



Love "Works"

Matthew 5:13-16; Acts 2:42-47; James 2:14-18, 4:17

OPEN

Describe a time when you served someone or with a project where your motivation was to purely help others, but found yourself being blessed at the same time.

How have you experienced relationships deepening because of serving with others?

DISCUSS

Understanding the context of the Sermon on the Mount gives more weight to the words of Jesus. Jesus' ministry was to proclaim that the Kingdom of God (or heaven) had come (Mat 4:17) and since it had come, there was now healing, new life, and proclamation of this good news (Mat 4:23-25). Jesus then taught what the Kingdom of God was like and how to live in it (Mat 5-7). Then he followed up these words by actually living this good news in a "love works" kind of life (Mat 8-9). Take a moment to skim the subheadings of these chapters and recognize that a Love Works life includes: words we speak, service we give, and changed lives—both for those who are being served as well as those providing loving works of service.

Now that you see the context, read Mat 5:13-16.

- What was the role of salt and light in these ancient cultures?
- Salt and light impacts whatever it touches...that is its nature and identity. What happens if salt stops salting and light stops enlightening?
 - What is the caution (or motivation) for followers of Jesus?
- Jesus bestows a new identity on his followers. He says *You ARE*.
 - Can you think of why this would have been so significant for these followers of Jesus?

- Do you feel the *You ARE* transfer of influence significant for us today? How?
- When Jesus said YOU, “you” was actually WE. Jesus was saying his followers living a love works life in community become salt and light in this world.
 - Read Mat 5:13-16 again and as you read, replace YOU with WE (your group). Does the meaning of the text change or take on new light for you hearing it in the plural?
 - What was the result of the early church living a devoted, love works life together (ref Acts 2:42-47)?

What is the difference between being a nice guy/woman who do good things for others or in the community and doing good deeds that are the salt and light of the kingdom of God?

Reflect this week on how you are being salt and light where God has planted you. Are others seeing God through your loving works? Do you need to take a step forward in your words and service so see more salt and light impacting those around you?

YOUR NEXT STEP...

- Go to the SERVE Center...and select a Love Works project to do with your group or sign up to serve in community others.
- Volunteer in a ministry at Christ Church (also at the SERVE Center and at www.cc-ob.org/servehere).
- Serve kids this summer through our summer programs like VBS and Camp Wonder: www.cc-ob.org/children
- Take a step to lead a small group or help your existing group to branch out and multiply.
- Go the extra step wherever you already are planted to be a Kingdom light (Mat 5:13-16), seasoning your context with the salt of your life and words.