Jesus' call is to *be* salt and light rather than to *become* salt and light, emphasizing that the salty distinction and light presence are already available to us. We received these gifts and love through union with Christ in baptism. We can orient this love to those around us and use the differentiated, upside-down perspective from the Beatitudes to be a visible blessing to where God has uniquely placed us.

Josh concluded with the exhortation to become comfortable being visible and different. We can use the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) as our guide for what it means to be different so that we can be distinct wherever God has set us to be a light.