

Panthers:

Do you love good service? Maybe you love to be served at your favorite restaurant, but have you ever thought about why? The answer will compel you to serve others.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus described service that leads to surrender (Matt. 5:13-16). In essence, Jesus said that who we are to *be* determines what we are to *do* which determines where we are to *go*. After completing the Beatitudes which described satisfaction through surrender, like clay in the hands of the potter, Jesus grabbed two more invaluable substances to paint a picture of a disciple—salt and light.

What is a disciple of Christ designed to be? A servant. Jesus said, “*You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world*” (Matt. 5:13-14). His command is not to be salt or to be light. A disciple of Christ already is salt and light, or a servant. Salt and light illustrate the *identity* of a disciple. Because salt doesn’t lose its flavor and light can’t be hidden, Jesus’ command is not to dilute the salt or hide the light. Only a pretender, a false disciple, would do so.

Salt was mined from the ground and renowned as a valuable commodity in ancient Palestine. Wars were fought over salt. In Old Testament times, salt was used to make covenants and served in the sacrificial system when confessing and repenting of sin and worshiping God. Disciples are servants of the New Covenant, those who confess and repent of their sin and worship God.

From cover to cover the Scriptures describe light as a metaphor for spiritual life. Jesus described Himself as the light of the world, noting that when we surrender our hearts and lives to Him, we reflect that light (Jn. 8:12). Salt and light are servants to the masses. Jesus came as a servant (Mk. 10:45). He said that anyone who wants to lead must not lord it over others; rather, he must serve (Lk. 22:25-27). This week, remind yourself, “I am a servant of Christ.”

What is a disciple of Christ designed to do? Serve (Matt. 5:15-16a). Salt brings out flavor. Light illuminates. Servants serve. This is the *initiative* of a disciple. In Christ, our identity and our initiative are inseparable. God designed us to serve, or to do good works (Eph. 2:10). These good works are deeds of love meeting the needs of others. James said that those with authentic faith serve others with deeds of love, and there is no such thing as faith without deeds (James 2:14-17). Paul said that these deeds of love cannot be hidden (1 Tim. 5:25). Jesus did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life for others (Mk. 10:45). This week, don’t look for opportunities to be served. Look for opportunities to serve. Be a need-finder.

Where is a disciple of Christ designed to go? Why does he serve? Surrender (Matt. 5:16b). Jesus said that when we serve people will see our good deeds and praise our Father in heaven. Salt helps taste and causes thirst. Light helps others see. Service helps others surrender. This is the *influence* of a disciple. Service leads the lost to surrender (1 Peter 2:12). Service leads the found to surrender (Heb. 10:24-25). God designed us to use our gifts to serve others, faithfully distributing His grace (1 Peter 4:10-11). This week, look for opportunities to use your gifts in order to lead others to surrender to Christ.

Service leads to surrender because serving illuminates the heart of Christ and draws others to Him. That’s why serving satisfies us more than being served (Acts

20:35). Christ in us can't be diluted or hidden if we have truly surrendered our lives to Him.

Serving God and others,

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