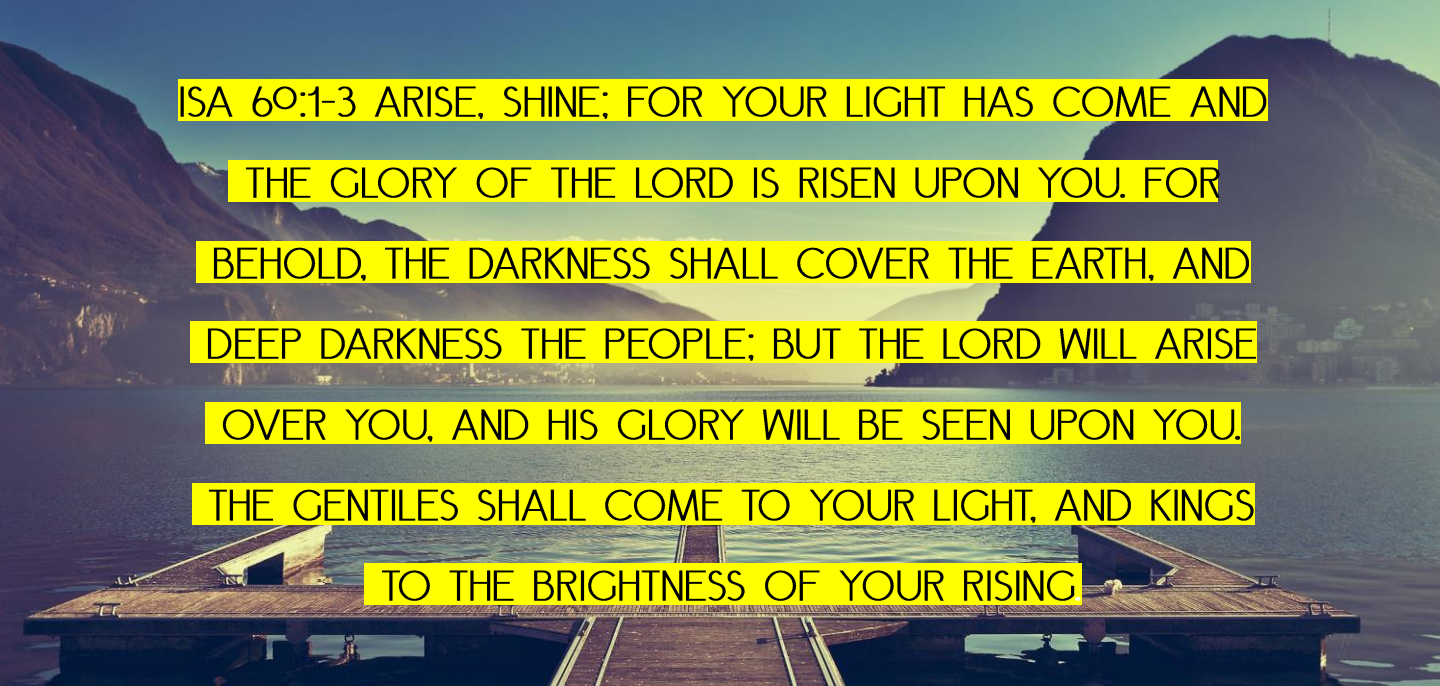


Week 2

Joel 2 Lifestyle

LIGHT
SHINING IN
THE
MIDST
OF
DARKNESS



ISA 60:1-3 ARISE, SHINE: FOR YOUR LIGHT HAS COME AND
THE GLORY OF THE LORD IS RISEN UPON YOU. FOR
BEHOLD, THE DARKNESS SHALL COVER THE EARTH, AND
DEEP DARKNESS THE PEOPLE; BUT THE LORD WILL ARISE
OVER YOU, AND HIS GLORY WILL BE SEEN UPON YOU.
THE GENTILES SHALL COME TO YOUR LIGHT, AND KINGS
TO THE BRIGHTNESS OF YOUR RISING

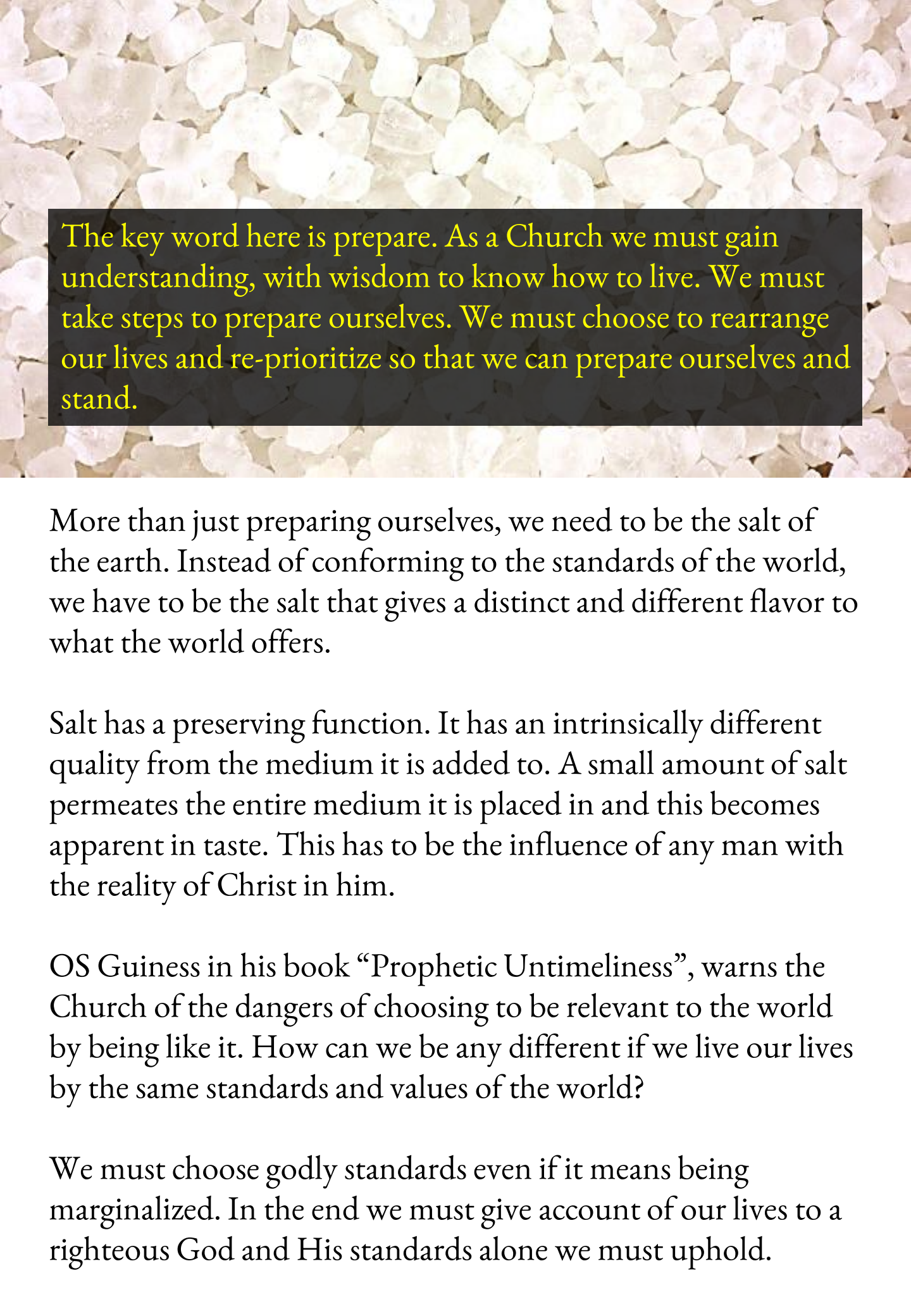
Is the world getting better or is it getting worse?

What does the Bible say?

Isaiah 60 says darkness shall cover the earth. It is not just darkness, but **deep darkness that will cover the people**. In other words, darkness will get darker and darker in the coming years and decades. Things will get worse and worse and will continue right until Jesus returns.

In the same breath of describing the rising darkness, Isaiah says that the Church will arise and shine, and that the glory of the Lord will be seen upon her. In other words, light will get brighter and brighter, if the Church arises and shines. Thus we are heading towards a unique dynamics at the End of the Age where darkness is at its darkest and the Church is at her finest hour!

But there is a condition. The Church can only arise to her finest hour IF she is **prepared**.



The key word here is prepare. As a Church we must gain understanding, with wisdom to know how to live. We must take steps to prepare ourselves. We must choose to rearrange our lives and re-prioritize so that we can prepare ourselves and stand.

More than just preparing ourselves, we need to be the salt of the earth. Instead of conforming to the standards of the world, we have to be the salt that gives a distinct and different flavor to what the world offers.

Salt has a preserving function. It has an intrinsically different quality from the medium it is added to. A small amount of salt permeates the entire medium it is placed in and this becomes apparent in taste. This has to be the influence of any man with the reality of Christ in him.

OS Guinness in his book “Prophetic Untimeliness”, warns the Church of the dangers of choosing to be relevant to the world by being like it. How can we be any different if we live our lives by the same standards and values of the world?

We must choose godly standards even if it means being marginalized. In the end we must give account of our lives to a righteous God and His standards alone we must uphold.

[illegible]

What kind of Church are we today?

1. A **Sleeping Church** – totally unaware of what is happening
2. A **“Street” Church** – following the values and culture of the world
(2 Tim 3:5 having a form of godliness without power)
3. A **“Surrendered” Church** – conceding defeat even without a fight
4. A **Shining Church** – shining brightly for God

"May we be the shining Church,
hearts burning and lives shining
in the midst of the thickest darkness!"

Readings for Week 2

Read Mathew 5:13-16. How can you be the salt of the earth and light to the world? Ask Holy Spirit to show you areas you can grow in to make a difference to this world. Ask God how you can become a truth bearer and a light bearer for this generation.

Prayers for Week 2

Pray Isaiah 60:1-2 for the Church that she will arise to be the salt of the earth and the light to the world. Using Philippians 2:15, pray for God's grace for the Church of Singapore to stand in righteousness even in a wicked and perverse generation.