



NEW LIFE: Kingdom Ambassadors

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You ever opened a bag of chips, eaten one single chip, closed the bag and then put it in the pantry? Of course not! Just like Lays challenged us in the 90s, “Betcha can’t eat just one!” Almost all of us don’t stop at just one! They’re too good! I envision that’s how the Father wants us to be for the rest of the world. To be like salt!

As we have learned in this series when we say yes to Jesus, we begin a new life. With that new life, we have new identities. Over the past several weeks we have taken a closer look at some of those new identities. Today let’s look at being a kingdom ambassador. The last thing Jesus tells his disciples before ascending into heaven is, “Therefore go and make new disciples of all nations, baptizing them in name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (*Matthew 29:19*).

We are called to be ambassadors

Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20—and I am paraphrasing here—since we have been reconciled through Christ we are, therefore, called to be ambassadors for the Kingdom.

1. What does it mean for us to be reconciled to Christ? What does that look like in our everyday lives?

When I think of an ambassador I think of someone who leaves their home, their place of comfort, and travels to somewhere new and advocates for and embodies the values of the place from which they came. So, what Paul is telling us, by calling us ambassadors, is that we are called to take the teachings of Christ with us wherever we go and to live them out for others to see.

2. Where can we be ambassadors? What does that look like?

So Paul tells us the “what,” but to learn the “how,” we are going to go to the greatest sermon ever given, the Sermon on the Mount.

Be like salt

In *Matthew 5:13*, Jesus gives us what seems to be a simple instruction. For the audience who was sitting there listening to him, this was an easily understood reference, but for us we may need to take a closer look at it: “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.” Let’s take a look at that first part. Why did he tell us to be the salt of the Earth? Let’s look at what function salt had back when Jesus and the 12 walked the Earth.

The first job salt had was it kept food from spoiling, it **preserved**. To be like salt, Jesus is telling us to preserve his teachings from corruption of the world. If you are wondering what it looks like when the church loses its influence in society listen to some podcasts where church leaders in Canada and Europe talk about what the church is like over there.

3. What teachings are we trying to preserve? How can we preserve the teachings of Jesus in our families, jobs, schools, etc?

The second job salt had was to **heal**. Ancient people would mix salt with things like honey or vinegar to help treat skin ailments, just to give an example. So, when Jesus tells us to be like salt he wants us to play a major role in healing the hurt we see in the world. How do we do that? We serve. Start reading *Matthew 20:20-28*. Let’s focus on Mathew 20:28 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.....”

4. How does serving become healing? How can we serve those around us?

The last job that salt had was that it **enhances** flavor, it makes good food better, it makes it irresistible. Just like with the chip metaphor we read about before; Christ wanted us to be so different, so unusual with our kindness, our love, our compassion, that we would be irresistible to others. Have you ever been around a person who is like that? You want to be around them all of the time because it's like a breath of fresh air.

5. What does this look like in our everyday lives? Take a moment and look up the story of Horatio Safford. How do you get to a place like that in your faith journey to have that response to such tragedy?

There is no substitute for the salt that Jesus provides

Lets take a look at the last part of *Matthew 5:13* when Jesus talks about salt being thrown out if it loses its saltiness, when it's no longer useful. When I was a kid my parents wanted to reduce their sodium consumption so they bought this salt substitute. It was horrific! Anything that stuff touched was best thrown in the trash.

6. What does it look like for a follower of Jesus to lose their saltiness? How do we keep that from happening?