

Matthew 5:14-16

Introduction

I. "You are the light of the world."

A. What Jesus is telling us about the world.

1. The world lies in _____.
2. We can talk about the darkness in terms of its _____.
 - a. John 3:19 – People loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil.
 - b. Romans 13:12-13 – The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.
 - c. 1 John 2:11 – But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness.
 - d. 1 Thessalonians 5:7 – For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night.
3. In the Bible, darkness is often a metaphor for spiritual _____.
 - a. 1 John 2:11 (cf. Rom. 2:19) – The darkness has blinded his eyes.
 - b. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 – And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
 - c. The world is blinded to the light of the _____.
 - d. The world's inability to see the light of the Gospel comes from its own _____ for the darkness!
 - e. John 3:19-20 – And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

B. What Jesus is telling us about – *us*.

1. Old Testament promise – A light for the nations
 - a. Isaiah 42:6 – I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a **light** for the nations.
 - b. Isaiah 49:6 – It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a **light** for the nations, that my **salvation** may reach to the end of the earth.
2. New Testament fulfillment – in *Jesus Christ*
 - a. Luke 1:76-79 – And you, child... will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of **salvation** to his people in the **forgiveness of their sins**, because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give **light** to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

- b. John 12:36, 46 (cf. 9:4-5) – While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light... I have come into the world as light, *so that* whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.
- c. The purpose of the light is to bring _____ from the darkness.
- d. Light and _____ (cf. Luke 1:79).
 - i. John 1:4 – In [Jesus] was life, and the life [that was in Jesus] was the light of men.
 - ii. 2 Timothy 1:10 – Christ Jesus... abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.
 - iii. John 8:12 – I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

3. New Testament fulfillment – in *us*

- a. We are the light of the world when our lives are a constant living _____ to the world of the salvation, and forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life that is available in Jesus Christ.
- b. Acts 13:46-47 – It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, “I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”

II. “A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

- A. Picture: The lights of a city on a hill at nighttime.
- B. How could an entire city of lights possibly be _____?

III. “Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.”

- A. A lamp under a basket, or...
- B. A lamp on a stand – in a _____ place where it can give light to _____ in the house.

IV. “*In the same way*, let your light shine before others.”

- A. In the same way as *what*?
- B. Our light is to be a beacon that is very obviously and powerfully _____ to the world.

V. “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works.”

- A. We can talk about the light in terms of its distinctive _____.
 - 1. Ephesians 5:9 – The fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true.
 - 2. Jesus summed up the fruit of the light in the beatitudes.

3. Cf. Philippians 2:14-15 – Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.
4. To let our light shine is to live lives that are always pointing to the presence of the _____ and to the reality of His _____.

- B. The ultimate test for whether we're really living out the beatitudes as faithful citizens of the kingdom is to ask this question: How _____ is our righteousness to the world?
 1. We have a _____ to the world. This is the only reason we've been left _____ the world.
 2. John 17:15, 18 – Jesus prayed: “I do not ask that you take them out of the world... As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them *into* the world.”

VI. “...so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

- A. The goal of light is to see people give glory to God as they too come to acknowledge His _____ and His _____ in Jesus Christ.
- B. The goal of *all* our words and deeds is to lay a good foundation for _____ people the gospel.

Conclusion

- A. The light _____ *everyone* (John 1:9), but that is not the same thing as _____ people's eyes so that they no longer walk in the darkness (John 8:12; 2 Cor. 4:3-4).
- B. We remember that the world is blind to the light of the gospel because of its own *love* for the darkness (John 3:19-20).
 1. John 3:19-20 – And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light.
 2. John 12:36-37, 39-40 (cf. 2 Cor. 4:3-4) – While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them. Though he had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in him... Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, “He has *blinded their eyes* and hardened their heart.”
- C. So what's the point of being the light of the world?
 1. Left to ourselves, we would still be just as _____ to the light of the gospel as the rest of the world.
 2. Ephesians 5:7 – For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.
 3. Colossians 1:13 – [God] has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.
 4. 1 Peter 2:9 – But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
 5. 2 Corinthians 4:6 – For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

6. God is a miracle-working God who _____ blind eyes.
7. And this same God has ordained that the only way people will come to see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ is through _____.
- D. “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that *we* should be called the _____ of the _____” (cf. 1 John 3:1).

Teaching our Children

- Q.** In Matthew 5:14, what does Jesus say that we are?
A. Jesus says that we are the light of the world.
- Q.** If the world needs light, what does this tell us about the world?
A. The world is in darkness. The world is blind to the light of the gospel (2 Cor. 4:3-4; I. A. 3. b.).
- Q.** How did the world come to be blind to the light of the Gospel? Who is really at fault?
A. The world became blind to the light of the Gospel because of its own love for the darkness (John 3:19-20; I. A. 3. e.)
- Q.** Review the Old Testament promise of a “light for the nations” (Is. 42:6; 49:6; I. B. 1). How is this promise fulfilled in the New Testament?
A. ~ This promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ! (See John 12:36, 46 & 8:12; I. B. 2)
 ~ This promise is fulfilled in *us*! (Matthew 5:14 & Acts 13:46-47; I. B. 3. b.)
- Q.** Jesus uses two different illustrations to help us think about our light. What are they?
A. Discuss the two images of a city on a hill and a lamp on a stand and how they show us that Jesus wants our “light” to be clearly visible for everyone to see.
- Q.** What is our “light”? How do people see it?
A. Our light becomes visible through our “good works” (review the beatitudes and see Phil. 2:14-15; V. A. C.). We want our righteousness to point people to our King and His wonderful kingdom.
- Q.** Why does God leave the citizens of His kingdom in the world?
A. So that they can be the salt and the light of the world. (See John 17:15, 18; V. B. 2.)
- Q.** What is the goal or purpose of letting our light shine in the world?
A. We want to see other people glorify God by submitting themselves to Him as their King.
 ~ This means that we will also be ready and willing to tell people the Gospel.
 ~ Discuss the principle that the goal of all that we do and say should be to lay a good foundation for telling people the Gospel.
- Q.** Isn’t it amazing that God has chosen to bring people into His kingdom through *our* light? What should this make us want to do?
A. We should want to let our light shine even *more* brightly before others so that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven!!!
- Q.** We are the light of the world. But who is the only one who can open blind eyes so that people will stop walking in darkness and choose to turn to the light?
A. God!

Spend time with your children marveling at God’s amazing grace – that *we* (who used to walk in darkness and who were just as blind as the rest of the world) should actually be called the *light* of the world! (See Scriptures under Conclusion, C.)