

please. But you have no right to do that. There is the honor of your church, the welfare of your children, your friends,—your life is to be a light. You have heard the story of the blind man who carried a lighted lantern. Someone asked why he always went around at night with a lighted lantern. He replied, "To keep others from stumbling over me." That wasn't a bad idea. Now he wouldn't intentionally stumble over anybody else, but he didn't want anyone to stumble over him. We need to see that under God, nobody stumbles because of our lives. We must live true to God.

2. Loyalty to Christian convictions.

This is another way we can let our light shine. By being loyal to Christian convictions. A man spending some time with a friend said, "If I stay here any longer, I shall become a Christian in spite of myself."

I remember reading a story of a young Christian man in an army barracks who was accustomed to reading his Bible and praying. While sitting on the edge of his cot, he debated as to whether or not he should continue that practice. Afraid of what somebody would say. And so soon he was down on his knees. There was a dim light burning near by and a big shoe came hurdling across the room and hit him. He said it nearly took all of the praying out of him. "But I continued my devotion," he went on to say. "The next night I survived the first test, another soldier came up and asked that we might pray together." He said, "I saw you over here last night I was so ashamed because I didn't show my colors, but after you acted the way you did, it gave me courage." The story goes on to say, it was not long before a number of others were gathering around and they were having a nightly prayer meeting.

So you see what this scripture involves. He did not preach a sermon or give a lecture but simply follow the conviction thereby letting his light shine. He was not like the young man who went up to a lumber camp to work during the summer. The men were rough and when he returned back home, in talking about his experiences, his brother asked him, "What did they say when they found out that you were a Christian?" "Oh, he said, "They never found it out."

THE LIGHT SWITCH (Matt. 5:14-16)

Intro. The possibilities of the light switch. In your attic or cellar perhaps you have a button or switch. The other day we had some men who needed to go up into the attic of the church. One of them climbed up the ladder and said it wasn't any light up there. So I climbed up and there was the switch. It had to be turned on. There are important lights in your home no doubt, but perhaps the most important light is the one that we overlook, and that is that we are as individuals the light of the world.

We hear some strange stories sometimes about haunted houses. H. G. Wells told a story. It seemed that a man had been challenged to spend the night in a haunted house. This place was shunned by all the people of the community. He took a handful of candles and after lighting and placing them around in a room he had chosen, he took his seat in an old chair. Presently his heart leaped into his throat as the candles begin to go out one by one.

It may be that candles of faith and hope have gone out in the past few years, lights are growing dim. There is much darkness in the world today...there is darkness in the realm of religion. Men do not like to retain God in their knowledge. No man is so blind as he who will not see. The darkness of the world is spiritual, so many are like Pharaoh...they listen to the plea of Moses and then say "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?"

I. Getting the light on.

That seems to be the first problem...turning the light switch...allowing the light to shine...to expell the darkness. We might in contrast here ask the question, "How does one become the light of the world?"

Cut - shut - Cross

II. What is this light supposed to do?

Once the switch has been turned, the light is supposed to shine. It is described here in this scripture like a city on a hill. Looking across the sea of Galilee there were a number of cities...towns,—many of them were located on hills. A city set on a hill is obvious to all who pass by.

The figure is taken from a lowly cottage home. The house consisted of a single room, so that the teeny light sufficed for all. If they put it under a bushel, the only one in the

room, then there would be no light at all. Now a lamp is placed on a lamp stand and it shines for all who are in the house. Jesus said men never hide them,--we say Christian do not hide your light under a bushel, but Jesus said, "Christians never hide their light."

What kind of a lamp did they have? They had lamps of wicks. If you put a lamp under a bushel, there would be little air and it would soon burn out. So it is placed on a lampstand and shines all through the house. That is what a light is for. You do not build a city on a hill to hide it, but so you can see it. You are light and it's your business like the city to shine. Thus men are to let their light shine, not to glorify themselves, but your Father in heaven. Not to call attention to yourself, but to the Heavenly Father.

It is not the scholar at Yale or Harvard,--it is not the seminary professor, but it's the Christians who are the light of the world. And he is to give expression to the recognition that God is Savior. You're not just a reflector,--it is in you--you are the light, and Christ shines into the world through the light of his people.

Did you ever stop to think of our street lights...how the wires bring in the power from the plant...make it light at night so we can travel as by day?

III. How is the light to shine?

We've talked about turning the switch on, now how is this light to shine. We are aware that light banishes night, that light reveals our dangers and that the impression and success of the gospel depends upon living men...the real test is the life. The real influence of this church is the lives of the membership.

The lighthouse keeper does not concentrate on the ship seeing the beam that shines from his lamp, but all he does is to feed it and tend it. That is what we must do, we do

not know how all will respond to the light, but it is our business to shine.

1. By our good works. (Matt. 5:16) V.16
Evil is to be overcome with good.

A minister told of a group of Christian making reports at a business meeting, concerning some work that they had been doing, and at the close of each report the statement was made, --"This work was done for Jesus' sake." That is a real thrill, as we consider working for Christ just to glorify the Father. It would do well for us to listen to Paul in I Cor. 10:31, "Whether therefore, ye eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all for the glory of God." and Col 3:17 "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

We know that we cannot live without light. It is essential for growth and progress and as we contact the light of the world, we ought to reflect something of Christ's character on to others.

We are not talking about good words or good intentions. These things can never substitute for good works. One example is the worth a thousand arguments. A young minister about to be ordained, stated at one point he was nearly an infidel in his life. But there was one argument in favor of Christianity. I could never refute the consistent conduct of my own father.

A Buddhist was given a new Testament. As he read it, he said, "This is the truth of God." He went to the Buddhist priest and said, "Truly this book is of God, it tells me things that fit me, it gives me the message I need." The priest replied, "There's nothing to it, and I can prove it."--"If you go to America where more people have this book than in any other nation, and consider the way the people live, you will discover that they profess ~~that they~~ to believe it and yet do not live according to it." There is much truth in the reply of this Buddhist priest,--To shame us. Our works often put out the light.

But some people say my life is my own,--I live it as I

3. By sharing this faith.

A splendid way to let your light shine is to share it with somebody else. This is one of the Christian principles. It is a great trust and a great obligation. Helen Keller once asked Phillip Brooks, "Tell me what you know of God." We cannot keep silent. Birds are bound to sing. Tides never cease their flow. The sun does not hide its light.

The first Christian missionary to Sweden told those people that he had been sent from God. They said, "Show us a miracle and ~~that~~ we will believe you." He said, "I will show you the greatest of all miracles,--a holy life." And he did, he demonstrated, thus sharing the grace of God and letting his light shine.

Do you want your life to count for God?

Let God push the switch & turn on the light of Sal- in your life -

Let us remember the first thing to be done with a lamp is to light it. The second thing is to set it where it can be seen. The third thing,--a lamp must be fed with oil or it will not keep a light. The fourth thing,-- the lamp must be trimmed if it is to give a good light.

S. May - July 17, 63 Royal Meeting (35 stories of it) -

30. May - June 26, 1954 P.M. -

A. M. - July 12, 1954