

A City of Light

Dr. Glenn Robertson

Matt. 5:14-16

A world of darkness can be oppressive. We who have life in Jesus are to reveal his life around us. When believers shine the light of Christ together, we become a city of light that cannot be hidden. We become a powerful force of God's presence, even in a world that opposes God.

Matthew 5:14-16 NIVO

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Last week I said that our theme for this year will be that we are to be light to the darkness. Specifically, we are to focus on two ideas:

2019 Be Light to the Darkness

1. Reduce our debt so we will have more money to fund ministry.
2. Be a light to our world by sharing Jesus with our world.

Jesus said we are the light of the world. He spoke this to his disciples. Those who are followers of Jesus Christ bear light to the lost and dark world. The world is dark because their hearts are closed to God.

Jesus said, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp just to cover it with a bowl. Instead, they raise the lamp up on a lamp stand.

1. If you are saved, you are light.

Jesus said you are the light of the world. If you are born again, you are a new living creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). What you do with that light is the question we must raise.

Jesus said that no one lights a lamp just to place a bowl over it. Instead, the lamp is placed on a stand so its light can fill the room. We are tempted to hide the light within us.

Light as Purity

Last week I mentioned that we can make our light impure, and then it will no longer shine brightly. If we become like the world, so we can be accepted by the world, then we hide our light.

We might also hide our light by refusing to speak truth to our world that resists God. We must not cave into the pressure of fear to hold back our witness of Christ or do good works in his name. Fear of oppression. Fear of rejection. Fear we might not be popular, respectable. We might be shamed by the majority.

Light as Witness

We must let our light shine before others as a witness. The light in us is the life of God living in us. We must allow people to know about this life.

This does not call for us to be obnoxious or insensitive, judgmental, or crude to those who are in darkness. Rather, we must love all people and witness to the truth of God in when they offend our sensibilities.

Light as Service

Jesus also said we are to shine our light before men by allowing them to see our good deeds. Jesus did good deeds because He had the life of the Father in Him. If we have the life of the Father in us, we should be compelled to do good deeds as well.

One way we can do good deeds is by service. Our church has many opportunities for you to join into service. Our ministry fair is out here to open your eyes so you can see places where you can serve. Get involved and let your light shine.

2. A church of light becomes a City of Light.

When the body of believers are together as light-bearers, then we become a city of light. Light attracts those who are wearied of the darkness. Like moths that fly into the house at night, God can attract lost people to His kingdom by our light.

Multiplication of Light

Each of us by ourselves is but a single light. Yet, when we come together, all of our light begins to multiply. We become bundled light.

LED lights have become the new norm for light. Often, to increase brightness, LED's are bundled together. More candles, more candlelight. More members serving God together, more light from their service.

The greatness of light of a church is found in its spiritual life, not carnal efforts. It comes from the collection of service, not from trickery or gimmickry to draw attention to this place as being a cool place.

Real light, real impact.

Remember, I said last week that the light in us is real. It is not merely a metaphor. The spiritual realm recognizes our light and it affects others. This is true of the individual, it is also and more true of the collective body. We truly become a city of light.

3. A City of Light requires many services.

A city requires many services. Sewer, drainage, water, electricity, police, fire departments, on and on. All are needed to keep a city running and safe. A ghost town on the other hand, doesn't need those services.

A city and a ghost town both have spiritual implications, but the latter has little, if any, activity.

So, also in the same way, a city of light requires many light-bearers to help run its many services. An active church requires active service by its members.

Ministry Fair – If you have the gift of ... service, then serve. Rom. 12:6-7

The Ministry Fair in our halls represents many of the services our church needs in order to be a City of Light. Not all of the services are presented. The ministries which are presented are there to encourage you to ask the Holy Spirit where you need to be engaged in ministry.

The Holy Spirit has gifted the church with the people and gifts it needs for ministry. However, if some have gifts but do not serve, many of those services are lacking. A few people have to work more jobs because some of the members do not want to engage. This breaks down the City of Light as a the few get more stressed and the ministries suffer.

So we have placed these ministries around the halls so you will have to notice them. It is easy to come to the service and slip out the door. Jesus said you are light. Let your light shine. You must get involved.

Go to the ministry tables and ask, Where can I serve.