

THE RADIANT LIFE
Matt. 5:14-16

When Christ came into this world to save sinners, He said, "I am the light of the world." When He would give us a conception of Heaven, He said it was a place of light. In the strictest sense Christ is the light of the world. As the moon and the stars reflect the light of the Sun, so the followers of Christ reflect His light; and therefore He said, "Ye are the light of the world." Thus He couples our names with His own in a way that is perfectly amazing. But along with this fact, He said, "Let your light shine." This duty enjoined ~~is~~ imperative, and every Christian should follow His command and live a radiant life.

I. The Meaning of Living a Radiant Life.

Our Lord is light in Himself. He is the true light that lighteth every Christian. If we know Jesus, we are light. We can shine. That is our business. That is what we are lighted for. No lamp is ever lighted just for its own benefit. It is lighted in order to give light. Likewise no man is saved simply and solely for himself. He is saved in order that he may give light. Every one of us should be a lamp to shine out into the darkness of the world. Men are in the darkness of ignorance, error, unbelief, inconsideration and vice.

This figure of the lamp is taken from a lowly cottage life. There was a projecting stone in the wall on which the lamp was set. The house consisted of a single room so that the tiny light sufficed for all. It was not put under the bushel, which was an earthen-ware grain measure, except to put it out or to hide it. Some things are necessary if a lamp is to give light properly:

1. It must be lighted.

It must be lighted by another, it cannot light itself any more than it can make itself. Only God can light us. Teachers can polish the vessel.

2. It must be set where it may be seen.

It must not be set under a bushel but in a prominent place so that it may shine for a useful purpose.

3. It must be fed with oil.

Unless it is continuously fed with the proper oil it will not continue to give light. Only God has the oil of grace to keep the light burning. The things which would hinder the brightness of the flame must be cut off. Careful trimming and constant feeding are needful to bright shining.

Christians ought to be instrumental in radiating a light which would bring men out of the darkness of ignorance, error, unbelief, inconsideration, and vice. They can do this by their teaching, testimony, exhortation, reproof, and good example. The latter is the best way of them all.

Christians are set for the illumination of the world. Whatever illuminates must itself be visible. If your conduct is to teach a better way to man, your conduct must be seen. Therefore, works are emphasized. Man cannot see your fine ideas, your noble purposes, and your holy aspirations. You must shine through union with Christ, union with the church, and good works. We can hold Christ the light up by-----

- a. Sincere Christian living.
- b. Loving communion
- c. ~~Active~~ efforts

d. Sympathy that strengthens.

The light streams out by means of good works. The world cares little for our words but it has a sharp eye for our works. The gospel that is needed most in this present age is the gospel of Jesus Christ written in the lives of Christians.

II. The Manner of Living a Radiant Life.

By this we mean how to shine?

1. Naturally.

Light banishes darkness

Being light, we cannot but give light to those that sit in darkness.

2. Brightly.

Astronomers tell us that some of the smallest stars among the Heavenly bodies have the brightest light, and are of the most service to this world. It is not the largeness of our endowment we have to consider, but the transparent lustre of our lives. In order to have our light shining brightly, there must be nothing in us to hinder the light, there must be no obstruction in the way, nothing to dim the light that is in us. This figure of light is quite common with us. If the wicks of our lamps are not trimmed, and the chimneys are not clean the light will be dim. It cannot shine brightly. So it is with our hearts. If we are to shine brightly, we must have clean hearts. Solomon said, "Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life." And David prayed: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted after me."

3. Conspicuously

This is what Christ meant when he said, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," and it is the duty of every Christian to place himself where he can shine most conspicuously for Christ. There are conspicuous places and perhaps the most conspicuous place in the world is the home for it is the center of society. Shine before men. That is not always easy. There are some who are not friendly to light. Jesus said, "Some men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." There are those in every age that shrink from the light that flashes from the face of Christ or from the life of one illuminated by the light of Christ. But we are not, for this reason, to leave off our shining or be afraid to be openly Christian. In order to win popularity, in other days man often sought to appear better than they were. Today there are those who seek to appear worse than they are. This "new hypocrisy" is all too common. Many are ashamed of the convictions that they possess. They are ashamed to acknowledge the faith that is very dear to them. They are ashamed of the ideals that are the very glory of their manhood and womanhood.

We certainly ought not to hide our lights but should always shine conspicuously. Many good people smother, stifle and shroud their light. Many bury their light under a mountain of inconsistencies. Others bury it under cowardly, sheepish silence.

4. Sacrificially

Shining is natural for light, but it is always costly. Wherever you see a light you may know that something is being burned up. You may know that energy is being expended. When Jesus came as the Light of the world, his shining was infinitely costly. Shining is expensive even when God supplies the power for the wick must burn with the oil.

5. Continuously

Fitful Christians do very little good. It is not the blazing comet or

as the wandering star that guides the mariner but the fixed star. There is much spasmodic Christianity. We have what we call the "up and down" Christians, and some of them are down more than they are up; up when things are going well, and down when things are going hard. Constant effort is the essential demand of Christianity. Let your light shine constantly for the Master.

6. Usefully

We would not light a lamp in open day or in twilight, and then put it out when it is dark, though in religion this kind of thing is frequently done. God never intended that religion and goodness should be a secret locked up in the heart. He intended that goodness should ~~wink at the world~~ be seen, and that the sight of it should inspire others. The greatest ~~testimony which can be given on behalf of Divine truth is the testimony of our own lives.~~

7. Where we are

When the Sun rose this morning, it shone upon the clean and the unclean with equal brightness. A candle will shine just as beautifully in a poor man's cottage as in a rich man's palace. If we are going to light the world we must do so by shining where we are. If you do not shine where you are, then you will not shine at all. "Brighten the corner where you are." That is your one chance, such shining as we have ~~mentioned~~ mentioned will be victorious and will conquer the night. We are not promised that such shining will result in applause for ourselves; but we are promised that it will result in the salvation of others and in their giving glory to God. Such results are but the natural outcome of light. This is true because----

a. Light is positive something

Wherever light shines it is going to be seen. If nobody sees our light, it is certainly ~~one~~ of two reasons:-

(a) Because we have no light

(b) Because we have hidden it away under some kind of a bushel.

Night might say, "I am not going to pay any attention to the Sun or give an inch to it." But in spite of its boasting when the Sun comes up it takes to its heels. Light is positive and positive forces win.

b. Light is cheering and comforting

"Be of good cheer" was on Christ's lips again and again. He said it in the presence of the fury of nature; of the ravages of sin; of the mystery and tragedy of death.

c. Light awakens

A few hours ago our nation was asleep.

The sheep and cattle were lying down in the pastures. The birds had their heads tucked under their wings. But now our nation is awake. How did it come about? Did God turn loose a million alarm clocks? Did He shake the birds out of the trees? No. He just lifted the Sun above the eastern hills and the multitudinous life of the nation awakened and began a new day.

d. Light makes for health

It is at once a preventive and a cure. It tends to shut the door in the face of invading disease or to cast it out if it has already entered. Unsunned places are ever the abodes of weakness, sickness and degeneracy.

e. Light reveals

It enables us to see. It is in the radiance of the light of Christ that we see ourselves. It is by the light of Christian character that we get a vision of the face of God. That is why Jesus came as the Light of the world. He came to show us God.

III. The Motives For Living a Radiant Life.

1. Not for self gratification

2. To do good works

A good work is that which is done----

- (1) By a child of God
 - (2) In obedience to the command of God
 - (3) For the glory of God
 - (4) For the welfare and good of men
3. To let others see our good works.
4. To illuminate the world.
5. For the glory of God

Our works are not to our own credit, because, if they are good, all the goodness in them comes from the grace of God.

And what higher vocation can you and I possibly dream of than just this to live such lives day by day that those who come in contact with us will see in the radiance of our lives something of the loveliness of God, that they will discover that God is our Father and they will see to it at once that He becomes theirs. Then they will surely glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

Thus may we shine naturally, brightly, conspicuously, sacrificially, continuously, usefully, and where we are--

"Till all the ransomed Church of God, are saved to sin no more."

"Till"