

Series: Sermon on the Mount

Lesson: #11

Title: The Light of the World

Scripture: Matthew 5: 14-16

Date: 7-28-2009

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Princeton, NJ

**Matthew 5: 14: Ye are the light of the world.**

The Lord does not say, "Ye ought to be the light of the world" or "Ye will be the light of the world." He says, "Ye are the light of the world." Our Lord's are not a suggestion or a recommendation but this is a statement of fact:

John 8:12: Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Christ Jesus says of his disciples, this is what you are.

Nor does the Lord say, "Ye are A light" but he says, "Ye are THE light of the world." The only light in this world are those in whom Christ the Light has given light. Those without Christ sit in darkness. Paul told the brethren at Philippi that they were:

Philippians 2:15:...in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.

**Matthew 5: 14: Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.**

The light that the believer is can not be hidden. The illustration is simple: We have all travel at night along a dark highway. You see a city on a hill all lit up. There is no way to hide that city. Neither can the light of the believer be hidden. The world sees you, believer. And you can bet the world is watching.

**Matthew 5: 15: Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.**

Neither did Christ give us light for it to be hidden, but to give light. In creation, God expressly declares the purpose for light.

Genesis 1:3: And God said, Let there be light: and there was light...16: And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also. 17: And God set them in the firmament of the heaven To give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good.

Now listen to those three reasons

- 1) To give light upon the earth,
- 2) To rule over the day and over the night,
- 3) and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that *it was* good.

In the Sun which shines in the sky, God shows us who Christ is: Christ the Light is the Sun of righteousness who gives light upon the earth; Christ the Light rules the day and the night; Christ the Light divides the light from the darkness. Those who he as made light give light upon the earth. The believer is a lesser light who rules in the midst of the night of this sin-dark world, and dividing the light from the darkness.

This is what light does. This is the purpose for which Christ came into this earth and it is the purpose for which Christ gives light to his people.

### THE MASTERS INSTRUCTION

**Matthew 5: 16: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

**Proposition:** The good works which the Lord Jesus Christ speaks of consists of two things: our words and our walk. We must always speak the gospel of Christ Jesus and walk in a manner which adorns the doctrine we preach.

One, because most hate this gospel they will try to find sin in you to discredit you so they can discredit Christ. Secondly, because the Lord will use helpless wretches, in whom his grace shines forth, to draw in his elect to hear this gospel.

**Illustration** The apostle Paul was such a wicked man before. But afterward he guarded his conduct because he was constrained by a desire for Christ to be glorified. The Lord worked this in Paul so that folks couldn't help but see that this is God's grace at work and nothing else.

### **I. CONSIDER THE MASTER HIMSELF**

The Lord Jesus Christ spoke the truth with profound clarity. And our Lord not only walked in sinless perfection but he is sinless perfection. This world of darkness hated him for righteousness sake. But it was through his gospel and through the wonderful works of his grace that sinners are given the light of life.

First, let's consider what our Lord spoke. Here is an example of our Lord's gospel. Notice that his message was the same whether in the midst of brethren or in the midst of religious men who accused him of being against the law.

John 6:35: And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

John 8:58: Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

John 10: 7: Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8: All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9: I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

John 10: 11: I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

John 10:36: Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

John 11:25: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

John 13: 13: Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.

John 14: 6: Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 14: 10: Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

John 15: 5: I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 8:12: Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Secondly, let's consider our Master's walk. The reason we must always be on guard concerning our walk is because men who trust in themselves hate the gospel of Christ and will try every means possible to discredit you so they do not have to hear it. They constantly attempted to use the Lord's own law to accuse him of breaking it.

Matthew 22: 15: Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk. 16: And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men. 17: Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? 18: But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?...[then] 23: The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, [a question about the resurrection]...29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. 30: For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31: But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, 32: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. 33: And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine. [then again] 34: But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. 35: Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying, 36: Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

Our Lord answered this last question but then he silenced them with a question of his own: here is how Light silences darkness:

Matthew 22: 41: While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 42: Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The Son* of David. 43: He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, 44: The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? 45: If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? 46: And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*.

Make sure you understand the difference between conducting yourself in a manner that men MAY SEE your good works and TO BE SEEN of men. The Lord exposed their religious works for what they truly were. The Lord said, Do not do after the works of the vainly religious men--

Matthew 23: 5: But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, 6: And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, 7: And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.... 24: *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. 25: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. 26: *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. 27: Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees,

hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. 28: Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

What is this difference between light and darkness? Why do men hate the light and seek to speak evil of those who are light? The Lord himself answers in two different places:

John 15: 22: If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. 23: He that hateth me hateth my Father also. 24: If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. 25: But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

John 3: 19: And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20: For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21: But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

## II. CONCERNING *OUR* SPEECH AND *OUR* WALK

Let your light so shine that men may see your good works, and glorify your Father. Manifest that your deeds are wrought in God.

First, here is what our Lord says to you and me concerning our speech:

Matthew 10: 27: What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops. 28: And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

The Lord Jesus Christ uses those whom he has given light for the purpose of giving light to others. If we attempt to hide it, we deny Christ and the purpose for which he gives light. This light can not be hidden, it must not be hidden nor diminished in any way.

2 Corinthians 4: 1: Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; 2: But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3: But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. 5: For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7: But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Secondly, let's consider our walk. You and I can not do righteousness. We can not be holy as God is holy except in Christ Jesus our holiness. But we follow after Christ our Holiness. He has left us an example to follow after and we do so simply because we are constrained by his love for us in the heart. We are careful in our walk giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not blamed (2 Cor 6: 3.) These things are common descency and honesty in our dealings with one another and those in this world.

- Read I Peter 2: 11-25; I Peter 3: 8-18; I Peter 5: 1-11