

City Set on a Hill

The darkness in which it shines

Christ says that the Christian is like light in a dark world.

1. **The reality** (1 Jn. 1:6; Prov. 4:19; Eph. 4:18). Man is in the dark about God, about His word, the purpose of life. Thinking itself enlightened, the world is so different from God who is Light Himself (1 Jn. 1:5).
2. **The reason**. It is a result of the fall into sin (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 3). Satan, who hated the light, tempted our first parents, and that is how we snuffed out the light and broke the relationship with God, and embraced the darkness of sin. By nature this spiritual darkness is great (Matt. 6:23).
3. **The result**. One of the signs that I am in the dark is that I do not see my misery, Christ's beauty, and do not understand the scriptures. If we stay in the dark, there is a worse darkness to come (Matt. 8:12).

The duty to shine

Christ describes His disciples as the light of the world (vs. 14) and calls them to shine (vs. 16). Their task is to dispel darkness; to bring light into the darkness and hopelessness and sin of the world; to warn like a lighthouse warns ships away from the rock, guiding them where they need to go. The task of Christ's disciples is not to grumble about the darkness, but to expose and shine in the darkness.

Christ's disciples do not have this light of themselves. The Lord Jesus Himself is the Light of the world (Jn. 8:12; Mal. 4:2), who came to people living in darkness (Matt. 4:16). He shines the light of the gospel in sinner's hearts (2 Cor. 4:6), and translates them out of the kingdom of darkness into His marvelous light (Col. 1:12-13; 1 Pet. 2:9).

As a result of union and communion with Christ, they reflect that light as the moon reflects the light of the sun. It means speaking of Jesus, living in communion with Jesus, being like Jesus. The Christian lives different from the world, and manifests a beauty and attractiveness that others are made jealous of you.

The dimming of our light in shining

1. **A Christian is meant to be seen**: at work, in his business, at home, in school. In difficult providences you are to shine (like Daniel in Babylon).
2. **Beware of bushels that cover the light**. There are the bushels of complaining and grumbling (Phil. 2:14-16), bushel of prayerlessness (Jam. 4:2), bushel of worldliness (1 Pet. 2:11; Rom. 12:1), the bushels of corrupt communication, bitterness, gossip, unforgiving spirit (Eph. 4:29-32).
3. **In darkness times, we need more than ever to be set on a hill**.