

# Shine

## Matthew 5:14

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

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
- Regardless of where we are in life or the opportunities and challenges we are facing, we are empowered to let our light shine

It is not a coincidence that the first time the universe heard the uttered words of God it was not...

- “Let there be peace”
- “Let there be love”

The voice of the Sovereign, Divine, Glorious God said...

- “Let there be light”

God had to turn the lights on

- Life requires light
- Faith requires light

We cannot deny we live in dark times  
A time some argue, is the blackest hour

## 2 Timothy 3:1–3 (NLT)

You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. <sup>2</sup> For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. <sup>3</sup> They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good.

- Immorality, Cultural decadence, Infanticide, Racism
- Pornography, Unbridled consumerism, Voyeurism, Materialism
- Terror, Jealousy

## 2 Timothy 4:1–4 (NLT)

I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he comes to set up his Kingdom: <sup>2</sup> Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. <sup>3</sup> For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup> They will reject the truth and chase after myths.

- Spiritual apathy, False prophets, Watered down preaching
- Hypocrisy, Moral relativism, Discord, Division strife
- Intolerance and unbelief

While we cannot deny that our culture is drifting further and further from God there is one thing that remains true

When light stands next to darkness, light always wins!

### Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

- God is calling us to be light in the darkness
- He needs us to speak life into dark places and situations

God’s spirit empowers us to go from existing in the natural to experiencing the supernatural

Our challenge is to remove the “Basket” of apathy, complacency, silence and fear and lay claim to the lampstand of righteousness so that we may shine before men!

- The spirit of Egypt still holds people captive in bondage and fear
- The spirit of Goliath still mocks and intimidates the children of God
- The spirit of Jezebel still makes us hide in caves because of sexual perversion and manipulation
- The spirit of Absalom is still dividing homes, churches and relationships

The most powerful Spirit on planet earth is the Spirit of God  
That Spirit demands to let light shine in the darkness

### John 1:1–5 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

- For every Pharaoh there must be a Moses
- For every Goliath there must be a David
- For every Nebuchadnezzar there must be a Daniel
- For every Jezebel there must be an Elijah
- For every devil that rises up against you, there is a mightier God that rises up for you and in you

### 2 Corinthians 4:7-9, 13 (NLT)

<sup>7</sup> We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. \* This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves. <sup>8</sup> We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. <sup>9</sup> We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed.

<sup>13</sup> But we continue to preach because we have the same kind of faith the psalmist had when he said, “I believed in God, so I spoke.” \*

- “The first thing faith will move is your mouth”  
– Duane VanderKlok
- God needs us to speak “Light” to overcome the darkness

When we think of light, sunlight most often comes to mind

The sun holds over 99% of the solar system's mass

- To replicate its energy you would need to explode
- 100 billion tons of dynamite every second

Sunlight also has restorative power

- Patients residing on the “sunny side” of hospitals need less pain medication than others
- Sunlight produces vitamin D
- Bright light is used as therapy for depression disorders such as seasonal affective disorder – SAD

High intensity light has been shown to boost student performance in Sweden's far north during the deep, midwinter gloom

Sun worship is as old as humankind, known as

- The bestower of light and life to the cosmos
- The unblinking, all-seeing eye
- The guarantor of justice
- The source of all wisdom

Significantly God spoke, “Let there be light” before the sun was created

Demonstrating that He, and not the created object is the true source of light and life

God is the source of “All” light

**Revelation 21:23 (NLT)**

<sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light.

- Light is...
- Generative like the sun
- Reflective like the moon
- And sometimes both
- The earth reflects light and produces the northern lights as a result of the sun's radiation

We reflect God's light and transmit our own light as well

- Our bodies reflect the sun's rays as well as emit some infrared radiation of our own
- The equivalent of 2000 calories a day
- We are not hot enough to radiate visible light but can be detected by night goggles and other light detecting instruments

All of us know that there are times when we are mirror like in our reflection of God's light and life, and other times we are duller than a lump of coal

- The light of God is in the soul of every person
- God wants us placed on a stand for all to see!
- There are things we can do to better reflect that light of life

Visible light is only one aspect of the “Light of the world” that we are called to personify

Light can also make things visible

### Ephesians 5:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

### Berean Study Bible

But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that is illuminated becomes a light itself.

- Are there people or issues that have been forgotten in the shadow of darkness?
- God wants to expose those things and bring clarity
- God loves you too much to leave you in a state of gloominess
- When light exposes areas in our life we can then become a light

Another definition of light:

*“To cause (the face, surroundings, etc.) to brighten, especially with joy, animation, or the like.”*

I wonder how many times in a day do we miss the opportunity to bring the joy of light to the life of another?

- Am I looking for ways to lighten the lives of others?
- Or am I consumed with my own life and the cares and worries that are attached to it?

Light is also synonymous with learning

If we want to be true light, we must...

- Think deeply
- Reason well
- Long to know ourselves well
- Long to know one another
- I long to know God as fully as the light of knowledge will allow

We need the light of learning to suffuse our lives and radiate to others as well

### 1 John 1:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

### 2 Peter 1:5–8 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue **knowledge**, <sup>6</sup> to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, <sup>7</sup> to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

<sup>8</sup> For if these things are yours and abound, *you will be* neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- We live to dispel ignorance and dispel superstition
- Instead of living with the threat of violence in our communities let us have fellowship with one another and love our neighbors

Light is a symbol of hope and protection

- A light house with its beacon to warn nearing ships of the rocks and dangerous shore
- A light or a candle in the window as an ancient symbol of welcome to a weary traveler

Studies show clearly that literal darkness affects human beings, significantly increasing criminal violence in our communities

To be light requires confronting and overcoming darkness

**John 12:46 (NKJV)**

<sup>46</sup>I have come *as* a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

Overcoming darkness sometimes requires willful accountability

- Do I have someone I can confess my weaknesses and addictions to?
- Do I walk away when I feel anger trying to grip me?
- Am I hiding from the truth?
- Do I have relationships that are not glorifying to God?
- Am I compromising my values on a regular basis?
- Have I just excepted the sins and addictions of my family history?

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

Am I willing and bold enough to ask for God's help?

### Philippians 4:6–7 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

- Ask God to break the cycle
- He will be faithful to do it
- Resist, rebel against and reject the grip of sin
- He will allow you to shine in a new way

### Hebrews 12:1 (NKJV)

**12** Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us

- Debt brings darkness into our finances
- Infidelity blots out true intimacy
- Depression shades our emotions
- Unforgiveness divides and weakens our families

We must choose light if we are to be light

- Am I willing to take an inventory of my life?
- Ask God to find the darkness in me and help me confront it?
- Let Christ remove the darkness so that my light can shine?

I can then reflect His hope in the bleakest of places and situations

## 1 John 1:5 (NLT)

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we heard from Jesus\* and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all.

Light is a unique, transforming force

- What would we do without it?
- What will we do with the light God has given us?
- How do we live in the power of God's light to touch darkness, overcome it, and shine brightly in the world?
  - God fills every void
  - Wipes every tear
  - Breaks every chain
  - Washes every sin
  - Heals every heart
  - Delivers every captive

## Acts 17:28 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup> for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

- I am...
  - Saved and not lost
  - Delivered not captive
  - Healed not sick
  - Whole not broken
  - Free not bound
  - Blessed not cursed
  - Accepted not rejected
  - Living and not dead!