

It's time to shine

From prayer in early August

Preached Sunday, August 16, 2020

Intro

Series review

- I've been speaking on spiritual warfare these last few weeks.

Wake up

- Two weeks ago from Romans 13, I spoke about the time in which we live calling the church to *wake up*
- We need to realize it's later than we realize. Jesus is coming soon - and we need to understand that we are living in the last days
- **Remember:** The night is almost over, and the day is almost here!!
- There is much to be done. We need to wake up and put off the "clothes of the night". I am glad no one came to church in their jammies. We must begin to clothe ourselves with His light!

- We begin by changing how we think. We must be in the word and in prayer
 - now more than ever!

Engage

- Last week I continued the series, calling us to engage against the enemy in the message **It's time to engage**,
- **Note** This was a message and text I'd given at the start of 2020
- We have to recognize - our battle is against a spiritual enemy! Not flesh and blood.
- Resist the enemy - we have the promise from James 4:7 that if we resist him
 - He will flee!
- **NOTE:** He will try to distract us, discourage us and deceive us
- We must gain victory in our personal lives - and then be warriors standing in the gap for our family, our church, our community and our nation
- How - we don't give in. We fight with spiritual weapons: the word and prayer! We are empowered to use the name of Jesus. We come together to build one another up!
- Finally we rely on on His promises:
 - Gates of hell won't prevail
 - Greater is he that's in us
 - He's given us power!

Today

- I want to continue the call to engage and overcome the enemy
- Our text is from the sermon on the mount. **Matthew 5:14-16** *You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. 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. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*
- I want to talk about this light and its power

Message

Light is different than darkness

- First thing we need to understand is that light and dark are fundamentally different things.
- In fact: Darkness is the absence of light!

The world is in darkness

- In the beginning God created, and the first thing he created *let there be light*. He separated the light from the darkness

- Before there was light - all was darkness - Gen 1:1
- In the same way - spiritual darkness covered all mankind
- Since Adam's sin - darkness has reigned. Remember they hid from God!

Jesus came as the light

- Isaiah prophesied the coming Christ as a light dawning.
- See **Matthew 4:16** recounts that prophecy: *the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. And for those who lived in the land where death casts its shadow, a light has shined.*
- In John's Gospel he describes the coming of Jesus **John 1:4-5 (NIV)** (4) *In him was life, and that life was the light of men. (5) The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*
- We have those under darkness - being touched (and changed by the light)

When we are born again - we are the light

- This is the thing - we can come into the light
- We are filled with darkness - but as we are born again, his light drives out that darkness
- Jesus says **John 8:12 (NIV)** (12) *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*
- Then he repeats it **John 9:5 (NIV)** (5) *While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*" Note the condition: *while I am in the world*

- But in our text he says *you are the light of the world!*
- When we become followers of Christ, His light fills us *and shines through us!*

We must maintain fellowship with the light

- **Note:** We must maintain connection with him.
- See **1 John 1:5-7** *This is the message we heard from Jesus and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. 6 So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. 7 But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.*
- Come into the light (salvation)
- Walk in the light!
- The enemy wants to rob us of our light - by keeping us from His presence. Discouragement (it doesn't matter), distraction (there's other things to focus on) or sin (this is more fun/important than following Christ)
- **Note:** Fellowship w/ one another
- Last week - that's one of the ways we resist the enemy - is by coming together
- The enemy HATES a body of believers who are united. We are unstoppable!

Are we filled with his light?

- The world is filled with spiritual darkness - but we are called to be light.
- Ask yourself honestly - am I different from this world? Am I full of Christ's light?
- As children of God we have been born again and filled with his light
- We must walk in fellowship with the light!
- Comes from external source
- We must be filled with Jesus and as he shines in me, he will shine through me!
- So the question is: am I different from the world around me?

Light is stronger than darkness

- Not only are light and darkness different (darkness being the absence of light)
- But they never share the same space
- Light drives out darkness. Always. No contest
- **Illustrate:** Back on a rainy day at the beginning of March, I had a chance to visit Ohio caverns
- It was fun, and I enjoyed walking through and taking pictures.
- We came to a place where they turned out the lights... and it was completely dark!
- Without light - darkness immediately took over

- See again **1st John 1:5** *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.*
- There is no contest. Light always wins! It's only when there is no light, that darkness can advance.
- **Note:** That's what is going on right now - darkness is advancing in our nation
- Which leads to the last point

Light must be shone in the darkness

- In order for light to be effective against the darkness - it must shine!
- Our text says that a light isn't lit and then put under a basket, instead it's put on a table to give light to everyone in the house!
- **Thought** Asher's visit a week ago, I got my guitar and sat beside him and began to play and sing songs I used to sing with Liam. Began to sing *this little light of mine...*
- That's what we must do NOW and begin to push back

How?

- Our text explains how - letting our *"good deeds shine out for all to see"*
- As believers with a hope of resurrection - our light shines as we spend our lives loving and doing good for others
- So hard to do

Why?

- The answer is given in v16 *so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father*
- As we live like light in a dark world - the eyes of the people around us are opened, and they turn them towards God and begin to praise Him
- AND... the enemy is driven back

Conclusion

- Show review slide
- God is calling us to fight in this last day.
- Don't give up the faith that we began with, rather dig deep and hold on.
- Resist and he will flee
- Overcome the darkness with His light