

The Light of the World #4

Matthew 5: 14-16

Tonight we are continuing our study of the *Sermon on the Mount*. This is the longest recorded message we have that our Savior preached. It was given to the disciples, the followers of Jesus, and reveals much practical application to the lives we live.

In our last study we dealt with the words of Jesus that proclaimed we are the salt of the earth. Salt has characteristics that react with other elements. Once applied, salt penetrates and permeates; it produces change in the substance to which it is applied. Light is vastly different than salt, but it too has characteristics that interact with other elements. Just as with salt, it also has the ability to penetrate and permeate the darkness. When light is introduced, darkness has to flee. Darkness and light cannot inhabit the same position. There are times when barriers prevent light from reaching darkness, but once it does, the darkness is gone.

Light is one of the characteristics of our Lord. *God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. Jn.8:12 – Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* As believers we know that we are to be like our Lord. If we are to represent Him as we should, then we must show forth His light. As we continue our study I want to consider the *details* Jesus reveals as we think on: *The Light of the World*.

I. This Light is Personal (14a) – *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.* We have the light within us; we are the channel by which the light is revealed. Every born again believer has a light that needs to shine. Jesus doesn't reveal that we have potential for light; He declares that we are the light of the world! *II Cor.4:6- For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* *Phil.2:15 – That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;* *1 Thes.5:5 – Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.*

- Much of the darkness we face today is a result of Christians who have failed to let their light shine. Would you not agree that society is worse morally today than it was ten years ago? What has happened? It is simple, we have failed in letting our light shine and standing for truth! We have an obligation to this world and our Lord to shine for Him.
- We all have unique opportunities to shine for Jesus. Each of us is around those who need the light of Christ. It is likely that if your light doesn't shine then they will have no light.

- I can let my light shine, but I can't let your light shine. Many times we have an effect on each other. When our light grows dim, then others tend to allow theirs to grow dim also. The truth is the church has failed in providing light to a dark world. There are enough professing Christians to make a difference. There is an urgent need as never before in our day to be a light for Christ!

I. This Light is Personal (14a)

II. This Light is Powerful (14a) – *Ye are the light of the world.* The church is to be the channel of Light to this dark world. The light shines through us, but we are not the source of that Light. We are merely the instrument, the bulb or candle that reveals the light. Jesus is the Light of men.

- We have been given the light of Christ. What a powerful light that is. It is able to conquer the darkness of sin. There is no darkness so dark that light can't conquer. A single match in a dark room will dispel the darkness.
- Do you remember the time that you walked in darkness and the light of Christ opened your eyes that you could see? There is no greater power in all of creation than the power of Christ. His power is revealed through His light.
- There is a world that slips further into the grip of sin each year. They are deceived and desperately need the light of Christ in their lives. He can take a life that is gripped by sin and make it whole again. We have the power of God within us and there is nothing that can hinder us from letting our light shine. This world has tried for thousands of years, but the Light remains.

III. This Light is Projected (14b-15) – *A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. [15] Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.* When light is being produced, it cannot be removed; it can only be covered or shut out. I can flip the switch and turn off the light, but as long as it is on, I can do nothing to remove the light. Light has properties that cause it to radiate all around its source.

- Light moves at an incomprehensible speed of 186,000 miles per second. That speed could circle the earth 7 times in one second. The light of Christ has the same properties. It cannot be contained. When it is revealed it radiates from the source, touching all that it comes in contact with. It has the ability to penetrate the darkness of the heart and illuminate the soul.

- The light of Christ needs to be shared with the world. Light is made to shine rather than to be hidden. Jesus implies that it would be foolish to light a candle and then put it under a bushel basket. We are all filled with light, so why doesn't it find its way out into the world. Sadly we have hidden our light. That is the only possible solution. Jesus has placed it in our hearts; we can't flip the switch and turn it off, so it must be covered or shut out. We have made the conscious decision to hide our light.
- If the light of all Christians were revealed, the entire world would be filled with light. The church is to be that city set upon a hill, revealing light. The world is powerless to stop the light when it is shining. Consider a world so filled with light that when sinners came out of their dark places of hiding that the light immediately exposed them.
- There is little light being shone and plenty of hiding places, even in the open, for sin. We as God's people need to resolve in our hearts to fill the communities around us with the light of Christ! Darkness will have to flee from the light. We can send Satan and his evil influence packing.
- Quickly before we move on, I have always loved the illustration that Jesus used concerning hiding the candle under a bushel, or a basket. In [Luke 8:16](#) He refers to placing the light under a bed. **No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.** What is the great significance of these two illustrations? Those who hide their light under a bushel are often too busy with the cares and labors of this life for their light to shine effectively. Those who put their light under a bed are so consumed with the pleasures and comforts of this life to let their light shine. I don't ever want to be too busy or comfortable to let my light shine for Him!

I. This Light is Personal (14a)

II. This Light is Powerful (14a)

III. This Light is Projected (14b-15)

IV. This Light is Profitable (16) – **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.** Our light is not a light of little value. We are to let our light shine that men may see. There is a lost world that would eternally benefit from His light being revealed.

- The Lord spoke to me as I pondered these verses. I like to get on my "soap box" about the world looking to secular sources for guidance in their lives. Many look to talk show hosts,

horoscopes, palm readers, and psychiatrist for answers to their problems. We can rail on them all we want, but the fact is we have let them down. We have the glorious gospel of Christ, the Word of God that has the answer for all of life's problems, and yet we keep it locked away in our stained glass prisons. There is a world that needs to see the light of Christ. His light serves as a guide for lives.

- Imagine the chaos at airports at night if there were no runway lights. This world lives in darkness with no guidance from the Lord. His light serves as a warning to those who are lost. It is like a lighthouse for those on troubled seas, or a RR crossing warning of impending danger. There is a world that is lost and dying, headed for hell that needs to be warned of the judgment to come.
- His light also brings clarity and reveals truth. There are those who are searching for truth. They are seeking answers to life's questions. The light of Christ can reveal that truth. We have failed to realize what we have been entrusted with. I pray that God will open our eyes to the responsibilities we have and the opportunities we've been given. What this world needs is Jesus. We can share Him with many right around us!

I. This Light is Personal (14a)

II. This Light is Powerful (14a)

III. This Light is Projected (14b-15)

IV. This Light is Profitable (16)

V. This Light is Productive (16) – *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* As men see our light and notice the lives that we live, they are drawn unto the Lord. I remember the day that the light shined in my life. I have never been the same. The light of Christ brought conviction to me as I cried out for salvation.

- Mankind is in need of many things, but his greatest need is salvation. It is our responsibility to share the love of Christ with those who are lost. When men see their need for the Lord through the light of Christ, they will come to Him in salvation.
- You and I have the privilege of being a part of that. If we will only magnify the Lord by letting our lights shine, He will work through us for the good of others and His glory. [John 12:32](#) – *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.*

- Isn't there someone you know who needs the Light in their life? Many are searching for peace in their souls and we can help them find what they need by letting our lights shine.
- As we let our lights shine for Jesus men will see our good works and glorify the Father. That is an interesting thought. The word **works** doesn't emphasize the quality of our works as much as it does their attractiveness, or beautiful appearance. We don't have to be perfect in everything we do as long as we let the light of Jesus shine forth in our lives. Men will notice and it will have an effect.
- A Hindu trader in India once asked a missionary, "***What do you put on your face to make it shine?***" With surprise the man of God answered, "***I don't put anything on it!***" His questioner began to lose patience and said emphatically, "***Yes, you do! All of you who believe in Jesus seem to have it. I've seen it in the towns of Agra and Surat, and even in the city of Bombay.***" Suddenly the Christian understood, and his face glowed even more as he said; "***Now I know what you mean, and I will tell you the secret. It's not something we put on from the outside but something that comes from within. It's the reflection of the light of God in our hearts.***" ¹

We have the power to make a difference. Light will always overcome darkness, but it must be shining to make the difference. Is your light shining for Jesus? Can we honestly sing that little song that the children know so well: This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine?

Do you have that light shining within? If so, it ought to find its way out from time to time. If you don't possess the light of Christ, He desires to save you and give you His light!

¹ http://sermonnotebook.org/new%20testament/Matthew%205_14-16.htm