

Trevor Allen
"Doing Missions At the Speed of Light"
Matthew 5:14-16

Introduction:

Reading/Prayer: So let's get to it, if you would, grab your Bibles and flip, turn, or scroll with me to Matthew 5 vv. 14-16. To give some context to our passage this morning, this is the beginning of Jesus' most famous sermon, the Sermon on the Mount. Here our Savior is addressing His disciples as the crowds begin to gather around to hear Him. On more time, we're in Matthew 5:14-16. After you get there, if you are able, would stand with me and follow along as I read God's Word?

Matthew 5:14-16 says, *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

Would you pray with me?

Please have a seat.

Big Idea: So about two weeks ago was almost perfect weather in my mind. I love when it is rainy and gray... Personally, I wish it would have been a little colder, but besides that, I loved it. Whenever the weather turns and it begins to look like rain and storms, I start to look for rainbows, as I am sure a lot of us do. What do you think about when you see a beautiful rainbow in the sky after a storm? I think about how the light dances through water droplets so perfectly and it manifests a beautiful rainbow. It is an absolute demonstration of God's skill as The Conductor over all of His creation.

Rainbows bring so much splendor, and order, and light to a typically dark, chaotic and stormy sky. It is almost as if the rainbow demands a response; it forces me to stop and gaze at the light spectrum blasting across the sky... instinctively my heart begins to offer glory and praise to the One who placed it there.

Now the amazing thing about a rainbow is that the light it possess is not it's own. The rainbow is powered by a foreign source of light, the sun. The sun's light shines in and through the storm, rays of light shine through the drops of water where they are refracted, reflected, and then dispersed to form this beautiful band of light that shines across the sky for all of the world to see.

In our Matthew 5 passage, Jesus calls us the light, he tells us to let our light shine before others, and He tells us this for the singular purpose that others would give glory to our Father in Heaven. This morning, our Big Idea, the main point, the singular thrust, the thing I would love for you, as a church and individuals, to reflect on this week is that-

Y'ALL ARE LIGHT TO GLOW AND SHOW THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

That is our Big Idea that-

Y'ALL ARE LIGHT TO GLOW AND SHOW THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

V.14: Let's explore more of what it actually means for us to be the light. If you glance at v.14 with me, Jesus says, *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden."* It is important to know who the "you" is in that sentence. Who is Jesus actually addressing? Matthew writes at the beginning of chapter 5, *"Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him."* When Jesus "went up" and "sat" He was signaling to His disciples that He was going to teach them. Likewise the crowds followed... The intended audience of our Savior is those that are following Him.

In fact, when Jesus says, at the beginning of v. 14, *"You are the light of the World"*, He is not just talking to an individual but He uses the Greek word, *υμεις*. So, when He says, "you" it is actually, "Y'all". Basically *υμεις* carries this idea that Jesus is speaking to all of His true followers as the church but also as individuals and not only then but now as well.

Like a rainbow, each individual drop of water together in the rain cloud refracts the light in its display of the rainbow. In a similar way Jesus tells His followers that "Y'all" are the light in this world. Just light a city set on a hill, the Light that the followers of Jesus possess cannot be hidden, but rather this light is supposed to be seen by the whole World.

Jesus informs all of His followers from past, present, and future that WE ARE the light of the world. Grace, that is your identity as followers of Jesus. We are followers of the risen Christ, so we are the light of Ladera Ranch,

Mission Viejo, RSM, SJC, RMV, and beyond. If we are the light of the World we will be seen in the midst of darkness in this area where the light shines. Do you remember our Big Idea?

Y'ALL ARE LIGHT TO GLOW AND SHOW THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

V. 15: So Jesus makes our identity explicitly known, as the Light, in v.14. If you would look at v.15 though He gives further instruction to the nature of our light, He says, *"Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house."*

The purpose to light a lamp is to shine light into darkness. Imagine if we were walking in the woods and it was pitch black. Now visualize you have a flashlight to shine on the dark trail, would you click the button on and then throw it in your backpack? Of course not! The flashlight is designed to bring light to darkness.

It is a great thing to bring light into darkness, especially if travelling through the woods to mark a clear and safe path. You know, light can even function as a beacon of safety to those who are lost or in danger. Light in the midst of darkness can also be seen from great distances as a lighthouse warning of danger to nearby travelers.

But light is not always a welcome thing, especially in the midst of darkness. One thing light does in darkness... it exposes. Light will lay bare the very things that were intentionally hidden.

Why would the person who lit the lamp put it under the basket? They wouldn't, right? Would there be any reason that you can think of in your personal life where light is not welcome? Where the lamp is purposefully retarded or covered in order to keep that hidden which the light will expose?

Friends, prior to us having this light that exudes from us now as followers of Christ, we were in absolute darkness. Our existence was one of death, our lives were filled with darkness, and our desires and works to do anything were skewed and evil to serve the hidden idols of our hearts.

What was our rescue to be in this dark and broken world? If we had light of our own there would have been no darkness. But darkness and death reigned in our lives. We needed an alien light, a light that was given and shown to us, one that was outside of ourselves. Light had to shine in! In the first chapter of the Gospel of John, the Apostle writes, *"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

Just like the rainbow that I mentioned in the beginning... it is not the water itself that possesses the light, but rather, it is the external light of the sun shining into these droplets, and then reflecting out of them to form a rainbow in the dark storm.

Brothers and sisters, this light that we have shines out of us as followers of Jesus. This light we have is not a light we intrinsically possess based on our own moral goodness, or the success of our career, our ability to lead others, our hard work ethic, our great leadership skills, or our kind dispositions... now I know you hear this every week. But, it is true... that apart from Christ you possess only darkness and death.

But here is some good news; this is not our final status as heaps of darkness and death to roam through existence in blindness. So lift your head up!

It was the very Light of God that came into this World, as the Apostle John wrote, this Light exposed our darkness, this light shines into our lives and makes our rebellion known. But not only does this Light expose as it shines in the darkness, it leads us to safety, and life! It beckons us to turn from darkness and to turn to light. You see it was the very plan of our Heavenly Father to save His people from this darkness.

And the eternal Life of God, Jesus Christ, stepped down from His throne, which is situated in unapproachable light, and He walked into our darkness. As Jesus lived, He lived perfectly as the God-man that walked in absolute and total light never turning toward the darkness, even for a moment, His entire earthly life. Yet, Jesus was treated as one who walked in perpetual darkness by being sentenced to death on a cross as a rebellious and darkened criminal. It was on this cross that the Perfect Light was consumed by death, where the prince of darkness mocked the Son of God as He hung bleeding, and where Jesus had the punishment for our darkness poured out on Him by His own Father.

Light seemed to be extinguished... But in three short days after the Light was laid into darkness, Jesus emerged from the tomb having defeated death's iron grip! Jesus, as the Life crushes the head of the serpent in His resurrection. And finally, He satisfied the anger of God that was reserved for our darkness and rebellion. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice and unblemished offering that bought salvation.

Jesus then ascended to be where His Father is, sitting at His right hand for all of eternity, restored to His rightful place in Light, having accomplished redemption for His people and bringing His light back into the World where darkness reigned.

And now, by the grace of God, this Light and Life of our Savior, Jesus Christ, gave us is applied by the Spirit of God as the Great Physician who brings life to death, and light to darkness. Just like the raindrops who possess no light of their own, but rather reflect the external light flowing through them. So are we as ones who have the Life and Light applied to us that then flows from us as a reflection of our Savior in this dark world! This is all given to us by God's unmerited favor granted to His people!

Don't forget our Big Idea, Church...

Y'ALL ARE LIGHT TO GLOW AND SHOW THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

V. 16: We will close by looking at v.16, ill read, *"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

Jesus said that we are light, Jesus said that our light was to shine and not be hidden... and now it comes full circle as we see the purpose of our radiance, through Jesus, it is to show this dark world the Glory of God through our good works.

I am anticipating here, as this would be a struggle of mine, and I am sure for some of you, that there becomes a grace/works tension arising. You may be thinking, "It is by grace through faith that I am saved, and it is not my good works that save me". I would absolutely affirm that. It is not your good parenting, or skill in counseling, or money that you have donated that saves you.

But just like a rainbow that fills a dark sky through the reflection of the sun's light shining through drops of water; it is your works that flow from your salvation in Jesus that fills the darkness of creation with the Glory of God! You reflect the Light, goodness, and life of Jesus in all that you do because, as he said in v. 15, YOU... ARE... THE... Light of the world...

This is the work of the church, is it not? We as individuals and together as the Body of Jesus shine the light of salvation and life into a dark world! It is through loving the unlovable, befriending the friendless, serving the needy, bringing goodness to evil, order to chaos, light to darkness... we share as lights who expose, guide, and lead people toward God. This is so we bring them to Jesus, the true light.

Brothers and sisters, if you are a Christian here today that does not feel very luminescent. Or you may feel like you are walking in the burden of darkness under the same clouds that don't fade. If you feel the weight of life, where dread and stress, exhaustion and frustration, fear and depression are your companions in this season. Rehearse and keep retelling yourself the good news! Share these burdens with other rain drops so that we can bear each other up! Let us mutually encourage one another and point each other toward the true light! Let sit at the feet of Christ and commune with Him; bring your burdens to Him for He is sufficient to bring darkness into light even though the clouds may still look.

For one day church, this is our future hope as The book of Revelation says it, *"And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it."*

Until this final day church, we have a mission to accomplish individually and together... So remember, Grace-
Y'ALL ARE LIGHT TO GLOW AND SHOW THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

Pray: Let's Pray