

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Text: Matthew 5:14-16

INTRODUCTION: Before the last War began, when Hitler began to march, a great European statesmen said, "The lights are going out all over the world." When Jesus made this statment He said in effect, "The lights have gone out. The world is walking in darkness." This reveals the condition of our world. The world is always talking about its enlightenment, etc. It is true that this is a great age, there have been many great advances and increase in knowledge, but the world has never been darker than it is at this hour.

Jesus here has paid the greatest compliment to the Christians that has ever been paid to an individual. He commands the Christian to be what He himslef claimed to be--the Light of the World. When Jesus commanded His followers to be the lights of the world, He demanded nothing less than that they should be like Himself. This reveals our utter difference from the world. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath trasnlated us into the Kingdom of His dear Son." (Col. 1:12,13)

No light at all apart from Xian

*wald = work
Xian = light*

I. THE POWER OF LIGHT

Ye & ye alone = emphatic

"Ye are the light of the world."

Xians are the ones who can give any help to the world

① Jesus is speaking to unimportant peasants, but He says that nobody but them has the power to relieve the darkness of this world. There is no light in this world apart from the light that is provided by Christians. What power belongs to His followers!

② A lamp does not light itself, it receives its light from another source. We get our light from Christ. He is the Sun and we are the reflecting moon that shines in the midnight of this world. Ephesians 5 says that we are "Light in the Lord." We are transmitters of light. This means that the condition of my being light is my keeping unbroken my communion and fellowship with Jesus.

*a city on a hill can't be hid = a true Xian can't be hidden
can't escape notice*

1. A Light is first and foremost meant to be seen.

(1) Who lights a lamp in order to cover it? That would be ridiculous! Why do you suppose Christ lighted us? To have us hidden? No, but to act as a lamp. God has made us partakers of His grace and has given us to be light in the Lord, that we should be light to others.

"There can be no such thing as a secret discipleship, for either the secrecy destroys the discipleship, or the discipleship destroys the secrecy."

secrecy meant to be seen

(2) It is a solemn possibility that our light can be smothered and shrouded.

Responsibility to tell what you know

A man can't get away from his obligation as a Xian

- a. We may bury it under the bushel of inconsistent living.
 - b. We may bury it under the bushel of cowardly and indifferent silence.
- (3) Our light is to shine freely without any hindrance.
This is our main task.

2. A Light is a Guide.

A light is something to make clear the way. So then a Christian must make the way clear to others. There are people longing, to know Christ, find the needs of their hearts, come out of the darkness, but they need a light to show the way.

3. A Light Reveals.

- (1) We are to reveal God, as did Jesus.
- (2) We are to reveal the nature of man.
 - a. By our life as a standard.
 - b. By our witness of the Gospel.

4. A Light is a Symbol of Purity--as over against darkness.

John 3:19; II Cor. 6:14; I John 1--God is light and in Him is no darkness at all--You are light.

5. A Light serves as a Warning Light.

A light is often the warning which tells us to halt when there is danger ahead. It is the duty of the Christian to bring to men the necessary warning of danger ahead.

→ Ill-Moody told story of lower lights failing and ship crashing into rocks. P.P. Bliss heard it and wrote song, "Let the Lower Lights Be burning."

Has our Light gone out?

II. THE PLACE OF THE LIGHT. *Jesus didn't say, "your light of church" " " " world"*

This whole passage hints at a widening circle of illumination.

- 1. In the Home--vs. 15 mentions a house. A disciple who forgets his faith in the home, denies his faith and darkens his light. The Church is no more spiritual than the homes that make up that church.
- 2. In the City--In olden times the watchman would move through the city streets at nightfall, crying, "Hang out your Lights."²
- 3. In the World--This is the sphere of the light, our witness. As long as there is one lost man in the world, he is our responsibility.

III. THE PURPOSE OF THE LIGHT

Verse 16--Here is the motive for Christian living--the lamp in unimportant, the light is everything.

1. Men are to see our Good Works.

*what are they? -
Beauties*

- (1) There are two words for good: one means a thing as good in quality. Another word means that a thing is not only good, but that it is also winsome and beautiful and attractive. That is the word which is used here.
- (2) The good deeds of the Christian must be not only good; they must also be attractive. There is a good which attracts and there is a goodness which repels. There is a charm in the Christian goodness which makes it a lovely thing.

2. Our good works are meant to draw attention to God.

(1) This saying of Jesus is a total prohibition of what someone has called "theatrical goodness." This is not an advertising light; it is an alter aflame.

(2) Here is a practical test: What we do, will it bring glory to God? Will it cause men to glorify God?

*advertising lite -
non-lite to
publicize ⊕*

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