

19 Minutes With the Messiah

The Light of the World

(Matthew 5:14-16)

Jesus' Body as the Temple
The Living Water
New Cloth
New Wine in Old Wineskins
The Salt of the Earth
▶ **The Light of the World**
The House Built on the Rock
The Two Debtors
The Sower
The Weeds
The Growing Seed
The Mustard Seed
The Yeast
The Hidden Treasure
The Fine Pearl
The Net
I AM the Bread of Life
Becoming Childlike
The Unmerciful Servant
I AM the Light of the World
I AM the Gate
I AM the Good Shepherd
The Good Samaritan
The Friend at Midnight
The Rich Fool
The Wise Servant
The Barren Fig Tree
The Great Banquet
The Lost Sheep
The Lost Coin
The Lost Son
The Shrewd Manager
The Rich Man and Lazarus
The Unworthy Servants
I AM the Resurrection and the Life
The Persistent Widow
The Pharisee and
the Tax Collector
The Workers in the Vineyard
The Ten Minas
The Two Sons
The Wicked Tenants
The Wedding Feast
The Fig Tree
The Householder
The Ten Virgins
The Talents
The Sheep and the Goats
A Lesson About Foot Washing
I AM the Way
I AM the True Vine
The Woman in Labor
I AM the Alpha and the Omega

¹⁴[Jesus said,] "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither 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. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

1. Take a moment to imagine a world without light. What glorious yet simple purpose does light serve in our everyday lives?
2. Isaiah the prophet wrote: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned. . . . For to us a child is born, to us a son is given. . . . And he will be called . . . Prince of Peace" (9:2,6). Who is the "child" and "son" of whom Isaiah writes? How does he serve as a light?
3. Underline the correct word or words and explain Jesus' sentence:
"You (ought to be; will be; are; may be) the light of the world."
4. Read the following passage. How do Christians become light?
"You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8).
5. Shining as the light of the world will be evident in both what a Christian does and what a Christian says. Give several specific examples from your everyday life of how you can let your light shine through your words and actions.
6. Like a city on a hill, the light of a Christian cannot be hidden. It is the very nature of light to shine, and there is no such thing as a light that does not shine. Nonetheless, the light of those who profess to be Christians may not always be shining. List three reasons why this may happen.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

7. Check and discuss each correct conclusion to the following sentence:
In verse 16, Jesus is saying that when unbelievers witness the "good deeds" of Christians, they

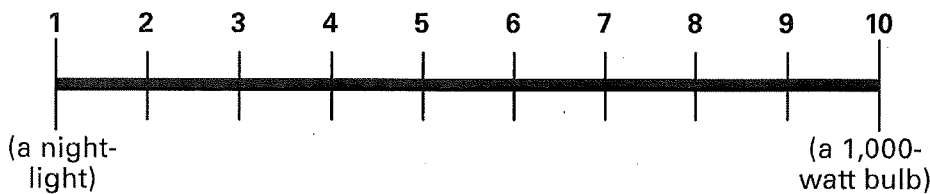
- ___ will imitate those deeds and, like Christians, earn heaven for themselves.
- ___ will acknowledge that those deeds are "good" and, unknowingly, will glorify God.
- ___ will see that Christians always strive to appear better than other people.
- ___ will come to saving faith in Christ.
- ___ may ridicule that godly lifestyle here and now, but will have to acknowledge it as good at the time of their judgment, to the glory of God.

8. Summarize the truths learned in this lesson by completing the following paragraph.

Jesus is the true _____ of the world who came to overcome the darkness of sin, death and unbelief. All who believe in this _____ have become _____ themselves, reflecting the _____ of Christ in their lives. While _____ can never be darkness, it can be covered up and hidden. Our Lord, therefore, encourages us, "Let your _____ shine!"

For Further Study

- 9. Spend time identifying and explaining the forces and pressures, internal and external, that may lead Christians to hide their light "under a bowl."
- 10. On a scale of 1 to 10, rank your brightness as the "light of the world." How does the Lord enable you to shine more brightly?



Prayer

Light of the world, shine in us and through us to the praise and glory of our Father in heaven. Amen.

Helps: (1) A world without light would be beyond dismal. Light enables us to see and enjoy all the glories of God's creation. (2) Isaiah is writing about Jesus, "the light of the world" (John 8:12). Christ is the light who reveals and lightens the way to eternal life for those living in the darkness of sin, despair, spiritual ignorance, death, and unbelief. In fact, Christ himself is the Way and reveals himself as such. (3) Jesus says, "You are the light of the world"—a statement of fact. Jesus speaks of the very nature of the Christian. (4) All people are born in the darkness of sin and unbelief. The Holy Spirit, through the gospel in the Word and the sacraments, calls people into the light of faith in Christ, an existence in which the Light dwells in their hearts and in which they reflect that Light in their lives. (5) Specific answers will vary. (6) The light may not be shining because they are, in fact, no longer Christians and therefore no longer light; it may be that their faith is weakening and, as a result, their light is dimming; or it may be that Christians are hiding their light from the world (an indication that faith needs to be strengthened). (7) Salvation is not by works and "good deeds" but by grace through faith in Christ alone. Christians do not live lives filled with "good deeds" for their own glorification. Neither does the witnessing of these "good deeds" bring others to saving faith. Nevertheless, even unbelievers, who have a natural knowledge of right and wrong, will identify a Christian's deeds as "good," thus glorifying God who works this good in his people. At the judgment, all people, willingly or unwillingly, will acknowledge the works of Christians to be good, to the glory of God. (8) The first two are *Light*; the rest are *light*. After filling in the blanks, reread the paragraph. (9) Examples might be past experiences with or the fear of future rejection, ridicule, or persecution; a desire to be accepted by the world; forgetfulness of God's promises and protection; or a timid faith. (10) The Holy Spirit strengthens Christian faith and lives through the gospel in Word and sacrament.