

***The True Disciple's Light:
A World Taking Notice and Praising
God.***

***By Peter Nieman Martin, Sr.
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The Lord taught with such clarity and depth. His word reaches the deepest part of the spirit of man providing the kind of light that lights the world. I set before you the text under discussion, Mathew 5:14-16 (Amplified Bible).



¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.¹⁵ Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck measure, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men that they may see your ^[z]moral excellence and your praiseworthy, noble, and good deeds and ^[aa]recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.

In examining these verses, there are three things which come to my mind. Those things are (1) who we are, (2) what we must do, and (3) why we must do it. Put another way, it states the following:

1. We are the light of the world.
2. We must let our lights shine in an excellent manner before men.
3. God will be praised by these men as a result of our efforts.

I. We are the light of the world

The very statement itself indicates that the world is in darkness. The depth of that darkness is such that when the proper light is shown, it will be perceived as the kind of light which provides the kind of hope that mankind desperately needs. It will indeed prove the existence of God and the Lord Jesus Christ because they are the originators of that light. They are the sources of it. The light which we have in us is a “derived” light. We have light in us as the result of having obtained it from them. But there are some things which are needful to bring these points more clearly to the surface. Let us look at some scriptures that will shed light on our first point--we are the light of the world.

- *³¹ So Jesus said to those Jews who had believed in Him, If you abide in My word [hold fast to My teachings and live in accordance with them], you are truly My disciples.³² And you will know the Truth, and the Truth will set you free.(John 8:31, 32, Amplified).*

- ⁷ *But if we [really] are living and walking in the Light, as He [Himself] is in the Light, we have [true, unbroken] fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses (removes) us from all sin and guilt [keeps us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations]. (I John 1:7, Amplified).*
- *Therefore, [there is] now no condemnation (no adjudging guilty of wrong) for those who are in Christ Jesus, who live [and] walk not after the dictates of the flesh, but after the dictates of the Spirit. (Romans 8:1, Amplified).*

The questions which are raised by these verses are weighty. They demand answers of the most honest kind. Do we abide in the word of the Lord? Do we live according to his word? Are we walking in the light? Do we live after the dictates of the Spirit? We cannot rush through these questions. Our answers to them must be sound. The spirit within us fully knows the truth about us, and God knows our spirit.

For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the ^[g]breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing *and* sifting *and* analyzing *and* judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart. And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open *and* exposed, naked *and* defenseless to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do. (Hebrew 4:12, 13, Amplified).

If we find ourselves operating outside the boundaries of God's word, we would do well to listen to the words of David in the Psalms. ***"I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands."*** (Psalms 119:59, 60. New International Version). To walk contrary to God is to place us in the same darkness of the very world we are told to enlighten. This must not be! Our behavior must be such that it is considered **peculiar** by the world. ***"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."*** (I Peter 2:9). I cannot emphasize enough at this point the incredible importance of staying in the light! The apostle Paul, in Romans 12: 1, 2 put the matter this way.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ²***Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.***

The apostle John had this to say in I John 2:15, 16.

¹⁵ *Do not love or cherish the world or the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him.* ¹⁶ ***For all that is in the world—the lust of the***

flesh [craving for sensual gratification] and the lust of the eyes [greedy longings of the mind] and the pride of life [assurance in one's own resources or in the stability of earthly things]—these do not come from the Father but are from the world [itself].

The warnings from **these two scriptures** (if **viewed soberly** as though one were looking at **his response** on the **Day of Judgment** to questions about this very thing in **his life**) **are enough to stir us to hasten to the “path of light.”** As long as we are on the path of light, we are the light of the world.

II. We must let our lights shine in an excellent manner before men

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your ^[2]moral excellence and your praiseworthy, noble, and good deeds and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father Who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16).

The word “**so**” is an adverb of quality used, in this case, to express emphasis. That emphasis is on “**the light**” resulting from **our good works**. The works must not be mere works that are good for even the world can accomplish such.

*For if ye love them which love you, **what thank have ye? for sinners** also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, **what thank have ye? for sinners** also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, **what thank have ye? for sinners** also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. (Luke 6:32-34).*

The Lord is saying that these acts which sinners can themselves perform are not enough to meet the standards set forth by Matthew 5:16. Our efforts must exceed what they do. The kind of sinner of whom the Lord is speaking in Luke 6:32-34 will stop and take note of our works which we do, and notice a difference in the spirit in which those works are done. **He will note that the degree we had achieved would not have been the degree he would have attempted.**

But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you. And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. (Luke 6:27-30).

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. (Luke 6:35, 36).

What the Lord is saying in these verses cannot be accomplished by the sinner because the ability to perform such would require the aid of the Holy Spirit. The world does not have the Holy Spirit. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, had something to say about being an example worthy to be followed. The words in these verses would certainly serve as a suitable conclusion for this second part.

For the rest, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and lovable, whatever is kind and winsome and gracious, if there is any virtue and excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think on and weigh and take account of these things [fix your minds on them]. Practice what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and model your way of living on it, and the God of peace (of [e]untroubled, undisturbed well-being) will be with you.(Philippians 4:8,9).

III. God will be praised by these men as a result of our efforts.

Can it be denied that the works performed by us speaks to the presence of God in our lives? I am not talking about anything miraculous for we all know those stopped with the New Testament becoming fully disclosed (I Corinthians 13:10). I am speaking of those works that manifest our character, that show that we have been born again, and that we are a child of God because of our actions.

- Do your actions honor God?
- Does your faithfulness honor God?
- Does the world see you as one of their own or as one who is peculiarly different?
- Does the world respect you because you are different?
- Do you monitor your actions daily?
- Would officials in government esteem you to be a child of God?
- Would your neighbors testify hardily to your Christian character?
- Would your job be a positive witness to your profession?
- Will your children and family members validate your godly behavior?

I will end this section with thoughts from Psalms 1

Blessed (happy, fortunate, prosperous, and enviable) is the man who walks and lives not in the counsel of the ungodly [following their advice, their plans and purposes], nor stands [submissive and inactive] in the path where sinners walk, nor sits down [to relax and rest] where the scornful [and the mockers] gather.

² *But his delight and desire are in the law of the Lord, and on His law (the precepts, the instructions, the teachings of God) he habitually meditates (ponders and studies) by day and by night.*

³ *And he shall be like a tree firmly planted [and tended] by the streams of water, ready to bring forth its fruit in its season; its leaf also shall not fade or wither; and everything he does shall prosper [and come to maturity].*

⁴ Not so the wicked [those disobedient and living without God are not so]. But they are like the chaff [worthless, dead, without substance] which the wind drives away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked [those disobedient and living without God] shall not stand [justified] in the judgment, nor ^{lb} sinners in the congregation of the righteous [those who are upright and in right standing with God].

⁶ For the Lord knows and is fully acquainted with the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly [those living outside God's will] shall perish (end in ruin and come to nought).

