



Series: Free To ...

Sermon Title: Free to Serve

Date: 8/27/2023

One of the many blessings of Jesus coming to earth was to show us how much we need one another and how much good we can accomplish when we work together for the purposes of Jesus. Being part of a small group helps you practice this and helps you to feel like you matter.

Matthew 5:13-16 revolves around two metaphors – two simple thoughts – that Jesus uses to describe those who follow him. Salt and Light

Big Idea: Serve the way Jesus designed you to.

You and your actions are critical to making Jesus known to our generation.

Serve others, and you will change the world.

The first metaphor Jesus uses is **salt**. One of the best ways to be salt is to serve others. By doing so, you are demonstrating an alternative to selfishness. When you serve others, you build opportunities to share why you are different, why you are kind, why is your vocabulary encouraging? Your salty answer: It's not me; Jesus changed me. That's how you change the world! - Telling how Jesus changed you – how he can change others! If you have been saved by Jesus – you are the salt of the earth. By your very presence – you change the flavor of your communities.

Living out your faith in Jesus, you are the salt of the earth, changing its flavor, melting its coldness, and healing wounds. If we keep living with our faith only internally, then we are not the salt Jesus spoke of – we become worthless to the world. In small groups, you get to practice caring for others who might start as strangers and grow to be friends.

Serve others, and you will be a beacon of salvation

The Second Metaphor Jesus uses: **Light**

Light was as necessary in the ancient world as we think it is today.

We're talking about small wicked oil lamps. Which, when Set up on a stand, spreads light a greater distance in the home. If I put something over it, like a

container – it would not only stop spreading light. It would easily be snuffed out altogether.

Jesus, after speaking about salt, now challenges us to consider: we are the light! Throughout scripture, light represents Knowledge, purity, God, Safety + sight, and light is a metaphor for = salvation.

1Ki 11:36; Psa 27:1; Psa 119:105; Pro 6:23; Ecc 2:13; Isa 8:20; Isa 49:6; Isa 58:8; Isa 60:19-20; Mat 4:16; Mat 5:14; Mat 5:16; Luk 2:32; Luk 11:34; Luk 16:8; Joh 1:4-5; Joh 1:7-9; Joh 3:19-21; Joh 5:35; Joh 8:12; Joh 9:5; Joh 12:35-36; Act 26:18; Eph 5:8; Eph 5:14; Php 2:15; 1Th 5:5; 1Ti 6:16; Jas 1:17; 1Pe 2:9; 2Pe 1:19; 1Jn 1:5; 1Jn 1:7; Rev 21:23

You are the light of the world. This metaphor comes with a warning as well. **DO NOT COVER YOUR LIGHT!** Do not keep Jesus hidden in your life. Joining with others in a small group will help to give you the confidence you need to live out your faith serving non-believers in your life.

May you be challenged by the Holy Spirit to come out of the shadows and let your faith shine for others to see. Your life is one light – one beacon – someone else may see, drawing them to salvation in Jesus.

Satan may tempt you to cover your faith; after all, what can one little light do? What's the power of one candle flame? Consider the darker it is, the further YOUR one candle of faith can be seen by others. When you live your faith in a way that is VISIBLE to other people, the works of God become more and more known.

When we band together, serving others as a group, the light in us that guides people to Jesus becomes even brighter!

It's one of the reasons we encourage people to gather in small groups either of similar interests or similar stages of life. Not to hide away from the people of the world. We do what we do to give even strangers the opportunity to see God in action today. We serve so that others can Visibly SEE the Difference faith in Jesus makes TODAY! NOW!

If you are a believer in Jesus – flavor the world serving others.

If you are a believer in Jesus – shine in the world serving others.

Jesus says your light MUST shine so that OTHERS have the opportunity to give Glory to God.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **What determines whether someone is drawn to the light or runs from it?**
- **What advice would you give to a Christian who is content covering their light?**
- **Describe a time when others noticed that you were salt and light.**
- **If you have been saved by Jesus – you are the salt of the earth. By your very presence – you change the flavor of your communities. Describe a time when your presence impacted the environment around you.**
- **God expects His followers to tell other people about Jesus. What specific traits did he give you that are beneficial when discussing Jesus with someone else?**