

Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion

Date : 11 September 2022

Sermon Title : Parables of Jesus – Light of the World

Speaker : Rev Peter Koh

Text : Matthew 5:14-16

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ speaks of His disciples as “light of the world”. In doing so, He lays out the identity of His disciples in a parable to illustrate their purpose. This description of disciples as “light of the world” is often associated with the other description - “salt of the earth” (v.13). While our focus will be on the former, it is good to remind ourselves what the Lord meant when He refers to us as salt of the earth. The properties of salt then and today are basically to preserve and add flavour. Thus, as living salt of Jesus to the world, we are to:

- ✓ preserve people for God by sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.
- ✓ add flavour to people by bringing the grace and love of God to them.
- ✓ make them “thirst” more for God as salt increases thirst for water.

As salt of the earth, we are to positively influence the world rather than to be influenced by it.

Likewise, as light of the world, we are to shine God’s grace and love to those around us. Being called light of the world, we are given an identity for Christ’s purpose. Like lamps that are hung up, we are to be shining for God. Jesus is the light to the world, the brightest and surest of what is good and pure. As His disciples, we are a partial identity of Christ and are the lesser light but can reflect that which represents God. What Jesus says in vv.14-16 can be divided into 3 parts: The Parable (v.14b-15), The Person – the identity of the Christian (v.14a) and The Purpose (v.16).

(I) The Parable (vv.14b-15)

The parable focuses not only on the light but on where it is placed – on a hill. A light on a hill is for all to see as it illuminates all around. Jesus reminds us that nobody lights up a lamp and then covers it, but instead it is to be put prominently so that the light can shine all around.

(II) The Person (v.14a) – Identity of Christians

As light for Christ to the world, others should see us and understand our spiritual identity as Christians. This identity must show in the following ways:

For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7

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- a. We know Christ – who He is, what He does for us, and how He shows His love for us in His sacrificial death and glorious resurrection. We have to know God more closely for our countenance to change to reflect His light.
- b. We know the Word (the living Word of God) – to understand God’s heart, who we are, our purpose, and God’s destiny in our lives.
- c. We know righteousness (God’s true righteousness) – to understand the true humanity of Christ for our salvation. His righteousness and love are that which wipe out our sins when our own blemished righteousness could not. He is the perfect man conceived by the Holy Spirit, who can pay fully for our sins which was passed down from the first man Adam, who was made perfect, but yet sinned against God.

(III) The Purpose (v.16)

The purpose of light is to:

- a. Reveal the Truth – intellectual and moral
By living a holy life, sure of what we know and believe, and doing what is morally right.
- b. Expose the Darkness – ignorance and falsehood
The world today is living in ignorance and falsehood. The social media platforms thrive with many of these lies and falsehood. For example, lust today is being communicated as love. However, we should know that love is about giving self for others as God commands while lust is merely to satisfy self. The lies of the devil prevails in contemporary values and living. We have to be careful to discern what is right from wrong, what is biblical from what is not.

FUNCTION OF LIGHT

As light of the world, we are:

1. To expose darkness – expose the lies of the devil and to give life to those in darkness by pointing them to Jesus, the true Light.
2. To give light – by enlightening those in darkness with God’s truth, teaching, and plan.
3. To help others grow in the knowledge of and faith in God.
4. To wake people out of slumber – wake others out of their faith slumber because they are indifferent, have back-slided or lost focus in their faith
5. To warm those who are cold – warm those who are cold because they face trials or are under the bondage of sin. We are to bring them comfort and reassure them of God’s love in their hurting lives.

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CONCLUSION

To be the light of the world, we need to be a direct influence by teaching and preaching the Word so that people will know Christ. Salt is passive but light is active. Thus, we need to be passively and actively engaging the world to be that light for Christ. Although there will be challenges to Christians in being light to the world, God continues to call us to be so to point people to Christ Jesus. We have the Holy Spirit to guide and lead us so that we can bring across our values and faith to those who challenge us, and at the same time challenge their ways in a loving and firm manner. May we play our roles faithfully as salt and light to the world.

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B. Relate Sermon Content

Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.

3. Read Matthew 5:14-16 slowly. The 2 main purposes of being the “light of the world” are to reveal the truth and expose darkness in the world.
 - a. Name a group/individual who have/has revealed God’s truth and exposed darkness in the world with the light of Christ.
 - b. What challenges will you face as a small group or individual in revealing God’s truth and exposing darkness of ignorance and falsehood concerning issues affecting our society and the world today?
 - c. What can you learn from the group/individual named in 3a. so that you can be an equally effective light of the world?

- 4a. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest, rate how much you know:
 - (i) Christ?
 - (ii) the Word?
 - (iii) righteousness?

Are you satisfied with your Christian identity?

- 4b.
 - (i) Which knowledge in 4a. do you need to increase?
 - (ii) What is one thing you can do to increase this knowledge?
 - (iii) How can your group members help or encourage you to achieve 4b(ii) above?

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C. Testimonies, Prayer and Action

Purpose: Give glory to God, seek Him and embody His Word.

5. Share your testimony of how God's light exposed the darkness of ignorance or falsehood you were caught in, to free you to live in His light, giving all glory to our Lord.

OR

Give thanks to God for using you to minister to people in need of His light in this world.

6. Bring before God all that have been shared in 2b, 3b and 4b and seek the Holy Spirit's guidance and empowerment upon your group members to fulfill God's purpose and function as light of the world. Pray too that our church will not hide God's light but be passively and actively engaging the world to be that light for Christ.

Optional items:

Suggested worship songs:

1. This is Amazing Grace – Phil Wickham <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPQKj2Zptr0>
2. Great Are You Lord – All Sons & Daughters
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hpb02shcAis>
3. Mighty to Save – Hillsong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCZ3Kcl4uEQ>

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