“Kingdom Influence: Let There Be Light”

Matthew 5:14-16

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 10/9/22)

What kind of influencer are you?

Salt preserves, preventing further decay. Salt flavors with the wisdom of God. Light dispels darkness, making things clear. An influencer lives in such a way that she brings the knowledge of God’s ways into this dark world. In today’s passage, Jesus is teaching His people about their PURPOSE: You are God’s means of making Himself known to others. This is your primary function as a believer and follower of Christ.

When Jesus arrived, it was a new beginning, a new genesis. He brought light into this dark world. People living in darkness are under God’s judgment, apart from rescue by Christ. In much of the Old Testament, God’s people chose to live in darkness. We call this rebellion. The same thing is happening today. But there’s good news! Isaiah prophesied of the coming of a Great Light to those sitting in spiritual darkness (Isa. 9:2). This Light is to the Jews and the Gentiles through God’s anointed Son (Isa. 42:6; Isa. 49:6; Acts 13:47).

In Matt. 5, Jesus outlines the ways of His Kingdom. The believer is a **reflected** light in the world. We were created and redeemed to reflect God’s glory. Pay attention to this point: the more exposure to the Light, the brighter the reflection (John 8:12; Eph. 5:8)! A Christian’s daily life is meant to make God visible in a world that is blind to God. YOU are God’s chosen means to dispel darkness. The believer is a radiant light in this dark world. Don’t believe me? If you take the true church away from a culture, darkness closes in. Reflection and radiance imply engagement with the world. The Bible knows nothing of a secret Christian, one who exists in isolation from the darkness. We are to be in the world, but not of it.

Read Matt. 5:15 again. It would be ridiculous to hide the light. But sadly, that’s what some do. They neglect to teach their children the Word of God. Fathers neglect to lead their families. Employees don’t share the Light at work. Students don’t share the Light at school. Some cower in fear of man. Some compromise away their Biblical values. Some are indifferent. Some hide behind pragmatism, instead of living by faith. Some have a vast knowledge of God, but without any outreach to a dying world. Are you hiding your Light?

The believer is a **revealing** light to the world. The world is meant to see God’s nature, and then glorify Him when they look at our lives. The reality is this: The world is a dark place, and the Light is often rejected (John 3:18-21). Now read 2Corinth. 4:3-7. This is the purpose statement for every follower of Christ.

When we show goodness, we show God’s goodness. When we show holiness, we show God’s holiness. When we love unconditionally, we reflect God’s unconditional love. When we forgive, we show how God forgives. When we mourn over sin, we show how much God hates sin. When we speak the truth, we are speaking God’s truth. What does it look like to live a life that brings glory to the Father? IT LOOKS LIKE JESUS! Church, you have been given a glorious purpose: You are the light of the world! SO SHINE!!!

**QUESTIONS**:

1. Of the 9 scriptures we read today, which one impacted you the most? Why?
2. How can you attract attention to God and not attract attention to yourself?
3. Pastor Steve said, “We are to be **in** the world, but not **of** it.” Put that in your own words.
4. The paragraph about Matt. 5:15 was full of convicting statements. If any hit home with you, first ask God for forgiveness, then make a plan to stop hiding your light. What will be your first step?
5. In your sphere of influence, who needs to hear about God and His character? (Think grandchildren, co-workers, neighbors, friends …) Does your sphere of influence need to be expanded? Are there widows, spiritual orphans, or disadvantaged people waiting for your light? Who can help you get started in reaching out to them?

“We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations” (Nichol)

1. We’ve a story to tell to the nations,  
   That shall turn their hearts to the right,  
   A story of truth and mercy,  
   A story of peace and light,  
   A story of peace and light.
   * Refrain:  
     For the darkness shall turn to dawning,  
     And the dawning to noonday bright;  
     And Christ’s great kingdom shall come on earth,  
     The kingdom of love and light.
2. We’ve a message to give to the nations,  
   That the Lord who reigns up above  
   Has sent us His Son to save us  
   And show us that God is love,  
   And show us that God is love.
3. We’ve a Savior to show to the nations,  
   Who the path of sorrow has trod,  
   That all of the world’s great peoples  
   Might come to the truth of God,  
   Might come to the truth of God.