

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!

Houses of Light Church • January 1, 2023 • Pastor Netz Gómez

Matt. 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Many people seek to find themselves but we, thank God, in Christ we are clear about our identity and purpose. In the gospels there are many statements by Jesus about who we are and one of the statements that He is emphasizing in this hour is what he said in this passage. After defining the path to true happiness, Jesus affirms that we are the light of the world.

II. WHAT IS THE LIGHT OF GOD?

- A. When we refer to light, we are talking about the presence of God and His power that brings life, love, hope, and joy. At the beginning of creation we see that the world was disordered and full of darkness and God spoke light from it and said it was good.

Gen. 1:2-3 "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. ³ And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness."

- B. Everything in the light of God is good because it is His goodness, truth and purity and that was what transformed everything. Also, at the end of the Bible, it speaks the same thing about the new creation, after the millennial reign of the Messiah on earth and the restoration of the Garden of Eden, His light fills everything.:

Ap. 22:5 "And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever."

- C. In the midst of human history when Jesus begins His ministry He is described as light, which is the fulfillment of the prophecy of **Is. 9:1-2**.

Mat. 4:13-16 "And leaving Nazareth he went and lived... in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali... ¹⁶ the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned."

- D. When Jesus was preaching and teaching he said it clearly:

Jn. 8:12 " Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (Jn. 9:5)

- E. Jesus is saying that He is the spiritual light of God that comes into the world and affirms that those who are listening to Him and receiving His teachings and His

Spirit and His love, they are also the same as Him, the light of the world (Matt. 5:14).

- F. Jesus is the light of God who came into the world and when He touches us, we receive life from Him and together with Him we become the light of the world. This means that we are filled with his joy, love, purity, truth and goodness from him, and that is what illuminates the world. In fact, all of creation is anticipating to see the light of God in us.

Ro. 8:19 "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God."

- G. We in Christ already have the light shining in our hearts by the Holy Spirit and by His grace, He has given us gifts and abilities that we can and should use to illuminate in this dark hour of history..

2 Cor. 4:6 "For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

III. LETTING THE LIGHT OF GOD SHINE THROUGH US

Matt. 5:14-16 "...A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven"

- A. Jesus compares our identity and purpose in Him to a city located on top of a hill and says that in that place we cannot hide. The exalted place that He has granted us in this world as the people of it cannot be hidden; we are his ambassadors; As Christians who do the good works of God we will be seen, not for our glory but for the world to glorify Him.
- B. Jesus also compares us to a lighted lamp that is there to shine; **The truths that have set us free in Christ are the ones the world needs to hear from us now that there is more confusion and deceit than ever. Jesus tells us: you are already lit, just let your light shine before those around you, your family, friends, your church and your community.** God has prepared good works for you and I to take action and He is glorified, He is counting on us.

Eph. 2:10 "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

- C. **This is precisely why we are beginning the year with this Week of Sanctification as part of our 21 Days of Consecration to resume our place and calling.** It is like a kind of re-set, in which everything in our lives is re-aligned to recover and maintain the purpose that God has assigned us.
- D. **The first week focuses on repentance,** not to feel condemned, but to recognize where we have passively resisted and fully surrender to Him so that His kingdom breaks into our lives, families, and communities as we all long for. **The second week is aimed at resuming the centrality and beauty of Christ** so that He remains at the center of everything we are and do. And finally, **the third week is about our call as a community:** Cultivate passion for God and compassion for others from the place of encounter with God, being faithful to activate and multiply our gifts.

IV. BREAKING LIMITS THROUGH FASTING

- A. Fasting consists of abstaining from food for a certain time to examine our hearts and seek the Lord with greater intensity than food itself. It is a means through which we can humble ourselves before God when things have reached their limit; It allows us to go to the next level.
- B. **Matt. 17** tells the story of a man whose son was severely tormented by a demon, he was a kind of suicidal spirit that constantly threatened the boy's life. The father had taken him to the disciples of Jesus but they could not do anything. When Jesus arrived he rebuked the demon, and it left him. The disciples ask him why they had not been able to heal him, to which Jesus replies:

Mat. 17:20-21 "...Because of your little faith.... ²¹ But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting."

- C. Jesus did tell them that they needed faith but they also needed to pray and fast. He counted as a fact that His own would fast; in **Matt. 6:16** He said: "**and when you fast...**" He did not say "**if you fast**" implying that it would be a common practice as part of our relationship with Him. The Lord Jesus Himself before beginning his ministry went through a forty days and forty nights fast.
- D. In **Is. 58** the Lord reveals the kind of fasting that He wants and that He promises to reward.:
1. **FASTING AND RECONCILIATION: v.4** "**Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high.**" When we forgive others for the bad things they have done to us, we open the door so that by the power of God it manifests itself and there is freedom and healing.
 2. **FASTING AND GENUINE ATTITUDE: v.5** "**Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord?**" It has to do with the heart more than with external rites; even giving up eating is not the heart of the fast.
 3. **FASTING AND JUSTICE: v.6** "**Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?**" When we remove every way we oppress and abuse others, we remove the obstacle that prevents God from releasing His blessing.
 4. **FASTING AND COMPASSION: v.7** "**Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?**" Our God is compassionate and as His children that is a mark that distinguishes that we are from His family.
 5. **FASTING AND CLEAN LIPS: v.9b** "**If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness**" Stopping criticizing and gossiping is not easy for our fallen nature; it is part of our culture. The more you pray for others and for what surrounds you, you will conquer your way of expressing yourself about what happens.

E. REWARDS OF FASTING:

1. **I RENEW, HEALING, DIRECTION AND PROTECTION:** v.8 y 11 *"Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.... 11 And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail."*
2. **PROMPT RESPONSE:** v.9a *"Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'"*
3. **CLARITY IN THE MIDST OF THE CRISIS** v.10 *"...then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday."*
4. **BEING USED BY GOD TO RESTORE:** v.12 *"And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in."*

V. IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Plan the type of fast you are going to carry out; make a list of requests and promises, get your Devotional book and plan what times you are going to spend praying. Attend Sanctification Week in person or online to unite with the whole church. In your Friendship Group use the devotional questions to reflect. The more you focus on your empty stomach and the sacrifice you are making, the more you will want to eat but we encourage you to watch and pray knowing the answers God will bring.

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. **Tomorrow begins our Sanctification Week, from January 2 to 6 from 7:00-8:30 p.m.** Our children's ministry will be open. Get your devotionals for children, youth (in English) and/or adults at the bookstore or online.
2. **Women's Retreats January 13-14 • Men's Retreat January 20-21.** Please register at the bookstore or at www.housesoflight.org
3. **Affirming Your Steps and the Discipleship School begin on Monday, January 23.** Please register at www.housesoflight.org
4. **The Course Intro to the House of Prayer begins on February 6.** Register today at www.nhop.la