

⇒ You Are the Light of the World!

Matthew 5:14-16

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How are you doing this morning? I see challenges all around us.

There is an unprecedented uncertainty in our world today with the Covid pandemic that has circled our globe. We are restricted in our movements, restricted in where we can go, what we can do, and the way we greet one another. There is fear, division, rioting and outright lawlessness.

I don't think we should panic. But it does make you wonder how close Jesus' return is. ... I don't know when He is coming back, but I do know it is a day closer than yesterday, and we still have a God given mandate to fulfill: **“Go and make disciples of all nations.”** It is clear that our time is limited.

The question is, **“How are we going to fulfill the Great Commission?”**

I. ⇒ In **Matt. 5:14**, Believers are described as **Light**.

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 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. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

a. ⇒ Light contrasts with darkness. (**Flashlight**)

Many people today are in the dark, depressed, without hope, lost. What can light do for us? Light can bring clarity, hope, guidance, show dangers in the road. It keeps us from hopelessness and despair.

A light in the darkness is obvious. **“On a dark night, I am told that a single candle can be seen from six miles away!”** I don't know, but I think you might need binoculars to see it.

But our presence as believers in this world must be like a light shining in a dark place. What happens when a light is turned on?

Darkness disappears!

When we enter in a dark place, **our good deeds will be evident to others.** But remember, the important thing is not for us to stand out for own sake, but that those who see you might **“praise your Father in heaven.”** That they might glorify Him.

⇒ **Phil. 2:14-16** Do everything without complaining or arguing,
15 so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God

without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you
⇒ **shine like stars in the universe** 16 as you hold out the word of
life--in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or
labor for nothing.

b. ⇒ How can we shine? (**Flashlight**)

i. We shine by being like **Jesus**

The deeds of Jesus' disciples are to
shine like a **light** for everyone to see.

⇒ **John 8:12** ... he said, "**I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.**"

John 9:5 "**While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**"

Jesus said He was **the light of the world** and now He is telling us that
we are the light of the world. We are to shine like He shined.

Are you letting your light shine by loving your brothers and sisters?
Jesus said in:

⇒ **John 13:34-35** "**A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.**"

We will be known by our love. Are you sowing seeds of love?

ii. ⇒ Living by the **Spirit**

Believers are to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in their life.

The question is: Can people see the fruit of the Spirit in your life?

⇒ **Gal. 5:22-23** **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.**

I pray that the fruit of the Spirit would shine brightly in each of
our lives. Can people feel your **love**, your **Joy**, and the **peace** that
you have? How are your **patients** when you are under pressure?
Do you show **kindness** to those who don't deserve it?
Or is your **Goodness** seen in the way you live?
Are you **faithful** in all you do?

Do you answer **gently**: Proverbs tells us, “*A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*”

Are you **self-controlled** or does your anger control you?

The fruit of the Spirit will help you to shine brighter as a light and provide you more opportunities to share the gospel.

iii. ➡ **Loving your enemies**

➡ **Luke 6:35** But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.

This is opposite of the world’s way; it is God’s way.
And it is letting your light shine!

iv. ➡ **The best way to let your light shine is by sharing the gospel.**

In 1982, I was studying linguistics at the Wycliffe center in Duncanville, TX. I wanted the opportunity to share the gospel while I was studying. So, on Saturdays, I would invite others from the Wycliffe center to go down to the slum area with me and share the gospel.

One Saturday, no one was available to go with me. I was tired and had a cold coming on. It was starting to snow a little and getting cold and dark, but I went anyway. The first house I came to was not lit well, but they opened the door just a crack and I introduced myself and then they closed it right away.

There were no lights on in the second house.

I then went on to the third house, but I was cold and a little discouraged and ready to go back to the dorm. I knocked on the door and, to my surprise, they opened it widely and said, “Come in. We were waiting for you.” This took me by surprise, and I didn’t know what to think.

A little confused, I went inside the house and they lead me directly into the bedroom where a sick man was lying on the bed. I sat down beside him and asked if it was okay to read John chapter 3 to him. He eagerly agreed and then I explained the Gospel and prayed with him. Praise the Lord, he responded in faith. I continued to follow him up for the next few weeks.

People are watching you. Are you hiding your light? What is keeping you from letting your light shine and being the light of the world by sharing the gospel with those around you? You don't have to be pastor or missionary or have a Bible college degree. Just share what God has done in your life.

⇒ My prayer is **Col. 4:2-6**:

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. 3 And pray for us, too, that God may **open a door for our message**, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. 4 Pray that I may **proclaim it clearly, as I should**. 5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, **seasoned with salt**, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

What sorts of **things can hinder or prevent** you from fulfilling your role as **light** in the world? The passage we studied clearly states that the distinction between the Christian and the world must be safeguarded; so, any choice on our part that **blurs** the distinction between us and the world is a step in the wrong direction. This can happen by adopting the ways of the world for the sake of **comfort** or **convenience** or plain **disobedience to Christ**.

Conclusion:

Our role as **light** in the world can be hindered by any decision to compromise or settle for something that is more convenient or comfortable, rather than what is best and what is pleasing to our Lord. If we deviate from genuine discipleship, the distinctions between ourselves and the rest of the world becomes blurred and our testimony is hindered. Only by being focused on Christ and His commandments will we be **the light of the world**.

Let me challenge you:

How is your light shining today? (**Flashlight**) Are you hiding it under a bushel basket? Are people able to see your light without you even noticing? We must let our light shine if we are going to be like Jesus, honor God with our lives, and **win our world for Christ!**

You are the light of the world. Let your light shine!

What a difference it would make if all of us Christians would allow their **LIGHT** to shine in the world around them. People would see your changed life.

Even one Christian could make a difference in the world around them! Are you willing to be the LIGHT of the world around you?

Consider the places you will be going this week and the things you will do. **What can you do to let your light shine more brightly?** Maybe you will have an opportunity to share the good news with a friend or even a stranger.

Maybe God is calling you into missionary service here or possibly overseas.

⇒ Just think of what God could do if you were a **shining light** for Him! People would see the difference in your life; they would hear the good news of salvation. And you will be investing in eternity!

Changing the world one soul at a time!

Let us pray.