

“Light Your World”

“You are the light for the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone 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)

1. Discuss the power and nature of light.
 - a. Can light and darkness coexist? Which wins?

 - b. What must one do in order to suppress light? Can you ever fully suppress it without extinguishing it?

2. Read Matthew 5:14.
 - a. What does the light that Jesus speaks of represent? What is it that He says we will shine forth into the world (v. 16)?

 - b. How does Psalm 37:5-6 help us understand what the light represents? How might this relate to Matthew 5:6?

 - c. Who is the “you” that Jesus is addressing (cf. 5:1)? The religious leaders saw themselves as lights (cf. Rom. 2:19), but would many of Jesus’ audience have seen themselves this way? Do you see yourself this way?

 - d. **You** is plural. If we were in Texas, we’d say, “Y’all are the light of the world.” How does this fit with what Peter says in 1 Peter 2:9? How might this challenge our western Christian way of thinking? How might this encourage you toward greater involvement in your local church community?

 - e. Jesus says that we are **the** light for the world. How might this fit with John 14:6 or Ephesians 4:4-6? How does this challenge our cultural understandings of religion? Why might this offend? If the church is **the** light, why must we not hide it?

3. Read Matthew 5:16.

- a. What is the connection between light and good works?
- b. Look at the following verses and answer the questions below: 1 John 1:5; John 1:12; Eph. 5:8-9.
 - i. What does 1 John 1:5 say about the nature of God? What is meant by this?
 - ii. What is the believer's relationship to God? How is this connected to 1 John 1:5 and Matthew 5:14?
 - iii. How is this relationship confirmed by Eph. 5:8-9? What is the fruit of the light and how does this connect to 1 John 1:5 and John 1:12?
- c. What does John 8:12 say about Jesus? What does John 14:20 say about your relationship to Jesus? (You might also look at John 15:4-5 or Romans 8:10).
- d. Looking at points b and c above, why does Jesus expect believers to shine as light in this world?
- e. How might these things help us understand why the Father gets the glory for our good works?
- f. How might these things help us understand how to brighten our lights (cf. esp. John 15:4-5)?

4. Read Isaiah 40:9.

- a. How does this passage connect with what Jesus says in Matthew 5:14-16, esp. v 14?
- b. What does Jesus intend for us to do with the message we've received?
- c. How are you tempted to hide the light of Christ in your day to day?

5. Read 1 Peter 2:9-12.
 - a. How does this connect with Matthew 5:14-16? What ideas are similar?
 - b. How does verse 12 in Peter compare to verse 16 in Matthew?
 - c. In what way do our good works display the gospel?
How does a believer who lives for himself distort the gospel?
6. Do you think of your life as the light of Christ for the world around you? What would change if you thought more about that?
7. In what ways do you see Cornerstone serving as a light for our world? What are some practical things you could do to help us shine brighter?