

# Life Group Lesson

## June 13, 2010

### “LIGHT OF THE WORLD”

***“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:13-16***

**ICEBREAKER:** What is the brightest light you own? Have you ever been in a power outage only to realize you don't have a flashlight or that your flashlight's batteries are dead?

#### **LESSON:**

Jesus said that we, Christians, are the light of the world. What did He mean by this? In this scripture, Jesus only addresses that they are a light. He does not address *how* they are a light. The fact is that Jesus is the only true light. ***"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).*** So if Jesus is the only light to men, how are Christ's disciples' lights?

We are a light to the world when we reflect Him in their lives. "Let there be light" is one of the most well-known verses of The Bible, but it was actually proclaimed by God twice - the first time, as quoted above, at the Creation that gave *physical* light on the world; the second time when He sent His Son Jesus Christ to give *spiritual* light on the world.

Look at these Scriptures and how a Christian should be light to the world:

*“For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.” - Colossians 1:13*

*“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.” - Ephesians 5:8*

*“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.” - Ephesians 5:11*

*“This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.” - John 3:19-21*

*“The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and*

*drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.” – Romans 13:12-14*

*“When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”*

## **WE REFLECT CHRIST**

We should reflect Christ in our lives. He is the light – we are the reflectors. What does it mean to “reflect Christ’s light”? Christians who reflect Christ: copy, echo, match, mirror, repeat, reproduce, shine, take after, demonstrate, display, exhibit, express, indicate, manifest, reveal, and show Him in their lives.

Think about a mirror. It reflects light and thus images. If it is dirty, then it distorts the true image. If it is broken, it distorts. If it is bent or warps, it distorts. To reflect the true image of Christ, we have to spend time with Him to look like Him. We must take on His character and attributes.

Jesus once said, "By their fruit you will recognize them" (Matthew 7:16). It’s easy to say that we are Christians, however, the truth is, that our character, not our tongues, will reveal who we really are. As Christians, our character should be like Christ' character. We are to strive to be like Jesus. 1 John 2:6 says, “Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did.”

**Question: How is your character? Is your character like Christ's character?**

## **THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS**

Think about the parable of the 10 virgins or maidens and their lamps.

Matthew 25:1-13 (NIV):

*<sup>1</sup>"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. <sup>4</sup>The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.*

*<sup>6</sup>"At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'*

*<sup>7</sup>"Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'*

*<sup>9</sup>" 'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'*

*<sup>10</sup>"But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.*

*<sup>11</sup>"Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'*

*<sup>12</sup>"But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.'*

*<sup>13</sup>"Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.*

Jesus Christ described "five who were foolish and five who were wise." **All ten** had lamps, but the wise ones had plenty of oil to make their lamps do what they were created for, while the unwise ones had nearly-empty lamps that did almost nothing to overcome the darkness.

Salvation, as well as the Christ-like character and actions made the "lamps" of the five wise virgins "shine". The five foolish virgins had lamps (they claimed to be Christian) but very little oil (they didn't

diligently study or live according to Christ's teachings – no fruit!). They couldn't possibly reflect "the light of the world."

The bridegroom is coming! Jesus coming soon! Are we, the Church, being drowsy and falling asleep like the 5 unwise virgins? Or, are we being fueled by the Holy Spirit and God's Word to be the light of the world – the city on a hill?

Is the church a city on a hill? Do we stand out? Do people take notice of our lives and glorify God? As the old children's Bible song said, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. Hide it under a bushel, NO! I'm gonna let it shine!"

### **LIGHT FOR A LITTLE WHILE**

Jesus said to the crowd of people one day, "*The light is among you for a little while longer.*" (John 12:35) The sun was setting on His earthly ministry and His time on earth was coming to a close. His physical presence on earth as Light would no longer be visible. But Christ's light continues to shine today through his people. We are the Light of the world, as Jesus told us, but the light that is in us does not come from ourselves or our deeds, no matter how holy and righteous we may think ourselves to be.

Our lives in Christ should illuminate His way, His truth, and His life to a dark world. It is kind of like how the moon reflects the light of the sun back to a dark world. We should also reflect the light of Christ to a world of people in darkness.

Just like Jesus earthly ministry, the light that Jesus shines through our earthly ministry is for just a little while. Time is short, and life is shorter. We must make the most of every opportunity, living each moment to let our light shine before others. That's the way Christ lived while on earth. Even as He approached His suffering and death on the cross, during His final week, He continued to speak truth and be light to a dark world.

If we care about those who are living in sin, we should be anxious to reflect Christ in our lives that some may be saved. And if we desire to glorify God, we should be anxious to reflect Christ that men may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. And only those who reflect Christ are those who have been rescued from darkness to walk in light having the light of life, eternal life.

#### **Questions:**

1. Is your reflection a true display of God's glory?
2. What should I change in my life to better reflect Christ to the world?
3. Are you reflecting the glory of God in your relationships? Your family? Your ministry? Your job?
4. How much light does your life give off?
5. Are you using the opportunities that God has given you to shine Christ wherever you go?
6. Do you have oil in your lamp? (are you growing spiritually in your relationship with Christ?)