

Northside

FOURSQUARE CHURCH

Let Your Light Shine

Sunday, September 10, 2017

Big Idea: We are the lights of the world when Jesus, the Light, shines through our lives. This pearl speaks of our personal purpose being fulfilled in our circle of influence. Don't hide who God created us to be. Let it shine

Scripture: *And he said to them,*

*"Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket,
or under a bed, and not on a stand?*

*For nothing is hidden except to be made manifest;
nor is anything secret except to come to light.*

If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

And he said to them,

"Pay attention to what you hear:

*with the measure you use, it will be measured to you,
and still more will be added to you.*

For to the one who has, more will be given,

and from the one who has not,

even what he has will be taken away."

Mark 4:21-25 ESV

***"Is a lamp brought in to be put under a basket,
or under a bed, and not on a stand?"***

We sang it as little children. *"This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. Let it shine till Jesus comes; I'm going to let it shine!"* And it still should be our theme song as adults. When I describe to a non-believer what it means to be a Christian I begin by drawing three concentric circles, like a target. The outside circle represents our body, and the second circle represents our soul, or psyche. Our soul consists of our personality, attitudes, emotions, intellect and will. We all have a body and soul, but so do our dogs and cats.

What makes us human is the third part, our spirit, at the center of the three circles. Then I draw a light bulb in that inside circle. As I explain to my non-believing friend, "we each have a spiritual dimension at the center of our being - it's like this light bulb, fully functional, but it only comes alive when it is connected to the invisible power of electricity." With my illustration, I draw an electric cord and plug it into a socket. Then I add colour and light rays extending from the bulb through the soul and body. "That", I explain, "is like being born again! The '*Light of the World*' comes into our center and lights up our life." He gives us purpose!

We have, in our church, a large video screen that is made up of thousands of individual lights. When they work together, we can display any picture we want; and to me that's how the Church works. When in our right places, each of us shines, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the colour we've been assigned, and serving together we display the beauty of Jesus to the world around us.

This is one of the Holy Spirit's favourite Word pictures. It's used in the very beginning of Creation as a picture of Jesus and his Kingdom coming to push away darkness. *Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. Genesis 1:3-4 NASB*

Then he used it again in the Temple Illustration as a seven-pronged lamp stand, that shone as it was fueled by the oil, a picture of the Holy Spirit. *"You shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually."* Exodus 27:20 NASB

David and Solomon used the light metaphor often. *For You light my lamp; The Lord my God illumines my darkness.* Psalms 18:28 NASB

The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread? Psalms 27:1 NASB

The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, Searching all the innermost parts of his being. Proverbs 20:27 NASB

Light was one of the prophet Isaiah's favourites too. *I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."* Isaiah 49:6c NASB

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. "For behold, darkness will cover the earth And deep darkness the peoples; But the Lord will rise upon you And His glory will appear upon you. "Nations will come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising." Isaiah 60:1-3 NASB

And of course, Jesus loved using light as a picture of Christians. *"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven".* Matthew 5:14-16 NASB

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. “Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. “For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps”. Matthew 25:1-4 NASB

“He (John) was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. John 5:35 NASB

So, here's Mark's third step in the pathway to success.

#1 was to be plugged into a healthy relationship with Jesus.

#2 was keep the lines clean with no interference.

#3 is to keep the power on and continue shining wherever God places us.

But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day. Proverbs 4:18 NASB