

Sermon on the Mount

Lesson #4

“Kingdom Purpose” Part II

Matthew 5:14-16

Scripture:

Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, " All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 " Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Introduction:

Do you remember your first vacation? Our parents decided to take us to Colorado to look at the beautiful mountains.

We went to Durango and road the train to Silverton, we went up Pikes Peak, stopped by the royal gorge and found ourselves at the Garden of the God's. Have you been there?

I remember thinking as a young boy that I could push one of those rocks over.

Then we went to the Cave of the Winds. I had never been in a cave before and was both excited and apprehensive about it, but we paid our fees and were lead off in a group down into the belly of the earth.

There we learned what Stalactites were (hang from ceiling) and what Stalagmites were (come up from the ground). We looked at the natural beauty and even the colors in the rocks. About the middle of the tour when we had walked down what seemed like a mile of steps, the tour guide stopped and told us that without light it was perfectly dark down here. Then they proceeded to tell us they would turn the lights off and we were to see if we could see our hands in front of our faces.

When the lights were turned out. I could absolutely see nothing. I had never been in total complete darkness before. The guides left the lights off for much longer than was necessary to make the point and I was terrified. I realized that I could never find my way out of that place if those guides didn't turn the lights on. I felt hopeless and lost.

I was never so glad to see the light of day as we came up the final steps.

Transitional Statement:

Church Satan has lured many people into his cave of sin, promising a grand old time. Then he turned the lights off on them. The world is stranded and helpless in the darkness of sin with no hope. They need our help to escape.

I. Jesus begins by saying: *"You are the light of the world..."* Matthew 5:14

A. First of all, we as followers of Christ need to have some understanding of spiritual darkness.

1. The first darkness mentioned in the bible gives us some real insight into spiritual darkness. Genesis chapter 1 tells us that in the beginning the earth was found to be formless and void while in darkness.

a. The Hebrew word for "Formless" has to do with.... waste, desolation and worthlessness

b. And the word "Void" basically means empty

c. And such it is with any person who the light of God does not shine upon.

2. Now, we have all been lost in the darkness of the cave of sin before....

a. Romans 3:23 *"...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"*

1) There we were separated from God by sin Isa 59:1-2

2) We have all been blinded by the darkness 1 John 2:11

3) Hopelessly lost....and in the need of help.

b. But the light of God, by his great love and mercy, has delivered us

3. But shall we run away from the cave of sin with such force and determination that we forget to help others out of it?

a. Shall we simply conclude that they are on their own.

b. Shall we offer a great number of prayers on their behalf while withholding all effort.

4. You see, left alone, those in darkness will suffer for eternity in what God refers to as outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth ...Matthew 25:30

a. Left alone.....2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 says when the Lord comes again God will:

"8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,..."

B. It is to this end that our Lord tells us that we are the light of the world.

1. In John 8:12 Jesus says that He is the light of the world.

a. So here when He tells His disciples that they are to be the lights of the world.... i.e. He is telling them that they are to be extensions of Him.

b. Because the light of Jesus is really all that will help anyone out of darkness of sin.

c. I can't help but to think of walking in the light 1 John 1:7

1) Help others walk in it.

2. Paul puts it this way to the Philippian church.....Philippians 2:15

15 "... prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,"

3. Jesus wants us to reflect His light in our walk upon this earth.

a. Helping folks out of the cave of sin and darkness:

1) First of all by caring about others more than ourselves.

a) Phil 2:4

2) Then by having compassion for the lost.

a) Like the good Samaritan... willing to stop and help
....Luke 10:33

b) Like a Christ who was willing to pay someone else's penalty

c) Like a God who goes to incredible measures to give everyone a chance for salvation.

3) By sharing the truth with them.... John 8:32

a) That which is false binds in darkness

4) And by exposing sin Eph 5:11

a) This might even cause conflict....something our society says no to.

3. You see godly light gives people in darkness direction

- a. When we share God's word with someone
 - 1) They have been given a lamp for their path Psalms 119:105
 - b. Godly light peels away the chaos of sin that has darkened many a heart.
 - c. Godly light brings worth and fills lives with real meaning.
4. You know, there is nothing quite as useless as a flash light that doesn't or won't work...
- a. I have a flash light at home that doesn't work....I have checked both the batteries and the bulb.
 - 1) It just won't work
 - b. What if I asked the flashlight why it won't work and it answered me.
 - I don't feel like turning on.
 - I'm tired of giving light.
 - Or light is not really my gift.
 - Or you should get a candle.

*It's just trash right!
5. A great example of whether to help folks or not might be taken from many American slaves of the 1800's. Slaves who successfully escaped the horrific cruelty of slavery by running off to Canada. Many of them once in safety found themselves compelled to return and even at the risk of their own freedomhelp others escape also.
6. Here I take pause to wonder how God would measure our efforts in being the lights of the world.

II. Jesus cont. in verse 14 by saying "...A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;"

- A. When we lived in Inola, Oklahoma we lived on Carpenter's Hill. We had a great view of the town and surrounding areas below. My grandmother who lived in a small neighborhood below referred to Carpenter's Hill as "Snob Hill"....She thought we were all up there just looking down on her.
- B. Church the truth is that God has elevated us in this life...not so that we would look down at others, not so that we would feel secure in our safe havens, but so that those in darkness would be inclined to turn their heads in a heavenly direction...a direction in which they might come to know their maker.
- C. Some cities try to hide themselves.
 - 1. Henrietta Oklahoma is that way. You wouldn't know it was there unless you happened to get off on the right exit.
 - a. You knowout of sight out of mind.

2. In Colorado I noticed some Wal-Mart stores that looked different on the outside. It seems that some towns have ordinances that all buildings must not stand out but to every extent possible blend in with the surrounding country.

a. Some cities just try to blend in.

3. But Church, God has in His infinite wisdom has created a people who would stand out and be seen by all the people of this earth.

a. The very definition of the word church....is the called out.

b. And 1 Peter 2:9 reads this way:

9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;"

3. When Jesus says this city "cannot" be hidden....in the Greek this word "*cannot*" means the absolute negative of.

a. So it seems that Jesus is saying to make the city even brighter and more noticeable.

b. So I stop to wonder why we spend so much time trying to blend in.

III. 15 "...nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house."

A. Here the main proposition of thought seems to be that we are not to hog the light.

1. If I take a lamp and put it under a basket, it will only give a small glow for those closet to it.

B. My boys really like to eat, and now that they are bigger I find myself going to the cabinet to get my favorite snack? Well, you know the story.... it's all gone...and not only that they left the empty wrapper to add insult to injury.

1. So for a while I adopted a new idea....in an attempt to take care of my own wants and desires, I begin to get snacks that no one liked thinking that I would suffer this injustice so I could have something.....But, you know what happened don't you?...Yes they learned to choke them down also.

2. The only thing that remotely works in my house is to hide snacks. So if you have a snack problem in your home you should come and talk to the master of snack hiding....my wife.

C. But Church, the point here is that God has given plenty of light for all of us.

1. Here we can always be assured that we will have an eternal supply of light to replenish what we give away.
 - a. Like the widows oil in 2 Kings 4:2
2. Jesus is telling us to share the light.
 - a. Help others out of darkness

IV. 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

A. When I was a kid I liked to take a mirror outside and catch some sun rays and blind my sisters....With my own boys I still can't resist the urge....it just comes over me and I can't help it.

- 1) Many times in this old world people end up using what is good for bad reasons.
 - a. Can you imagine using the light of Jesus to promote selfishness?
 - b. Can you imagine using the light of Jesus to promote position?
 - c. What about using the light of our Lord to hurt others?
- 2) Here Jesus is reminding us that the light shines from us because He is in us
 - a. And it is all toward one end and one end only....glorifying God.

B. Being light bearers comes with responsibility.

- 1) We must faithfully hold the light of Jesus in our lives.
- 2) We must examine every thought and motive for each decision we make....lest our light become dim.
 - a. Lest we rob the rightful glory of God.

Conclusion:

Isa 9:2 prophesies how those living in the land darkness in Zebulun and Naphtali will see a great light and Matthew 4:16 tells us that light was to be Jesus.

It seems that Jesus simply wants to say..... How can those in darkness find their way out the cave of sin without our help.

Who is your light glorifying?