

**Power failures in Kansas City last week inconvenienced a lot of people. Some of them still have no electricity. My parents and three of my siblings finally got theirs back after several days. I told them they should move to Cameron – we had plenty of power up here.**

**Having no electricity made citizens think about things they take for granted. Several people said, “Now I know what it’s like to be poor.” Well, they don’t. They know what it’s like not to have electricity for a few days. They don’t know what it’s like to be poor for years. Others are thanking God for what they have. They realize that everything we have comes from God, and that God expects us to appreciate it.**

**But Jesus tells the disciples today to go beyond appreciation. No one should take our God-given abilities for granted, and yet we often do. At the very least, we should appreciate them. But Jesus expects even more.**

**He tells the disciples they are salt for the earth and light for the world. He expects them to use what God gave them in the way that salt flavors food and light brightens the world.**

**God gives us many gifts: the ability to read and write, to make conversation, to exercise, to cook. And we do a lot of these things to make our own lives better. But Jesus asks something more in this gospel. He asks not just that we be salt and be light, but that we be salt and light for the world. It’s not enough just to use our gifts for ourselves; Jesus wants us to put them to a bigger purpose, to benefit the lives of other people in the world.**

**In many ways, a community like ours already does this. At every mass we pray for people around the world. Local farms produce meat and grain that feed the world. Our schools educate children who will one day lead the world. Our businesses help visitors traveling through these crossroads from all around the world. Even in a community like ours, we do not live in isolation. We serve the world.**

**But there is always more we can do. We can contact those in public office about legislation that feeds the world. We can recycle and conserve energy in ways that share our resources**

**with other people of the world. We can support the missions of the church that bring Christ to the world.**

**At first Jesus' command to be salt for the earth and light for the world sounds outrageous, like it's too much to expect that anyone could have much of an effect on the world. But we can, and we do.**