

How Can We Be Lights in the Lives of Others?

Shine

(v): To give off or reflect light

I. Throughout the scriptures, light represents good, and darkness represents evil

- A. *“And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.” (Genesis 1:3,4)*
- B. *“Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life’” (John 8:12)*
- C. *“For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.” (I Thessalonians 5:5-8)*

II. What does it mean to shine?

- A. *“Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, **among whom you shine as lights in the world,** holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.” —Philippians 2:14-16, ESV*

- B. In the Gospel of John, Jesus is called *“the true light, which gives light to everyone”* (John 1:9). Throughout the New Testament, the followers of Jesus are called to be lights in the darkness.
- C. Jesus said in **Matthew 5:13-15** that we “are the light of the world” and that we should *“Let your light shine before others”* (**Matthew 5:16a**). He explained that no one lights a lamp just to hide it under a basket. A lamp is meant to be placed on a stand to give light to everything around it.
- D. **“This Little Light of Mine” SONG**

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel, NO! I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

Don’t let Satan (blow) it out, I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

All around the neighborhood, I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

Let it shine till Jesus comes, I’m gonna let it shine. Let it shine all the time, let it shine.

III. Always point back to the LIGHT SOURCE

- A. When Jesus said, *“Let your light shine before others”* (**Matthew 5:16a**), that wasn’t the whole sentence.
- B. **He went on to give the reason why it’s important to shine:** *“so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven”* (**Matthew 5:16b**). Our goal should never be to bring recognition to ourselves, but to

bring glory to God. There's a fine line between being a light and putting on a show to get attention. It's a matter of the heart.

- C. We live in a dark world, full of lies, hate and confusion. But God's Word tells us to "**cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light**" (Romans 13:12). While others are chasing after physical pleasures and selfish gain, we're commanded to live a different way—to "***put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires***" (Romans 13:14).
- D. When we let our light shine, we're not going around doing it to be seen, but rather reflecting the light of Jesus, so others can see Jesus' light through us.
- E. God's "***word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path***" (Psalm 119:105) – if we follow God's commands, our light will shine

IV. So how exactly do you shine?

- A. "***I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.***" (Romans 12:1,2)
- B. The "**Golden Rule**"
 - i. "***So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets***" (Matthew 7:12)
 - ii. Love your enemies and do good to them – it's easy to love those who love you, but much harder to love those who hate you – **READ LUKE 6:27-36**

- C. **“Walk as children of Light** (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth)” (Ephesians 5:9)
- D. **“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God”** (I Corinthians 10:31)
- E. **“Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.”** (Philippians 2:14-16)
- F. As Christians, we **should put off the old, sinful man & put on the new, spiritual man** (Colossians 3:1-17):
- i. Seek things that are above
 - ii. Set our minds on things above, spiritual things, not earthly, fleshly things
 - iii. Put away sin
 - iv. We should be compassionate, kind, humble, meek, patient, helping one another, forgive one another
 - v. We should put on love and let the peace of Christ rule in our heart
 - vi. God’s word should dwell in our hearts and **“whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him”** (Colossians 3:17)
- G. **“And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water** because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, **he will by no means lose his reward.**” (Matthew 10:42)
- i. Our light truly shines when we serve others
 - ii. **“Room In God’s Kingdom” SONG**

Just a cup of cold water in His name given
May the hope in some heart renew;

Do not wait to be told, nor by sorrow driven
To the work God has planned for you.

- H. **We all have different gifts** – we should use them to the glory of God – **READ ROMANS 12:3-8**
- I. Let your light shine by “loving one another with brotherly affection” – **READ ROMANS 12:9-19**
- i. Let your love be genuine
 - ii. Pray constantly
 - iii. Help those in need and be hospitable
 - iv. Bless those who persecute you
 - v. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep
 - vi. Live in harmony with one another
 - vii. Repay no one evil for evil
 - viii. If your enemy is hungry or thirsty, give him/her food and drink
 - ix. *“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good”* – **Romans 12:21**
- J. Be like the servant who received five talents and the servant who received two talents in the **Parable of the Talents** in **Matthew 25:14-30**. The five and two talent servants doubled their talents, while the one talent servant was lazy and buried his talent. We should be active in God’s service, using our talents, our gifts, our abilities.
- K. **Be careful what you say.**
- i. The Bible calls the **tongue “a restless evil, full of deadly poison”** (James 3:8).
 - ii. *“**Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear**”* (Ephesians 4:29).
- L. **“Oh, Be Careful...” SONG**
- Oh, be careful little eyes what you see.

Oh, be careful little ears what you hear.
Oh, be careful little lips what you say.
Oh, be careful little hands what you do.
Oh, be careful little feet where you go.
For the Father up above is looking down in love, so be
careful little XXXXXX what you YYYYYY.

V. **CONCLUSION: What keeps your light from shining?**

- A. *“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?”* –**Matthew 7:3**, ESV.
- B. Do not let sin cause your light to be extinguished – *“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”* (**John 1:5**)
- C. Sin can dull our shine as lights for Jesus Christ. Our lives which once sparkled with the joy of Christ can become clouded with a love for things of this world. If you have sin in your life, turn from that sin and ask God for forgiveness.