

Shine – 6

Matthew 5:14

“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.”

We cannot deny we live in dark times

No Slide: 2 Timothy 3:1–3; 4:1-4 (NLT)

- Immorality, Cultural decadence, Infanticide, Racism
- Pornography, Unbridled consumerism, Voyeurism, Materialism, Terror, Jealousy
- Spiritual apathy, False prophets, Watered down preaching
- Hypocrisy, Moral relativism, Discord, Division strife
- Intolerance and unbelief

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV)

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

- We have been promised light and we have been empowered to make a stand against darkness

We are called to be light to a world that desperately needs a relationship with God

- Light has some interesting properties and characteristics
- Light always affects and changes the environment it is released into
- When light stands next to darkness, light always wins!

1 Samuel 5:1–5 (NKJV) *The Philistines and the Ark*

5 Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. ² When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon and set it by Dagon.

³ And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and set it in its place again. ⁴ And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands *were* broken off on the threshold; only Dagon's torso was left of it. ⁵ Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon's house tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.

- Because Light always overtakes darkness we are called to obliterate darkness by perpetually shining for God
- Two times the idol is found on the ground
- Soon the idols worshippers began to face all kinds of calamity
- In fact, everywhere that the ark went that wasn't supportive of God's people, calamity occurred
- God intends for His presence to be with His people
- His light can Shine only with people of light

Living as people of light gives our life *Definition and Purpose*

There is an inextinguishable light within every one of us
A light that can penetrate and even eliminate the darkest of places

Light has and will continue to overcome darkness

- No matter our circumstances
- No matter how bleak the future

We are called to stand in the knowledge that we are the light of the world

- We *reflect* the light of God
- We *absorb* the light of His presence
- We *emit* a light that is truly ours
- We are more than a surface reflection of faith

A natural example is photosynthesis

- Plants *absorb* sunlight and give off oxygen
- This supplies nutrients for other light forms

You and I are called to be the ones to seek out...

- The broken
- The forgotten and hurting
- Those who are physically and spiritually impoverished
- The ones imprisoned by the lies of the enemy

We must hold up the eternal image of God

- Light shines through us to bring healing and restoration

We are the light of the world

- Our words of affirmation must replace the words of hatred and pain
- Our actions will help others see that they can walk in newness of life

The body of Christ is like a prism

When the light of God shines through us we shine with all the diversity, complexity and beauty of a rainbow

Since we are the light of the world, we should be able to emulate the unity displayed by a laser the gives it great power

- We are all called to be on the same wavelength
- We must begin unifying our hearts, minds, and lives to God
- When we get on God's wavelength we will experience coherency and direction

We must learn to hate sin the way that He does

- Sin always keeps us from being on the same wavelength as God
- He calls us to join with Him by giving Him our whole life

Ephesians 5:8–14 (NLT)

⁸ For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! ⁹ For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. ¹² It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. ¹³ But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, ¹⁴ for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

The light that Christ gives us is eternal

- It is not subject to the decay that is part of our mortal lives
 - It gives truth
 - It makes us good
- We must seek Him daily and live our lives intentionally
- A living, ongoing sacrifice

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

- The light that God gives can never be obsolete
- There is not a more efficient or powerful version to come
- This power is of God not of us
- It is *supernatural*
- It is all *powerful*
- It is *without beginning or end!*

Because we are the light of the world we are called to pierce the darkness with the light of Christ

We are like *clay jars* that are *broken* to allow His light that's on the inside of us to shine into the lives of others

2 Corinthians 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

Israel has been brutally oppressed by the Midianites for 7 years when they cry out to the Lord in desperation

- The Lord calls Gideon to lead – *God always uses a man!*
- Gideon can hardly believe it
- He has plenty of excuses that God has the wrong guy

Judges 7:2 (NKJV)

² And the LORD said to Gideon, “The people who *are* with you *are* too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’

- God dwindles Gideon’s army down from 32,000 to 300 and tells him to go pick a fight
- God then gives Gideon the plan to defeat the Midianites
- The weapon of choice? – a lamp!
 - Are you kidding me?

Fragile clay jars in the hands of a powerful God are the weapons of victory

Judges 7:16, 20-21 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Then he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man’s hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers.

²⁰ Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, “The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!” ²¹ And every man stood in his place all around the camp; and the whole army ran and cried out and fled.

Just as in Gideon's story we are both the jar and the light

- God is the potter

Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV)

⁸ But now, O LORD, You *are* our Father; We *are* the clay, and You our potter; And all we *are* the work of Your hand.

Jeremiah 18:2–4 (NKJV)

² “Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.” ³ Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel. ⁴ And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he *made it again* into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

- God is still committed to molding you into His image
- He loves you too much to leave you in any state that's less than glorious
- You are not defined by what people say about you
 - But rather by what Jesus did for you!
- You are not defined by your failures
 - But rather His forgiveness!
- You are not defined by what's around you
 - But rather who's within you!

There's something powerful about *starting over*

- What the devil said is finished, God says,
“Wrong! I am just starting over!”
- Brokenness exposes light!

Our faith is not like any other faith

Our faith is *transparent, transcendent, and transformational*

Our faith teaches us to...

- Cross over obstacles
- Shout down walls
- Break through crowds
- Walk on water in the midst of life's storms

Our faith enables us to...

- Survive the fires of life
- Overcome the den of lions
- Silence the serpent and outwit the fox

Our faith empowers us to...

- Break through the barriers of compromise and relativism
- Break out of comfortable Christianity

The church is to bring people to faith, follow a mission, to spread His hope, and to be His light so that others can experience His touch

Ephesians 4:5, 6 (NKJV)

⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

Through the church, God has the ability to heal one generation and touch the next generation

In **Mark chapter 5** Jesus was asked by Jairus, a synagogue leader, to come heal his daughter

While on His way He encounters a woman, who had been bleeding for twelve years

- She had suffered greatly
- Spent her money on doctors, yet only grew worse
- Probably had not felt the touch of another human for quite some time
- Considered ceremonially unclean
- She heard about Jesus and, coming through the crowd, reached out and touched His robe

Mark 5:28–29 (NKJV)

²⁸ For she said, “If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.” ²⁹ Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of the affliction.

The woman with the issue of blood touched Jesus before He touched the little girl

- God is a God of order
- This was no coincidence
- Instead of waiting for God to touch the next generation, today’s generation must reach out and touch Him

God is not done with His church yet!

We are one touch away from an awakening that will heal one generation and save the next

Like the woman with the issue of blood we must “*go through to get to*”

- We must go through a season of storms to get our season of peace
- We must go through a season of want to get our season of plenty
- Sometimes we must go through seasons of darkness to get to the season of light

Matthew 5:13–15 (NASB95)

13 “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. 14 “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

The church is called to be a shining city on a hill

- When a city is built at a higher elevation, it shines through miles of darkness
- It can represent hope to a traveler that the journey is nearing an end
- To a tired family it is the hope that soon their heads will rest on comfortable hotel pillows
- To a hungry traveler it represents a good, hot meal

The light of the city truly demonstrates the hope of the city, the offerings of the city, and the shelter of the city!

Ephesians 3:10–12 (NLT)

¹⁰ God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was his eternal plan, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² Because of Christ and our faith in him,* we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence.

- Christ is the head of the church
- His body is the instrument through which His glory is to be manifested to the world
- The church brings glory to God by revealing His glory to all!
- As individuals, we are called to shine our light
- When we do so in the community of Christ's church, our light combines into an influencing agent
- She becomes an empowered church
- Christ has built and continues to build His Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against her!

2 Corinthians 4:6 (NLT)

⁶ For God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made this light shine in our hearts so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

- Shine!

Colossians 3:3 (NLT)

³ For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God.

- Real People – Real Life – Real God