

“For Ye are the Light of the World”

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction: Matt. 5:14-16

A. Jesus called His disciples “the light of the world.”

1. They were common folk, not well educated or well known, not political, religious, or military leaders or affluent businessmen
2. They were people taken from among the people to illuminate the people
3. Those who follow Jesus are the light of the world - 1Cor. 1:18-25

B. What does Jesus mean?

1. What does it mean to be the light of the world?
2. Who constitutes the light of the world?
3. Where is the light of the world to shine?
4. Why must the light of the world shine?

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD?

A. Light is essential for physical life.

1. God created light before plants or animals because neither could survive for very long without it.
 - a. Plants must have light for photosynthesis in order to grow and produce food and oxygen
 - b. Animals depend on plant life for food and oxygen; without plants, all animals would eventually die
 - c. Animals depend on light for sight and survival

B. Light is critical for spiritual and eternal life.

1. God is the light which gives spiritual life. Without God, not only is there no physical life, but there can be no spiritual and eternal life
2. 1John 1:5; Rev. 22:5

C. While in this world, Jesus was the spiritual light.

1. John 1:4-5, 14, 8:12, 9:5
2. We have been called into His light - 1Peter 2:9

II. WHO CONSTITUTES THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD?

A. Every Christian is in Christ - Gal. 3:26-27

1. The light is in Christ; therefore, everyone who is in Christ is in the light
2. Matt. 5:14; Phil. 2:14-15
3. We are transformed by the light in Christ - Rom. 12:2; 2Cor. 5:15, 17

B. The evil are not only out of the light, but are also afraid of the light

1. John 3:20-21
2. All Christians are lights, not just preachers and elders

III. WHERE IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD TO SHINE?

A. The light must not be hidden - Matt. 5:15-16

1. The lamp shines where it is placed; it seldom gets to choose where it will shine. We sing hymns that express this principle

2. "This Little Light of Mine", "Brighten The Corner Where You Are", "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning"
- B. The purpose of the lamp is to provide light for all who are near, not just select individuals or those we think might like the light; it is for all
 1. This also forbids Christians from hiding their light because of a misguided, over-developed, or erring sense of humility
 2. When Christians hide their light, they hide God from the eyes of the world and make Jesus appear inept.
- C. The light must shine where there is darkness.
 1. Often professed Christians only shine their light in the church building
 2. The purpose of the light is to dispel darkness - John 12:46
 3. The darkness will object to being dispelled - John 3:20
- D. The darkness does not have the power to dispel the light - John 1:5
 1. The best way to resist the darkness is to expose it - Eph. 5:8-13

IV. WHY MUST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD SHINE?

- A. Our shining as lights in the world is essential to God's plan to save the world.
 1. While on earth, Jesus was the light, but when He returned to Heaven, He left us behind to shine in His place.
 2. Christ re-created us; when we shine as lights in the world, we reflect His transformation of our lives - 1John 1:6-7, 2:6; Eph. 2:10
- B. We shine to glorify God, not ourselves
 1. "Glorify" - doxazo: to make glorious, adorn with luster, clothe with splendor; honor, magnify (Strong's)
 2. Matt. 23:5-7, 6:2-5, 16, 5:14-16