



Go!
Shine the Light
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Matthew 5:1-20 (NLT) - One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, 2 and he began to teach them.
The Beatitudes

3 "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

4 God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

5 God blesses those who are humble,
for they will inherit the whole earth.

6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,
for they will be satisfied.

7 God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.

9 God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of God.

10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

11 "God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Teaching about Salt and Light

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

14 "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. 15 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

Teaching about the Law

17 "Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. 19 So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

20 "But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

A right life is a bright light.

Study Guide

This last Sunday we spoke about how a right life is a bright light, and that living life the way God has designed us to live will inevitably point draw others in. As you look at your life, what are some instances when people have noticed there is something different about you? What are some moments where someone noticed the light that you are shining?

When we talk about right living, we can often get drawn into a very complicated conversation about the minutia of what that means. The difficulty is that, while there are very clear instructions for the elements of how we are to engage with the world and what righteousness looks like, the application of that can end up being more complicated than we anticipate.

Take a moment to Read 1 Corinthians 10 together. What do you think Paul is saying here? What is his main point? Paul seems to be creating a new lens for the believers to look at their actions through. Whereas the majority of the Jewish practice was based on objective obedience to very specific laws, Jesus has ushered in a new era where there is greater freedom, but still a very strong commitment to living the right way. The thing that Paul is communicating here is that, while the actions themselves are important, the way they land with others is as well. He is challenging us to ensure that we do not inadvertently communicate something God is not while living according to the letter of the law. What are some situations where you have experienced this same potential for confusion? How did you navigate it? By what measurements could you ensure that you are doing as God has asked in action and how it communicates with others?

Take some time to pray for each other for sensitivity to the Spirit and a heart that longs to show God well to the world around us.