

How to be the light in a dark world

We're in a tough period in our culture's history - worldwide. With the global pandemic, job losses and economic decline, racial protests, political contentions, churches not being able to gather normally, travel restrictions and so on., everyone agrees - ministry outreaches can be complicated and limited. However, God still expects for us as believers to keep shining our light in this dark world.

Let us look at what God's Word says regarding this subject matter in Matthew 5:13-16 – (KJV)

¹³ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

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

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.

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

Let us look at this same Scripture in Message Translation

Matthew 5:13-16 MSG

13 “Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You’ve lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.

14-16 “Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, your generous Father in heaven.

Jesus told His followers, “You are the light of the world” ([Matthew 5:14](#)). “The Lord is my light” ([Psalm 27:1](#)).

If we are to be the light that shines in a dark world, we have to understand our power source.

John 15:1-8 (KJV)

15 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

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.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Jesus said in [John 8:12](#). “Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life”. [Isaiah 60:20](#) says; “The LORD will be your everlasting light.

Ladies and gentlemen, our words, our actions, and our values should be impacted by the way Jesus lived His life on the earth; Just like stars in the darkest of night skies, we can shine in a world that seems to be filled with more darkness than light.

Ephesians 4:17-24 - New Century Bible (NCV)

17 In the Lord’s name, I tell you this. Do not continue living like those who do not believe. Their thoughts are worth nothing. **18** They do not understand, and they know nothing, because they refuse to listen. So they cannot have the life that God gives. **19** They have lost all feeling of shame, and they use their lives for doing evil. They continually want to do all kinds of evil. **20** But what you learned in Christ was not like this. **21** I know that you heard about him, and you are in him, so you were taught the truth that is in Jesus. **22** You were taught to leave your old self—to stop living the evil way you lived before. That old self becomes worse, because people are fooled by the evil things they want to do. **23** But you were taught to be made new in your hearts, **24** to become a new person. That new person is made to be like God—made to be truly good and holy.

Galatians 5:13-15, 25-26 NLT

13 For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don’t use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve

one another in love. 14 For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another.

25 Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. 26 Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.

1 Peter 1:22-23 NLT

22 You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.

23 For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God.

God expects us to bring hope and life to those around us.

Isaiah 61:1 (NLT)

61 The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released, and prisoners will be freed.

Let us look at the three main ways we can let our light shine in a dark world

1. **Recognize the Open Doors.** Every day you have an opportunity to be a light in someone's life. As a believer, look for these opportunities especially in your career.

Remember what Jesus said to His disciples:

John 13:34-35 - "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another"

We display the light of Christ to a hurting and broken world most clearly when we love people the way Jesus loved us. How did Jesus love us? He moved toward us when we were far from Him. He didn't let our sin, our brokenness, or our differences get in the way but forgave us freely. He sacrificially gave His life that we might join the family of God.

2. **Act in the moments of opportunity God represents to you.** I realize some of these opportunities may only present themselves once. What are you doing with opportunities that God brings to you to witness the Gospel?

James, the brother of Christ, nails this issue in his epistle in **James 2:8** “**If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers’**”

The way of Jesus is the path of renewal and restoration for our entire culture. This is what it means to be a light in the dark world. God expects us to draw people to Christ.

3. **Specifically point those people that God’s brings in your life to Jesus.** I am not saying, point them to your church – NO, point them to Jesus Christ who is our Lord and savior. I think this is the most challenging part when it comes to living this out

We sometimes struggle with this, don’t we? Our fears, our pride, our “rights,” or our selfishness gets in the way. It is easy to love the people who look like us, think like us, and talk like us. But what about those who look, think, and talk differently than us?

Ephesians 5:15-17 NIV

[15] Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. [17] Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the Lord’s will is.

2 Corinthians 5:14-17, 20-21 NLT

14 Either way, Christ’s love controls us. [b] Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. 15 He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

16 So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! 17 This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

20 So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, “Come back to God!” 21 For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ