

Set On A Hill . . . And Not Hidden

by David Diestelkamp

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matt. 5:14). Like it or not, want it or not, as Christians we radiate. Jesus Himself says our role is illumination, and it does not make sense to think we can or should turn that light on and off when we feel like it. His darkness-dispelling brilliance in us cannot be hidden anytime or anywhere.

Never have these words of Jesus been more needed than in our age of the internet and social media. The internet teems with promises of apparent anonymity, celebrity, relationship, information, entertainment and influence. That we are Christ's light of the world can easily get lost in the confusion. We must not forget that Christ in us should be visible in our online presence. Here are some things to shine:

Non-Directional Light

"You are the light of the world" (Matt. 5:14) means that we can impact a wide audience. What we say and post online is rarely private. Think of everyone — friends, enemies, unbelievers, people you hope to influence someday — seeing what we post and assuming it is a reflection of Christ. Generally, the internet is on a hill on which what we post cannot be hidden.

Glorifying, Thanksgiving, Praise, Contentment

"Do all things without complaining and disputing..." (Phil. 1:14). We cannot shine light through a filter of darkness. If we are set on a hill and hate our lives — our bodies, our weather, our jobs, our enemies, our government, our finances, our families, our church, the DMV — what darkness are we dispelling? Christlikeness changes us in practical, daily-life ways which enlighten rather than depress others.

Love Truth

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 describes those who perished *"because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved."* Our love of truth begins with Scripture and spreads to everything in our lives. Urban legend, gossip, unsubstantiated claims, pseudo-science, and anecdotal evidence are not adequate proof on any topic for lovers of truth. Sharing or liking falsehoods on any topic can dim the confidence of other in the light of truth we project to the world.

Speak Truth In Love

"...speaking the truth in love" is one of the goals of letting our lights shine (Eph. 4:15). There is a time for strong rebuke, mocking, and even ridicule, but social media paints with a broad brush and reaches a wider audience than those deserving of a tirade. This does not mean being silent or politically correct. It means replacing position statements with Biblical arguments and flippant rhetoric with strong Scripture used in context. Our responses to our world should radiate the fact that we love God and others enough to show them the gospel.

God Is All

It has never been easier than it is now to forget Jesus during daily life. Does what we post and "like" ever hint that *"All things were created through Him and for Him"*? (Col. 1:16). Social media offers us a sense of popularity, even celebrity if we get enough friends or followers. And people care about what we eat, drink, and wear! Do our pages shine self-centeredness, materialism, or even narcissism, or do they reflect thankfulness to God for all we have from Him to use in His service?

We are not invisible or neutral online. When we go on the internet we need to remember: *"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden"* (Matt. 5:14). We don't have to only post Scriptures and Bible lessons, but our comments about everything from politics to the weather should reflect a different mindset, a different light, from that of the world. With my apologies to James 1:19 — may we be swift to hear, slow to wrath, slow to post.

— via **THINK ON THESE THINGS**
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