

2023 Theme - Focus On What Matters
Sermon Series - Focus on Your Witness
Sermon Title - You've Got Two Jobs
Sermon Text - Matthew 5:13-16
Sermon Presenter - Pastor Larry

"You didn't want heaven without us, so Jesus, You brought heaven down My sin was great, Your love was greater!" Folks, that's the message we've got to get to others! Jesus doesn't want heaven without you! He wants you to live in heaven someday with Him so bad that He was willing to leave heaven and come down to this old earth with all of its sin, sadness, cruelty, and tragedy! He lived among us, and though He was the Prince of Peace and the King of Kings, He lived in no palace and had no life of ease! And although He had lived a perfect life, He was crucified as a criminal between two criminals. But make no mistake about it, no one took His life, He gave it willingly so that all who would believe in Him could find forgiveness, mercy, love and the presence of God. And you and I have been called by God to take this message to the world by doing two jobs. Let's pray and ask The Holy Spirit to inspire us to take our jobs seriously! Pray.

"Father God I pray with all my heart that I will never lose the passionate desire to share Your good news, Your amazing love, Your promise to forgive, and Your promise to be present with us in our daily lives!! There's so many out there who are always searching, yet never finding! Help me to say something, do something, or be something that will in some way draw others to You! Help me to faithfully lead and teach our church to do the same in their daily lives. Help us to understand the job description you gave to all followers of Christ, to be salt and light. Fill me with Your precious Holy Spirit, as I speak. In Jesus Name, Amen!

Here's a question for us today: "Why in the world would we not want others to have what we have in our relationship with Jesus? Why would we not want to share and show how this relationship has changed our lives and how it could change anyone who is willing to be changed? We should not only be excited to let other people know why we've decided to follow Jesus and why they should follow Jesus, it's our job. You see, when we allow Jesus to be our boss, our guide, our leader, and our Lord, one of the first things He will do is give us a job description! We're going to talk about the details of that today. And by the way, why would a person make the decision to allow Jesus to be their boss on a daily basis in the first place?

It all has to do with Him being our Savior and all that entails! What does it mean when a person uses the religious phraseology, "He saved me?" Someone in the world might be curious as to what Jesus saved you from. Questions like, were you shipwrecked on an island or something? Where you pulled out of the rubble after a storm? What are you talking about, "He saved me?" Well for me, "He saved me" means a lot of things.

He saved me from the penalty and the power of sin!
He saved me from my past!
He saved me from fear of the future!

He saved me from a wasted life!
He saved me from the deception of depression and despair!
He saved me from myself!

So I guess in some ways, you could say that Jesus saved me from a shipwreck. My life was a shipwreck before I met Jesus! Jesus pulled me from the rubble of my sin ravaged life! And here's a beautiful thing, it's not just what He saved me from, it's what He saved me to!

He saved me to live free from the bondage of sin!
He saved me to live for others instead of me, myself and I!
He saved me to live in hope instead of despair!
He saved me to live encouraged, not discouraged!
He saved me to live in truth, not deception!
He saved me to live in forgiveness, not guilt and shame!
He saved me to live with purpose, rather than with aimlessness and meaninglessness!

And all of this has to do with the job description Jesus gave to His followers. It's amazing! Let's read the job description given by Jesus Himself in His sermon on the mount! [Annaliese](#) and [Julianna](#) are going to come up and read this for us...

Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.
Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.
Matthew 5:15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.
Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Thank you girls so much! In these words Jesus gave an overview of the job description for His disciples when He says we are the salt and the light of the earth! I pray that today you will gain a better understanding of your job description as the salt and light of the earth! So what are the details of the job description for a disciple of Jesus Christ? Let's look at...

Detail #1

You are the Salt of the Earth

Matthew 5:13a "You are the salt of the earth..."

When Jesus was in this world He was the spiritual salt of the earth. He infused the flavor of God's truth into what had become a world filled with false and tasteless religion. Salt, during Biblical times served not only as a seasoning for food, but it was a preservative. Jesus was using the analogy of salt because true religion was supposed to flavor life and preserve life with the truth of God! He confronted the religious leaders of His day with the fact that they were not following God's job description. They had ceased to be the salt of the earth. When Jesus was

preparing to leave this world, He let it be known He was leaving the job to His disciples. How do I know this? He told them, "You are the salt of the earth." Also, listen to Jesus' prayer just before His Crucifixion. Edward and Connor are going to come share these words of Jesus with us...

John 17:13 "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.

John 17:14 I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world.

John 17:15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

John 17:16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

John 17:17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 17:18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

You and I have been sent into the world to continue the mission of Jesus! Do you know what Jesus' job description was when He was here on the earth? It's so important and relevant to our daily life. If you don't remember, my friend Jonah will jog your memory...

Luke 19:10 "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Thanks Jonah! You see we are to continue the search and rescue mission of Jesus by being salt in a world that desperately needs the life giving, life preserving qualities of salt. And yes, your physical body does need some sodium to live. According to Harvard University Health "It's needed to transmit nerve impulses, contract and relax muscle fibers (including those in the heart and blood vessels), and maintain a proper fluid balance." Health.harvard.edu

However, we don't need all the extra salt most of us add to our foods. But I'm not here to preach about that because I like salt! My wife used to get on to me about using so much salt, and my grandmother would say, "Don't fuss at him honey, when he gets old like me they won't let him have it!" I'm there! I have to use Potassium Chloride, the salt substitute now, to keep my blood pressure down! But trust me, there's salt in just about everything, so I still get the salt I need! Ok, back to the spiritual metaphor of being the salt of the earth. Detail #2 of our job description...

Detail #2

Stay Salty!

Now let me clarify what I mean by "Stay Salty." Back in the old days, if someone said you were salty, they may have meant that you were a bit rough and gruff or angry. And some younger people now use salty to mean someone is upset about something trivial, or something small. What I'm talking about is staying flavorful in a Christ like way and maintaining your good witness and example to those around you. Jesus said...

Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

Here's something fascinating. The literal translation of verse 13 has a clause that reads... "if the salt should become foolish." Of course Jesus was saying if the salt loses its saltiness, but here's the deal, if the salt He was talking about is the truth and wisdom of God, and we lose that, then we become foolish! Maybe that's why Jesus prayed for the disciples to be sanctified by the truth and said, "Your word is truth!" Here's another fascinating fact. Chemically speaking, salt is sodium chloride. Unless you change the chemical composition of salt it will not lose its saltiness. But you can dilute it to the point that it is no longer discernible for taste or effective as a preservative. Dr. Frank Stagg made this observation:

"The salt taken from the Dead Sea in Jesus' time was a mixture of salt and other matter. Exposed to weather, the salt could be lost, leaving only what had the appearance of salt."

Do you see the implications here for us and our job description to be the salt of the earth? If we allow the things and ways of this world to dilute the truth and wisdom of God in our lives then we will lose our ability to do our job of being the salt of the world. We may have the religious trappings, but a false or fake religion. And here's something to think about. Remember the literal translation of verse 13, "If the salt should become foolish?" Here's the truth. I am foolish to think that I can be the salt of the earth if I'm not living according to the wisdom of God! I don't naturally have the chemical makeup within me to be the spiritual salt of the earth. So I have to depend on Jesus to flow through me. I depend on God's wisdom, His truth to give my life the salinity it needs to make a difference in the world. I guess you could say, I'm just a salt shaker. And as long as I let Jesus fill me up with His Spirit, His principles, His ways, His direction, then I can bring salt to the world. I want to live my life in such a way that I'm sprinkling a little bit of Jesus everywhere I go and with everything I do and say! And I'm not talking about an obnoxious, in your face, look at me I'm so religious, kind of thing! That's not the kind of flavor the world needs, because it's bitter, and overwhelming in a bad way. The world is looking for the real deal! Genuine! Authentic! Oh it can be passionate, but always under the control of The Holy Spirit of Christ, and when He is in control you will act with the same kind of attitude and Spirit as Jesus did. I'm going to ask my buddy Jude to come and tell us what Paul the Apostle had to say about this...

Philippians 2:1 Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, Philippians 2:2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,

Philippians 2:4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Philippians 2:5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Detail #3

You are the Light of the World!

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world..."

Our world is struggling with spiritual darkness! While this struggle is nothing new, it is as important as ever before that we combat the darkness with the light. And how do we do that? Once again we are simply the vessels. It's like we're the flashlights and Jesus is the light shining through us to show the way to a lost and dying world. He's the source of the light, the battery that brings us the charge to shine! In fact, Jesus explained it to Paul when He confronted him on the road to Damascus in a vision. We talked about that last week, how Paul, also known as Saul of Tarsus, was lost in deep spiritual darkness. We hear this story again when Paul shares his testimony with King Agrippa. It's found in Acts 26:11-18

Acts 26:11 Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I even hunted them down in foreign cities.

Acts 26:12 "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.

Acts 26:13 About noon, King Agrippa, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions.

Acts 26:14 We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

Acts 26:15 "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' " 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied.

Acts 26:16 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen and will see of me.

Acts 26:17 I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them

Acts 26:18 to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Acts 26:19 "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.

God gave old Saul a brand new job description and it was to turn people from the dark powers of Satan to the glorious light and power of God so they could receive forgiveness and a place in God's family. Paul told King Agrippa that he was not disobedient to the vision he had received from God!

And this leads us to the next detail in our job description...

Detail #4

Don't hide your light!

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

Matthew 5:15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house

Jesus was using a picture here that makes me want to get my camera and tripod. Just think of an ancient city built in the mountains and the light that would be emanating from the candles and cooking fires. When I first started going to Haiti back in the late eighties, you could see little fires dotted all over the mountain sides. It was beautiful. Here's the point Jesus was making: When the glorious light of Jesus Christ has shone in your heart and changed your life, it's going to be almost impossible to hide that. Even if you're shy, at some point, you'll bubble over and say something about this new relationship you've discovered with Jesus Christ and how it's changed your life. You won't be obnoxious about it, but it will show. In fact, the freedom from darkness you'll discover in the light of Christ will be so powerful that you may find yourself somewhat bold about shining your light, not in a prideful way, but in an enthusiastic way! You won't be able to help yourself! Peter and John once got arrested for shining their light into the life of a crippled beggar and the guy was healed.

The hypocritical religious leaders of the day were so upset. Here's part of the story in Acts 4:16-21...

Acts 4:16 "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it.

Acts 4:17 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

Acts 4:18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges!

Acts 4:20 As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Acts 4:21 After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened.

Jesus said when people light a candle, they put it on a stand so it will give light. It would be foolish and useless to light a candle and then cover it up. It's the same thing with the light of Jesus in your life. A disciple of Christ, a follower of Jesus, should be only too happy to share the light they have received with others. In fact, let's just see what Jesus said next. It's the last part of our job description...

Detail #5

Let your light shine through your life!

Matthew 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Now some people want to play the humility card here so they don't have to do this. They may even quote the Scripture where Jesus said don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing when it comes to giving, and when it comes to praying go into your prayer closet. But you can't take those things out of context. In those instances Jesus was talking about people who were doing their good deeds in order to be seen by others and look super spiritual in a prideful kind of way. They weren't trying to shine the light of Jesus into a dark world, they were basically screaming, "Hey shine the spotlight on me, look how great I am!" Jesus will call you out on that every time! But Jesus said in our job description to let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. There's the difference! Are you shining the light on you to get glory for yourself, or are you shining the light of Jesus into a dark world by the way you live so people can find Jesus and glorify God? The video I'm about to show you showcases what I'm talking about! I hesitated to use this illustration because I'm involved and I do not want to give you the idea that I'm trying to shine a spotlight on myself, but if I'm going to preach that you should do something, then I need to be willing to practice what I preach, wouldn't you agree? So I had this metal scrap in my covered trailer to take to the scrapyard. It had been in my trailer for well over a year, maybe two and I just couldn't seem to find the time to drive it the three miles from my house to the scrapyard! One day I got up and for some reason I just felt like, I've got to take that scrap today! Let me preface the video with this: I believe in a concept called "As you go evangelism!" Remember the great commission Jesus gave us in Matthew 28?

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Matthew 28:20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

In the Greek, the word translated "Go" in verse 19 is a participle phrase that literally says "As you are going!" However, it carries the force of the verb it modifies, which is "make," as in make disciples, so Jesus is telling us to "Go and Make disciples!" But, I don't think we should miss the fact that He is also communicating this: "as you are going about your life, make disciples!" It's a lifestyle! It's not something you just turn on and off! You should be always and ever aware that there are people around you who need Jesus and you should always be looking for ways you can share the love of Jesus with them. I'm not talking about being obnoxious or inconsiderate. I'm talking about letting The Holy Spirit give you wisdom and inspiration to know how and when you can show and share the love of Jesus with those around you. That happened to me at the scrapyard that day and I realized later that the reason it took me so long to take that scrap was the fact that God knew exactly when He needed me to be at that scrapyard. You might be wondering what in the world am I talking about? Let me let someone named Andy Partridge tell you what I'm talking about.

Video Testimony

I talked to Andy this week! He's so fired up about Jesus! Andy is now managing a car wash in Picayune, MS and is very involved in his church, First Baptist Picayune. I deeply appreciate them sharing with us this video testimony that Andy gave to their church! Folks, Jesus wants us to go and make disciples, and one of the most beautiful ways you can do this is to be salt and light as you are going about your daily life! Look at our graphic for this series! As you are going make disciples! And never forget what Isaiah said...

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation...!"

The concept of lifestyle evangelism is seen throughout the New Testament in example and in word. Paul took his new job description to be salt and light seriously and he did so when he stood before kings and judges, and even when he was put in prison! And Paul encouraged other believers to do the same. Listen to what Paul said in his letter to the Colossians...

Colossians 1:9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,

Colossians 1:10 so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Colossians 1:11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience,

Colossians 1:12 and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light.

Colossians 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,

Colossians 1:14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Closing illustration: Some of our children are now going to hand out some really cool plastic light bulbs that Lacey got for us today. The base of the bulb unscrews and opens up the bulb. As the box of bulbs comes to you, please only take one per family so there will be enough to go around! As they are beginning to distribute the bulbs I want to explain to you what we want you to do with these bulbs. There were some pieces of paper on your seats. If you would grab those now and get a pen from the seat back in front of you. Here's what we would like for you to do: think about someone you feel like God would want you to be salt and light to in their lives. Write their names down on that piece of paper and put it in the light bulb. Please set the bulb somewhere in your home where from time to time each family member can see the bulb and be reminded to pray for the name they placed in the bulb! This will also help them be encouraged to be a good witness in the way they live their life around the person they wrote on the paper and placed in the bulb! Let this help you remember that you are to bring the flavor of Jesus into the world by seasoning your life with the ways of Jesus and you're to bring light into their darkness by being the light of Jesus to them!! God bless you. Let's pray!!!