

THE RIGHTEOUS PURSUES HOLINESS

Chapter 4 Lesson 2

Chapter's Subject: The Christian's Influence (Matt. 5:13-16)

Main Point: Light of the World (Matt. 5:14-16; Phil. 2:12-18)

Today's Study: Dispel Darkness

1. Character
2. Commission
3. Compelling Witness
4. Convincing Evidence
5. Christian Witness is in Great Demand ... Let Your Light Shine!

Time is available only for a brief discussion of review questions from previous lesson.

THE CHRISTIAN'S INFLUENCE Matt. 5:1-16

"Light of the Word"

Introduction

A. Excerpts on Light

1. What Does Light to the World Means?

Light is defined as life, as seen in John 1:4, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Those who have faith through Him will have eternal life. This life is a gift through Jesus, brought from God into a dying world. Those who walk in darkness do not have eternal life because they are unknown to God. The "Gospel" of Jesus Christ is light to those in darkness which guarantees "eternal life."

2. What Does the Bible Say About Being Light?

For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord (Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:4, 5). For God who said, "Let light shine out of the darkness," made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of His glory through Jesus Christ.

3. The Spiritual Meaning of Light and Darkness

Light comes from the one and only true God, our blessed heavenly Father. In the spiritual realm light represents life (John 1:4; 5:26; 10:10; etc.); God is light and He gives life. On the other hand, the enemy, Satan, the devil is the prince of darkness (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2). Satan represents death, which is what darkness represents in the spiritual realm. The powers of darkness exist to oppose the work of God and wage war against all believers (Eph. 6:12).

4. **The Believers are Lights**

We as Christians cannot afford to be in the dark about the events happening in the world. We have to be the lights that shine in the darkness. This means we have to be witnesses of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Light of the world (John 1:5a, 7; 8:12; etc.). The world and its governments are not addressing the real issues; they do not have what it requires in addressing man's real needs. We as Christians are not supposed to live like worldly minded people but be genuine ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

Sin is man's cardinal problem and victory can be realized only by being born again and maintain an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ by abiding in Him and living a life of righteousness and true holiness; resulting in the world seeing Jesus Christ radiating from our lifestyle. Let us be lights!! Some poor struggling seaman will be rescued, will be saved!!

B. **Quote on Evangelism**

1. "We hear a lot about evangelism today and how the church must pay more attention to evangelism. **But mostly evangelism is not what we tell people, unless what we tell is totally consistent with who we are.** It is who we are that is going to make the difference. It is who we are that is going to show the love that brought us all into being, that cares for us all, now and forever. If we do not have love in our hearts, our words of love will have little meaning. If we do not truly have faith, nobody is going to catch the fire of enjoyment from us. If our lives are not totally centered on Christ, we will not be Christ-bearers for others, no matter how pious our words." (Madeline L Eagle)
2. "The believer's job is to shine out Christ in their living and in their speaking." (Henry Hon)

C. **Brief Outline for Matt. 5:14-16** *(See previous lesson, lesson 1, for a more detailed outline)*

DISPEL DARKNESS

1. **Character v. 14a**

"You are light ..."

2. **Commission v. 14b**

"You are light of the world ..."

3. **Compelling Witness Vv. 14-15**

"You are light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house."

4. **Convincing Evidence v. 16**

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

D. **Three Quotes on Matt. 5:14**

1. John Gills Exposition of the Bible

“What the luminaries (*guiding lights*), the sun and moon, are in the heavens, with respect to corporal light, that the apostles were in the world with regard to spiritual light; carrying and spreading the light of the gospel not only in Judea, but all over the world, which was in great darkness of ignorance and error; and through a divine blessing attending their ministry, many were turned from the darkness of Judaism and Getilism, of sin and infidelity, to the marvelous light of divine grace.”

2. Clarke’s Commentary

“Ye are light of the world” – That is, the instruments which God chooses to make use to illuminate the minds of men; as He uses the sun to enlighten the world. Light of the world, was a title to the most eminent rabbins. Christ transfers the title from these, and gives it to His own disciples, who by the doctrines that He taught them, were to be means of diffusing the light of life throughout the universe.”

3. Barnes Commentary

“The light of the world – That light of the world often denotes the sun, John 11:9. The sun renders objects visible, shows their form, their nature, their beauties, their deformities. The term light is often applied to religious teachers. See Matt. 4:16; Luke 2:2; John 1:4; 8:12; Isa. 49:6. It is pre-eminently applied to Jesus in these places, because He is, in the moral world, what the sun is in the natural world. The apostles, Christian ministers and all Christians, are lights of the world because they, by their instructions and example, show what God requires, what is the condition of man, what is the way of duty, peace and happiness, the way that leads to heaven.”

“YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF HE WORLD”

Matt. 5:14-16 Amplified Bible

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck measure, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your moral excellence and your praise worthy, noble, and good deeds and recognize and honor and praise and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

DISPEL DARKNESS Matt. 5:14-016**A. Character Matt. 5:14a**

“Ye are lights ...”

Introductory Notes

A most important thought for you to remember is: the disciple’s (Believer’s) character is light. Christ is the Light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5). In Matt.5:14, He says to His disciples they are to be like Him ... “the light of the world.” The disciple is to undergo a radical change (change from the root): he is to become like Christ more and more and to reflect the light of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6-7). In regards to the believer as light, note the following characteristics.

1. Light is Clear and Pure

(a) It is clean, that is: good, right and true.

(b) The characteristic of light is pure, therefore the believer is to walk in the light meaning, walking in purity (Eph. 5:8; Rom. 13:12; Phil. 2:15).

(c) Eph. 5:8, 9

“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are light in the Lord: walk as the children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth ;)”

2. Light Penetrates

(a) By nature it cuts through and eliminates darkness.

(b) 1 Thess. 5:5

“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night nor of darkness.”

3. Light Enlightens

(a) It enlarges a person’s vision and knowledge of an era.

(b) John 12:35

“Then Jesus said unto them, yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light. Lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.”

4. Light Reveals

(a) It opens up the truth of an area, a whole new world, and it clears up the way to the truth and the life.

(b) John 14:6

“Jesus said unto him. I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

5. Light Guides

(a) It directs the way to go, leads along the right path.

(b) John 12:46

“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide [walk} in darkness.”

6. Light Strips Away the Darkness

John 3:19-20

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov’d.”

7. **Light Routs the Chaos**

(“rout”: defeat completely, to drive out; dispel)

Phil. 2:15

“That ye may be blameless and, the sons of God, without rebuke, in a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”

8. **Light Discriminates Between the Right Way and the Wrong Way**

(a) John 8:12

“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”

(b) **Eph. 5:8-10**

9. **Light Warns**

(a) It warns of dangers that lie ahead in a person’s path.

(b) Eph. 5:11-14

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove the. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done in them in secret. But all things that are reprov’d are made manifest by light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

10. **Light Protects**

(a) It protects a person from danger of darkness, from stumbling, falling and injuring himself.

(b) Rom. 13:12

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.”

B. Commission Matt. 5:14b

“Ye are the light of the world ...”

1. **World Mission**

(a) The disciples’ place to share the “Good News” is the world.

(1) The world is the place where believers are to move about and reflect their lives (live and minister).

(2) Why is this important? The answer: Because the world is blind, stumbling, groping, in chaos, in darkness and in trouble.

(3) Definitely, troublesome times are here, filling men’s heart with fear.

- Because sin is a reproach to anyone, any family, and any nation.
- Because man in all his might and majesty fades quickly as the most beautiful flower does.
- Because, in reality, sowing to the flesh results in reaping corruption.
- Because, although man spurns and rebel against God, deep in his heart he fears falling in the hands of an angry God.

- Jesus Himself said:
Luke 21:26 NKJV
“Men’s heart failing them for fear and the expectations of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.”
- (4) **The world needs the light of the gospel!! Let it shine!!**
- (b) All Christians are light in the Lord (Eph. 5:8)
- (1) Christians must shine as lights (Phil. 2:5) and those call to higher service need to shine in a special manner.
 - (2) Jesus Christ Himself is the Light of the world (John 8:12).
 - (3) All Christians and ministers are workers together with Christ and as a result have the same honor (great honor) placed upon them.
- (c) Truly the light is lustrous, glorious, and most welcome!
- (1) Light of the first day was glorious, it shone out of darkness.
 - (2) As the light of the first day was glorious, illuminating, majestic, etc. so is the morning light that we have every day.
 - (3) **The gospel of Jesus Christ is glorious, enlightening, etc. and so is everyone who spreads it!**
 - The world sat in darkness, Christ raised up His disciples to shine in it!
 - They shine for Him, by Him, as the moon reflects the sun to the dark side of the world.
- (d) **The reality is obvious!** (*Briefly noted*)
- (1) There are far too many believers who are complacent, having no intention of giving up their comfort zones and get involved in the mandate issued by Jesus Himself (Matt. 28:19-20; etc.). They are at ease in Zion and as a result we have witnessed in many local congregations the reality that the desire to have babies (spiritual) coming to birth only to realize they do not have in place what it requires for spiritual reproduction.
 - (2) **We have been witnessing more and more that so many un-churched in our communities are staying away from church services.** There are several reasons of which one is, we have not taken this old saying seriously: **“A home going church will have church going people.”**
- (e) Jesus, the Light of the world, is still the solution for a troubled, sin disastrous, hell bent world! We the Church must shine in the world!!
A quote from Barnes Notes: (*Quoted above*)
“The apostles, Christian ministers and all Christians are lights of the world because they, by their instructions and example, show what God requires, what is the condition of man, and what is the way of duty, peace and happiness – the way that leads to heaven.”

2. Wherever You Are!!

- (a) We will have time for only a brief coverage.

- (1) In the main study, the Righteous Pursues Holiness, I quoted the poem “My Neighbor’s Bible which has been repeated several times for emphasis; for example Chapter 4 Lesson 1 page 13. Please take time to reread.
 - (2) Too many believers are more concerned about public opinion rather than maintaining a genuine love relationship with God. It must be remembered that no matter what our position is, popularity, performance, etc. any form of inconsistency with God’s Word hinders the gospel.
 - (3) For those who specialize on always being in the spotlight, it should be remembered that champions are not made in the ring. Oh may our practical, lives speak loud and clear, showing the righteousness of God. Externalism has not helped, only hinders, rob, and destroys. **We are to be lights wherever we are, whether it is among the believers or among the lost!**
 - Beloved, one of the major problems with the Scribes and Pharisees was their emphasis on the external and neglecting what was essentially important and pleasing in the eyes of God. Christ was specific, our righteousness MUST exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 5:20).
 - It is an Old Testament passage but carries a powerful message ... **Isa. 58.** The Wesley Study Bible comments on Isa. 58:2-4 as follows: “A powerful ironic statement of the way formal religion can become a substitute for sincere commitment to God (see 2 Tim. 3:2-5); **find pleasure** (v. 3). They are pursuing religion for their own sakes, not for God and others.”
 - See also Isa. 65:5; Jer. 2:35; Matt. 7:6; Titus 1:16.
 - The challenge is to let our lights shine wherever we are, to the glory of God.
- (b) **We must not miss the point: The light in the world, and the candlestick in the home ... wherever you are!!**
- (1) Wherever the place may be, the believer is to shine!!
 - (2) The chorus that we sang some years ago: “This Little Light of Mine,” is a reality to be lived daily.
 - In singing that chorus we generally add different lines as we sing along. For example we would add: “Let it shine in my school;” “Let it shine in my home,” “let it shine in my neighborhood,” etc.
 - Unfortunately some believers are lights only on Sunday mornings or whenever they meet for worship but once out of the church building they live contrary to who they were in church.
- (c) **“Ye (you) are the light of the world”**
- (1) The world has no other light!!
 - You are its light ... its only light!!
 - Therefore, the light is placed where its influence can be used and felt.

- **This is an important lesson for all believers, they must be lights in their life, work and play!!**
- Every community, city, state, and nation . . . the whole world is to be illuminated by the light of believers.

(2) Acts 13:47

“For so the Lord has charged us, saying, I have set you to be light for the Gentiles (the heathen), that you may bring [eternal] salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth. [Isa. 49:6].”

(3) See also Phil. 2:15

C. Compelling Witness

Matt. 5:14-15

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.”

1. Luminaries (Unavoidable Witnesses)

(a) “A city that is set on a hill.”

- (1) Many cities of Judea were placed on the summits or sides of mountains and could be seen from afar.
- (2) Christ may have pointed to a city on a hill to point out to His disciples that they were likened to that illustration.

(b) **The disciples’ unavoidable witness.**

- (1) Two things are said about the city: it sits on a hill and it cannot be hidden.
- (2) Two things about the candle:
 - It is put on a candlestick.
 - It gives light to all that are in the house.
- (3) The disciples’ light is in the world, on a hill and in the house ... he is not concealed!

(c) The Disciples of Christ, especially those who are moving forward and are zealous in service, become remarkable and are taken notice of as beacons.

- (1) They are for signs, who men wonder at (Zech. 3:8) and all eyes are upon them.
- (2) Others envy them, hate them, censure them, and study how to destroy them ... but they will overcome as Christ did (John 16:33).

(d) **The Disciples of Christ were obscure men before He called them, but the character He put upon the Disciples dignified them.**

- (1) As preachers of the gospel they became like Him, they were His representatives.
- (2) Even though they were reproached by some because of the gospel:
 - They were respected for it by others ... they saw in them something special.
 - They were advanced to thrones and made judges (Luke 22:30)

- This actually refers to that of the future.
 - Christ hereby (Luke 22:30) refers to the **kingdom** of the future. **God's people** includes all who are truly redeemed through the death of Jesus Christ.
 - The language is figurative but clearly means that the apostles will receive honor at Christ's return.
 - All who follow Jesus' servant role are destined to honor from God.
- Definitely, the saints will be rewarded by God: Psa. 91:14; Isa. 58:14; Luke 19:17; 1 Cor. 6:2; Rev. 3:21. Oh, Beloved! Let us shine wherever we are to the glory of God!!

- **Keep this in mind: CHRIST HONORS THOSE WHO HONOR HIM!!**

(e) I will close this pointer with another quote from Barnes Notes ... referring to the disciples as lights on a hill:

"The eyes of the world were upon them. They must be seen; and as this was the case they ought to be holy, harmless and undefiled."

2. Lessons

Several practical lessons can be learnt from this account (Matt. 5:14-16), of which some are:

- (a) Believers shine as lights in the world. They are like cities and candles sitting in a dark world.
- (b) Light has different levels of strength
 - (1) It can be strong or weak, bright or dim.
 - (2) In fact, light can be so dim and provide so little light that a person can stumble and fall.
- (c) Some places in the world are brightly lit; others are dimly lit.
 - (1) Some cities have many bright lights; other cities have few bright lights.
 - (2) Some homes have strong lights, other homes have weak lights
 - (3) Every city, every home and every business – every place on earth that has the witness of a Christian believer – has some light either weak or strong.
- (d) A light can become so weak it has no use.
- (e) A light is not to be hid. It is lit to be seen and to give light. Therefore a light is conspicuous; it has many eyes upon it!

3. Light in Demand

- (a) Reference was made earlier to John 3:19 and although so many have rejected, scoffed at, scorned, etc. the Word of God, there will be a time when it will be greatly desired, longed for, desperately searched after but it will be too late (see Psa. 74:9; Lam. 2:9; Ezek. 7:26; Amos 8:11-12; Luke 15:14; Rev. 3:17)
- (b) Irrespective of negative response to the gospel. Light is still in great demand.
 - (1) There are times when everyone wants lights – at least for some time.
 - They seek it out; admire it; walk in it; reaps its benefits; joy in it and suggest its use.

- The natural world needs light, even more so man needs the Light of the world.
- (2) 2 Cor. 4:6 NKJV
 “For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
- (3) See also Eph. 5:13-14

D. Convincing Evidence

Matt. 5:16

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

1. Good Works

“... that they may see your good works ...” (v. 16)

(a) Salvation is not by works (Eph. 2:8-9)

- (1) No man can redeem himself, only one was worthy ...
- Jesus Christ was destined to be our Redeemer (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 53; Col. 1:21-29; etc.).
 - John the Baptist states of Christ:
 “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29; see also 1 Cor. 5:7; 1 Peter 1:19; Rev. 7:9; 15:3; 21:22).
 - Only Jesus Christ was and is worthy to be man’s Redeemer
 - The Only Intercessor Isa. 59:16
 - The Only Remedy John 3:14
 - The Only Nourishment John 6:35
 - The Only Source of Truth John 6:67, 68
 - The Only Savior Acts 4:12
 - The Only Foundation 1 Cor. 3:11
 - No other was sinless ... He is our great High Priest, the sinless One ... Heb 4:15. See also 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22.
 - The price for our redemption has been paid once and for ever (1 Peter 3:18).
- (2) Salvation is a gift ... (Note briefly):
- We do not pay for gifts but receive them with gratitude.
 - Indeed freely we have received (Rev. 22:17) salvation by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8-9).
 - Nothing that we do can in anyway compensate for our redemption; it has been purchased wholly and solely by the precious blood of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19).
 - Definitely we are not saved by works but too many believers have not read beyond Eph. 2 verse 9. Please note carefully verse 10.
 - There are many reasons why “good works” is lacking in so many believers but we will reserve the discussion of this subject for another lesson.

- I will summarize what I intended to say on Eph. 2:10 by quoting from the Life Application Study Bible.
“We become Christians through God’s unmerited favor, not as the result of any effort, ability, intelligent choice, or act of service on our part. However, out of gratitude for the free gift, we will seek to help and serve others with kindness, love, and gentleness, and not merely to please ourselves. While no action or work we do can help us obtain salvation, God’s intention is that our salvation will result in acts of service. We are not saved merely for our own benefit but to serve Christ and build up the Church (Eph. 4:12).”
 - Time wouldn’t allow but you are encouraged to study and build upon:
 - James 2, NB Vv. 14-20 and 21-26.
 - 1 John 3:16-19
- (b) The disciples’ purpose; see again Matt. 5:16
- (1) The believer has light
 - Light is already within him
 - He is the light of God upon the earth.
 - Observe carefully what Jesus said in the text: **“Let your light so shine.” (Matt. 5:16).**
 - (2) The believer can refuse to let his light shine.
 - He can turn it off, refuse to turn it on, shade it, darken it, turn it away, and direct its beam in another direction.
 - Leading an inconsistent Christian lifestyle can obscure, obstruct or obliterate your radiance!!
- (c) Believers are to let their lights shine in order to show forth good works.
- (1) The command “let your light so shine” means “let your good works be seen.”
 - (2) The believer is to show good works to the world, but he must be careful how he does his works before others (James 3:13).
- (d) See also 1 Tim. 6:17-19; Titus 2:7, 14; 3:8; Heb. 10:24-25; 1 Peter 2:12; etc.)

2. Glorify God Matt. 5:16

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and **glorify your Father which is in heaven.**”

- (a) The believer’s life should “glorify God” . . . some example of how this can be done:
- (1) **By Praise**
Psa. 22:23: “Ye that fear the Lord praise Him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and fear Him, all the seed of Israel.”
 - (2) **By Good Works**
Matt. 5:16 (Quoted above)
 - (3) **By Fruit Bearing**
John 15:8: “Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much **fruit**, so shall ye be my disciples.”

- Winning Souls (Rom. 1:13)
- Righteousness (Rom. 6:20; Phil. 1:11)
- Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)

The above, on fruit bearing, has been discussed in Chapter 3 Lesson 2, pages 21-31.

(4) **By Spiritual Unity**

Rom. 15:6: "That ye may with one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

(5) **By Entire Consecration**

1 Cor. 6:20: "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

(b) Believers are to let their lights shine in order to stir men to glorify God.

(1) **This is the supreme reason why our light is to shine before men: to stir them to glorify God.**

(2) The glory of God is to be the primary aim of all believers (1 Peter 4:11; 5:11)

- Nothing else is more important!! God must be glorified!! He must be exalted!!
- We are living in a time when there is too much emphasis on self!! Too much of man is on display!! God may be mentioned, but when we look closer, it is all about men. Their qualifications, their accomplishments, etc.
- **Jesus Christ is the one who died for the sins of the world; He is the one who was placed on the cross!! (John 3:14; 12:32)**
- Let Him be glorified in all that we are, say and do!!

(3) **The way God is glorified is by the light, the good works of believers shining before men.**

- God is glorified when believers glow with God's righteousness into the darkness where men are.
 - Jesus came to eradicate darkness (Luke 1:79; etc.)
 - We must remain in Jesus Christ in order to glow for Him.
 - See John 12:35-36; Eph. 5:8; John 15:1-8.
 - 1 Thess. 5:5
"Ye are all the children of light, and children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."
- The good works of believers are to be done in darkness (among those living in the darkness of sin) not only within cloistered (confined) walls with other lights (John 15:8, 16; 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Peter 4:11)

(c) Several significant lessons ... note a few:

(1) Light has one purpose: to shine before men.

- Light is not seen unless it is placed before men.
- If people are not contacted there are no eyes to see the light.
- A believer must not seclude himself from others (remember we can associate without mixing up, that is adapting to the darkness).

- (2) Other lights do not need the light to be liberated ... they are already out of the darkness.
- It is the people in darkness who need the light.
 - Believers! “Let your light so shine **before men**” – before men who are in darkness.
 - Believers are not to be restricted to their place of worship moving only among other lights.
 - The more the lights shine in the darkness, the more the darkness will be eliminated.
- (3) Believers are not the only one to glorify God. They are to go out and cause those in darkness to be liberated and glorify God!!

E. Christian Witness in Great Demand!! Let Your Light Shine!! Phil. 2:12-18

Introduction

1. Quote Summarizing Phil. 2:12-18

The following quote is taken from The Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible. In regards to the emphasis on unity, you may want to read Philippians 1 and 2; in fact the importance of fellowship can be seen in all chapters of the Book of Philippians. The importance of unity is also evident throughout the main study, “The Righteous Pursues Holiness”; we, as believer, must be united as this is very much evident among the true people of God and testifies to the world of the sincerity of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

“This passage is still dealing with unity – unity in the church and unity among believers. But the passage is unique because it brings up the great subject of salvation. Keep in mind that salvation means deliverance and that salvation is of God. It is God who has saved and delivered you: ‘For by grace are ye saved’ (Eph. 2:8-9). But once you are saved, go to work – work out your own salvation and deliverance. Salvation is not stagnant and complacent. A saved person is not to be sitting around doing and letting the chips fall where they may. A saved person is to get up and work. He is to do all he can to work out his own deliverance. This is the subject of the present passage. If the church is to be unified – if believers are to walk in a spirit of unity, then they must look at their salvation – at the whole scope of their life and the glorious salvation God has given them – and they must do all they can to work out their own salvation.”

2. I will discuss the passage (Phil. 2:12-18) based on the following pointers:
- (a) **Work Out.** v. 12
 - (b) **Will of God** v. 13
 - (c) **Wasteful Conduct to be Avoided** v. 14
 - (d) **Wholesomeness in the Midst of Corruption** v. 15
 - (e) **Witness of the Word of Life** v. 16
 - (f) **Workers Together (Follow the example of sacrificial labor)** Vv. 17-18

3. This we do need to remember, if we are going to dispel the darkness, we must be lights. For us to effectively be the witness and bring about the needed change there must be fellowship with God and each other. There is victory in unity but divided we fall. **The Christian” Witness is in Great Demand, SHINE AS LIGHTS!!!**

Phil. 2:12-18 ESV

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only in my presence but much more in my absence, work out by your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, **among whom you shine as lights of the world**, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.”

1. Work Out Phil. 2:12

(a) Work out your own salvation

(1) Not your own righteousness

- Our own righteousness is vain, empty and useless (Isa. 64:6)
- We are declared righteous ONLY because of Jesus Christ.
 - He is the only way (John 14:6; Acts 4:12)
 - Our righteousness is obtained because of Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:21; 2 Cor. 5:17)
- To be “Clothed in Christ’s Righteousness” is to be declared righteous “in Christ.”
 - See the main study, *The Righteous Pursues Holiness*, for example Chapter 1 lesson2, page 11.
 - We have “taken off the old man” (Col. 3:8) and “put on the new man.” (Col. 3:12). Read Colossians chapter 3.
 - Stating it simply, we “have put on Jesus Christ” (Rom. 13:12-1`4)

(2) This is an exhortation to diligence and genuine commitment for those of the household of God. We must work out our salvation!!

- There are far too many believers who are not aware that after baptism, as believers, we have other responsibilities.
See the main study, The Righteous Pursues Holiness, Chapter 3 lesson 3, pages 1 to 4 for “Some Duties after Baptism.”
- “Work out your own salvation” (Phil. 2:12)
 - It is the salvation of our soul (1 Peter 1:9)
 - Nothing can be exchanged for our soul (Matt. 16:26).
 - Our salvation is secured only **in** Jesus Christ (Matt. 11:29)
 - Jesus Christ is the Shepherd and Bishop of our soul (1 Peter 2:25).

- Jesus is the Author and Source of our eternal salvation

Heb. 5:9 NKJV

“And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”

- This involves the deliverance from all the evils of sin (Isa. 1:16; John 8:11; etc.)
- It exposes us to the possession of all good in Jesus Christ (Psa. 36:8; John 10:10; Phil. 4:19.
- It guarantees our happiness, joy, and, contentment under any situation (Phil. 4:10-13, NB v. 11; Heb. 13:5; etc.)
- We have a treasure in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7).
 - Above everything else we must secure the welfare of our souls
 - It is our salvation, the salvation of our soul..
 - It is not for us to judge others but to maintain the standard whereby we will be able to help the weak.
 - See Jude 3
 - **We must be diligent in the use of all means which are conducive to our spiritual health.**
 - “With fear and trembling” (Phil 2:12). Lest we become careless and lose what we have in God!!
 - See Heb. 4:1 (See also Acts 5:11; 9:31; 10:2)

(b) **As believers saved by grace (Eph. 2:8, 9), we must work out our salvation to the end. Failing to do so will result in us losing the salvation freely given to us.**

(1) **We do not work out our salvation by mere human effort, but by means of God’s grace and the Holy Spirit’s power given to us.**

- The whole movement of the Christian life from beginning to end is dependent on God’s grace.
- Time wouldn’t allow for details but this has been discussed before; please note the following (*repeated for emphasis*):
 - By grace we are made free from the bondage of sin (Rom. 6:20, 22)
 - We are to be loyal in doing His will (Phil. 2:13)
 - We are to grow in Christ, go on to maturity (2 Peter 3:18)
 - See also Acts 4:33; 11:2.

(2) **In order to work out our salvation we must resist sin and follow the desires of the Holy Spirit.**

- This involves a sustained effort to use every God-appointed means for defeating evil and revealing Christ’s life.
- Thus, working out our salvation focuses on the importance of sanctification which contribute to living a life of righteousness and true holiness (Gal 5:17; note also Vv. 16-26).

- (3) **We work out our salvation by ever drawing near to Christ (Heb. 7:25; Jude 24) and receiving His power to will and to act according to the good pleasure of God (Phil. 2:13).**
- (4) **Working out or walking out our salvation, as noted before, it must be done “with fear and trembling:**
- This is an awe (reverential respect mixed with fear) of the power, holiness and righteous retribution of God and a dread of sinning against Him and face the consequences (Ex. 3:6; Psa.119:120; Luke 12:4-5).
 - It is not a destructive fear, but a wholesome and redeeming fear that leads to God’s nearness and blessing; to moral purity, and to a full life and final salvation (Psa. 5:7; 85:9; Prov. 14:27; 16:6).

2. Will of God Phil 2:13

(a) The necessity of obedience

(1) Note again Phil. 2:12

“As you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence.”

- Their focus was upon the will of God and as a result their loyalty was not man based. It was not about impressing men but “being acceptable unto God” (Rom. 12:1).
 - Neither was this display of loyalty a lack of love and respect for the Apostle Paul but a whole-hearted commitment to God and rightly so.
 - The fact remains, God’s will must always be first and foremost . . . no matter what!
 - It was so with Jesus Christ (Matt. 26:39, 42; John 4:34)
 - It was so with the Apostle Paul (Acts 21:14, read Vv. 1-16 for context).
- (2) It is the believer’s responsibility to work at obedience by obeying the stirrings of God within the heart.
- The word “worketh” (v. 13) means energize.
 - God arouses, stirs, and energize the heart of the believer to do His will.
 - These stirrings within are of God!
 - God is working within us – energizing us – giving us both the **will and power** to do what pleases Him.

- **1 Thess. 5:19 Amplified Bible**

“Do not quench (suppress or subdue) the Holy Spirit.”

(b) “It is God who works in you” (Phil. 2:13 NKJV)

- (1) It is our responsibility to use our utmost endeavors in working out our salvation, yet still we must go forth, and go in a dependent attitude on the grace of God.
- (2) God’s grace works in His children to produce in them both the desire and power to do His will.
- (3) We must note that while God works in us, such work is not of compulsion or irresistible grace.

- The work of grace within us (Phil. 1:6; 1 Thess. 5:24; 2 Tim. 4:18; Titus 3:5-7) is always dependent on our cooperation and response of faith (Phil 2:12, 14-16; compare with Rom. 4:16; 5:2).
- Our duty is to grab hold of the stirrings and not let them pass. We are to grab hold of them and do exactly what is impressed by God through the Holy Spirit.

(4) The secret to a changed life is to submit to God's control and let Him work in us.

(5) **Two important lessons:**

- **First, The Wonderful Truth**
 - God has not left us alone in our struggles to do His will.
 - He works with us: moves, stirs, energizes, and arouses us to get up and get to it.
 - **He is the Divine Keeper!! He Keeps the Saints!!**
 - He is the Pilgrims Companion (Gen. 28:15)
 - He is the Protecting Father (John 17:11)
 - He is the Sleepless Watchman (Psa. 121:4)
 - He is the Almighty Guardian (2 Tim. 1:2)
- **Second, The Woeful Situation**
 - Tragedy results when we ignore, neglect and refuse to respond to the stirrings and workings of God.
 - Time for one reference: Prov. 1:20-33
 - It important to remember: "Do not provoke God!!" (Heb. 3:16-19)

(c) **Our ultimate goal is Christlikeness!!**

(1) To be like Christ, we must train ourselves to think like Christ (1 Cor. 2:16; Phil. 2:5; 1 Peter 4:1)

(2) To change our desires to be more like Christ, we need:

- The power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; Phil. 1:19; 1 John 2:27)
- The Influence of faithful Christians (Prov. 17:17; 27:17; Ecc. 4:9, 10)
- Obedience to God's Word ... not just exposure to it (Matt.7:24-28; Rom. 2:13; James 1:22; etc.).
- Sacrificial service (Matt. 16:24-26; Luke 14:26-27)

(3) Often, it is in doing God's will that we gain the desire to do it (Phil. 4:8, 9).

(4) What is important and necessary is to do what He wants and trust Him to change your desire.

3. **Wasteful Conduct to be Avoided Phil 2:14**

(a) **Thought from the past.**

(1) My mom usually say: certain type of behavior, for example disputes, fights, etc. are done by idle people who do not have anything meaningful to occupy their time.

(2) A well known phrase: "The devil makes work for idle hands."

- It is one of the numerous variants that expresses the idea that trouble or evil arises from not keeping busy. It's an old saying believed to go back to the 12 century.
- Two other ways this phrase can be stated:
 - Idle hands are the devils workshop.
 - The devil finds mischief for idle hands to do.

(b) **Defining “murmuring” and “disputing” Phil. 2:14**

(1) “Murmuring” means to mutter, grumble, and complain.

- It means the quiet, soft, behind-the-back, undertone of murmuring and grumbling.
- It is the kind of criticism, dissatisfaction, faultfinding and gossip within groups or cliques.

(2) “Disputing” means arguments, outward and vocal questionings, and expressions of doubts.

- Simply stated, it is as Scripture indicates and as we observe: disputes or arguments that have broken out in the open.
- Some synonyms are: debate, discussion, argument, controversy, disagreement, quarrel, strife, etc.

(c) **Several significant facts:**

(1) Murmuring and disputes are not to be encouraged or allowed in the church.

- **Phil. 2:14 states:** “Do all things without murmuring and complaining.”
- If murmuring begins among a clique or even between two people, the church should deal with it just as Christ laid out (See Matt. 18:15-20).
- Murmurings, unless stopped, will lead to disputes, turmoil and divisiveness.

(2) Murmurings and disputes are never of God!!

- This is the primary lesson being conveyed ... note again the verse ... **“Do all things without ...”**
- **James 4:1 Amplified Bible**
“What Leads to strife (discord and fueds) and how do conflicts (quarrels and fightings) originate among you? Do they not arise from your sensual desires that are ever warring in your bodily members?”

(3) Murmurings and disputes were the very sins that brought judgment upon the Jews in the wilderness wanderings of Israel.

- See 1 Coir. 10:1-22, NB v. 10
1 Cor. 10:10 KJV
“Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.”
- See also Ex. 14:11; 15:24; 17:3; Num. 11:1; 20:2; 21:4, 5; etc.

(4) The people who murmur and dispute is not working out his salvation.

- Despite the conditions of the world he is not stirring to be light of the world.

- He is doing the opposite of what he should be doing which results in bringing judgment upon himself.

(d) **Why complaining and arguing are so harmful?**

- (1) If all that people know about a church is that its members constantly argue, complain, and gossip, they get a false impression of Christ and the Good News.
- (2) Belief in Christ should unite those who trust in Him (John 17: 11, 21; etc.)
- (3) If your church is always complaining and arguing, it lacks the unifying power of Jesus Christ.

- (4) The results of murmuring are far worse than people think. Here are some negative results:

Hurts	Opposes God's will
Damages	Hinders progress
Divides	Mislead people
Tears down	It is self centered
Brings down people	It frustrates growth
It distracts from Christ	It elevates selfish opinion
It pushes people away from the church	

- (5) Stop arguing with other Christians or complaining about people and conditions within the church; instead let the world see Jesus Christ, **Let your light shine!! (John 13:35; Matt. 5:16).**

- Our lives should be characterized by moral purity, patience and peacefulness, so that we will "shine brightly" in a dark and depraved world.
- **The Christian Witness is in Great Demand!!**
 - Are you shining brightly, or are you clouded by complaining and arguing?
 - Do not let dissensions ("*dissent*": *disagreement, dispute, conflict, etc.*) snuff out your light
 - **SHINE OUT FOR GOD!!** Your role is to shine until Jesus returns and bathes the world in His radiant glory!!

4. **Wholesomeness in the Midst of Corruption Phil. 2:15**

This I must note, that when you look in details at Phil. 2:15, some very strong terms are used as it relates to purity. As noted in the main study, The Righteous Pursues Holiness, our emphasis on holiness is not advocating that we obtain "Adamic Perfection," "Angelic Perfection," and certainly not "Absolute Perfection. However, as we saw in the main study, "Christian Perfection" is possible (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-39; Mark 12:29-31) and when we love God with OUR ALL we will seek to live according to His will which involves holiness of life (Lev. 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16). The Word of God has emphatically stated the importance of living holy lives based on the Word of God (Heb. 12:14; Eph. 4:24, 25; Phil. 3:14). This I do emphasize, that if we are going to let our lights shine, we must

DAILY and sincerely pursue righteousness and true holiness which requires diligence and effort. In essence, Phil. 2:15 is a call for purity which is compulsory and possible.

NOTE: Brief Summary of verse 15

I have divided verse 15 noting five pointers; below is a summary of the first three as quoted from Matthew Henry commentary; these pointers will be briefly discussed.

“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke ...”; that you be not injurious to any in word or deed, and give no offence: We should endeavor not only to do no hurt, but to come under the just suspicion of it. **Blameless and sincere; some read it; blameless before men, sincere towards God.**

‘The sons of God’: It becomes those to be blameless and harmless who stand in such a relation, and are favored with such a privilege. The children of God should differ from the sons of men.”

(a) Guiltless

“That ye may be blameless ...” (Phil. 2:15a)

(1) “Blameless”: ... free from fault and severe disapproval.

- To be faultless, above reproach and rebuke.
- Consider a few synonyms for blameless: innocent, guiltless, above reproach, beyond criticism, perfect, etc.

(2) The believer is to live a blameless, faultless and pure life, both in the church and in the world.

- No one is to be able to point to the Christian and accuse or blame him with anything.
- The Christian is to be clean, unspotted, spotless, holy, righteous, and pure before God and man.

(3) The message here is: That you may give no occasion for others to accuse you of having done wrong.

(b) Guileless

“That ye may be ... and harmless ...” (Phil 2:15b)

(1) “Harmless”: The Greek means that which is unmixed; that which is pure and sincere.

- The essence of what is communicated here is that they (Philippians ... as well as all believers) should be without **guile**.
 - The word guile means sly or cunning intelligence.
 - Some synonyms for guile are cunning, craftiness, artfulness, shrewdness, deception, wiles, etc.
- The emphasis is to be without guile. Some antonyms for guile are honesty, frankness, candor, sincerity, uprightness, etc.
- To be guileless means devoid of guile, innocent and without deception.
- Some synonyms for guileless are honest, sincere, genuine, unworldly, etc.

(2) The idea here (in Phil. 2:15) is they should be artless (without deception).

- That they would injure no one.
- The word occurs only ...

- In Matt. 10:16 and Phil. 2:15 where it is rendered “harmless.”
- Also used in Rom. 16:19 ... observe the latter part of the verse
KJV: “... and simple concerning evil.”

Amplified Bible: “... guileless as to what is evil.”

- (3) The believers are to work at being harmless: unmixed, unadulterated, and innocent.
- It is the idea of flour or grain passing through a sieve to separate the pure from the impure.
 - See our previous lesson (Chapter 4 Lesson 1) for example pages 23-24, where we also discussed the necessity of sincerity as meaning without mixture.
- (4) Keeping ourselves pure involves our thought and lives.
- We are not to be polluted by watching, reading and listening to worldly and sexual attractions.
 - We are **not to be given over to** worldly and sexual attractions.
- (5) Our thoughts and lives are to be pure, clean, uncontaminated and unpolluted. See Rom. 16:19; Phil. 1:10; 2:15; Heb. 7:26; 2 Tim. 4:18; Jude 24.

(c) **Good Report**

“That ye may be ... the **sons of God without rebuke** ...” (Phil 2:15c)

(1) “Sons of God”

- Identifying us for who we are ... “sons of God” ... “children of God.”
 - Not a reason to become swell-headed and overcome with destructive pride but in reality that’s who we are (**John 1:12**; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 4:7; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:1)
 - Not by creation only as with angels but redeemed by the blood of Jesus and adopted in the family of God (1 Peter 1:18-25; 1 John 5:13; Gal. 4, NB Vv. 1-7)
- Universally, He is our Father!
 - It is the result of the new life Rom., 8, NB Vv. 9-17, highlight v. 15.
 - No matter our country of origin, etc. we all pray to Him as “Our Father” (Matt. 6:9)
 - See also Rom. 3:29; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; Heb. 12:9; 1 John 5:7; etc.
- Called out! As children of God we are distinctive!!
 - The sons of God are clearly distinguished from the world. It is a title the unregenerate do not share!!
 - **This is a spiritual relationship in which the individual lives in total subjection to God the Father.**
 - it is a relation signifying regeneration; one in which there is not only yielding to higher powers but enjoying the privileges (1 Peter 2:1-11; etc.)

(2) “...without rebuke ...”

- **Clarification** ... “without rebuke ...”

- We are not without rebuke of the Father.
- Admonition, correction, chastisement will be done as necessary.
- Several reasons why God disciplines His sons (children); we have time to highlight three ... see for example Heb. 12:3-11.
 - They are a sign that we are God's children (Heb. 12:7-8)
 - They are assurance of God's love and concern for us (Heb. 12:6)
 - The Lord's discipline has two purposes ... (a) that we might not finally be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:31-32), and (b) that we might share God's holiness and continue to live sanctified/holy lives without which we will never see Him (Heb. 12:10-12, 14; etc.).
- **Call to purity Phil. 2:15c**
 - Note the Call to Purity (Phil. 2:15c)
 - **KJV:** "... the sons of God without rebuke ..."
 - **Amplified Bible:** "... children of God without blemish ..."
 - **It is a call to purity of life!!**
 - Believers are to work at being "without rebuke" meaning: "without blemish, spot, or defect."
 - This is a word taken from the O.T. in particular to when sacrifices were made to God (Ex. 12:15; Lev. 6:6; 9:2, 3; Ezek. 46:14; etc.)
 - Our redemption was secured by One without blemish (1 Peter 1: 18-19)
 - The Church to be presented is one without blemish (**Eph. 5:24-27**; James 1:27; 2 Peter 3:14)
 - There is no alternative! This is God's way!!
 - The believer is to live and walk upon earth under the eyes and scrutiny of God.
 - He is to walk without any blemish, spot, or defect (Matt. 5:20; Heb. 12:14; etc.)
 - He is to be without blame, without giving occasion for anyone to complain of him.
 - Should he inadvertently sin (**not habitually sinning**); see 1 John 1:5-10; 2:1-2.
 - If the believer is wrongly accused (1 Peter 2:15; 3:16).

(d) Godless Environment ... Phil. 2:15d

KJV: "... in a midst of a crooked and perverse nation ..."

Amplified Bible "... in the midst of a crooked and wicked generation [spiritually perverted and perverse] ..."

(1) The Church (Universal) is not only "called out in a hostile environment" but the environment in which it exists is warped and wicked!!

(2) The believer lives in a crooked and perverse generation.

- The world is wicked and evil, twisted and perverted; therefore the believer has a difficult path to walk.
 - Despite the conditions in which we serve, we must walk the walk, in other words, live consistent Christian lives.
- (3) Jesus and His apostles emphasized that the world we live in is a “faithless and perverse generation.” (Matt. 17:17; compare with Matt. 12:39; Acts 2:40).
- The people of the world are in deception and darkness, and thus have a distorted view of life, values and religion.
 - They follow immoral ways of life and reject the norms of the Word of God.
 - They are people of perverted sentiments and habits.
 - They are inclined to complain and find fault.
 - They will take every occasion to pervert what the believers do and say, and who seek every opportunity to retard (*slow down, keep back*) the cause of truth and righteousness.
- (4) Adapted to an evil environment.
- The Israelites were a perverse and wicked generation, “who failed to carry out their responsibilities as children of God.” (Deut. 32:5; Isa. 59:1-8; etc.).
 - The Jews were among the bitterest foes of the gospel and did perhaps more than any other people to embarrass the cause of truth and prevent the spread of true righteousness.
 - Paul is hopeful that the Philippians in the midst of a similar **crooked and perverse nation may shine as lights in the world.**
- (5) The need is urgent and demanding!!
- Where there is no true religion, little can be expected but crookedness and perverseness.
 - The more crooked and perverse others are, among who we live, the greater the demand; as a result the more careful we should be to keep ourselves blameless and harmless.
 - In loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, we are to be pure and without faults in order to proclaim His glorious redemption to the lost world (1 John 2:15)

(e) **Glow with God’s Righteousness!**

“... among whom ye shine as light in the world.” (Phil. 2:15e)

- (1) In the main study, *The Righteous Pursues Holiness*, I quoted a renowned holiness scholar who stated: “If you take holiness away from the people, you leave them in total darkness.” Time is not available for details but note these highlighted pointers:
- The unordered world was described as “without form, void, and **in darkness.**” We will not get into the debates centered on this account but do note the fact that darkness is typical of when anyone revolt against God.

- My emphasis at this time is to note that light is a basic prerequisite for life physically and spiritually.
 - This we are also aware of: Jesus Christ is the light of men and as in the creation account, light separates darkness, even so Jesus Christ dispels the darkness from the lives of men. See John 1:1-14. John 8:12; etc.
 - The Egyptians worshipped the sun-god Re (or Ra) but they still didn't know the true source of light. Their sun-god was unable to give light when God struck them with plague number nine ... "darkness" (Ex. 10:21-29) and all the gods they worshipped were unable to deliver them from the wrath of God.
 - Throughout the history of man, there has been a rejection of God's light because of man's depraved nature which makes him loves darkness (John 3:19; Rom. 1, NB Vv. 18-32; etc.)
 - Because of the prevailing darkness, and the eternal damnation, it is imperative for us to reflect Jesus Christ and let His presence radiantly glow through us; this is a call for "Radiant Lives" (Job 11:17; Ecc. 8:1; Dan. 12:3; John 5:35; Acts 6:15).
- (2) Indeed, we live in a crooked and perverse generation!!
- There are so many who publicly show that they are not ashamed, nor have any intention of giving up their derogatory and disgraceful lifestyle.
 - The world is wicked and evil, twisted and perverted; therefore the believer has a difficult path to walk.
 - However, our testimony is in great demand and our lives must glow to the glory of God.
 - We are to shine as lights, reflecting the purity and holiness of God.
- (3) "Shine as lights..." (Phil. 2:15)
- The "lights" refer to the heavenly bodies, sun, moon and stars. As these provide physical light for the physical world, so **the light of the Christian is to be poured out on the darkness of the moral and spiritual world.**
 - The image may also be that of light-houses on a seacoast.
 - Light-houses are placed on a dangerous coast to inform and assist vessels of imminent danger, and to save them from shipwreck.
 - The Christian's genuine devotion to God, living a life of righteousness and true holiness, shines on a dark world that is on a dark and perilous voyage.
 - The refrain of "Let the Lower Light Be Burning."
 Let the lower lights be burning!
 Send a gleam across the wave!
 Some poor fainting, struggling seaman
 You may rescue, you may save.
 - "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matt. 5:14)

- See also Acts 13:47; 1 Thess. 5:5-11; etc.
- **Phil 2:15 Amplified Classic Edition**
 “That you may show yourselves to be blameless and guileless, innocent and uncontaminated, children of God without blemish (faultless, unrebukable) in the midst of a crooked and wicked generation [spiritually perverted and perverse] among whom you are seen as bright lights (stars or beacons shining out clearly) in the [dark] world.”

5. Witness of the Word of Life (Phil. 2:16)

(a) Source of Life

“Holding forth the word of life ...” (Phil. 2:16a)

(1) We are witnesses of the great mystery of which so many looked for (Col. 1:21-29).

- The Pentateuch, Poetic Books, and Prophetic Books all testified of His coming ... The Anointed One ... The Long Awaited Deliverer!! (Gen. 3:15; Deut. 18:15; Psa. 68:18; 110:1; Isa. 9:2, 7; 61:1-3; etc.)
- John the Baptist bore witness of His coming and His ministry (Matt. 3, NB Vv. 11-17; Mark 1:1-8; Luke 3, NB Vv. 15-18; John 1:6-8, 19-28).
- John the Apostle bore witness of Him in a moving, compelling and authentic way ... example
 - “In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men.” (John 1:4 Amplified Bible)
 - John testified of the “Logos,” the “Living Word;” He is the second person in the Trinity and He is God (John 1:1).
- The disciples and the early Church bore witness of Him (Luke 24:48; Acts 1:22; 5:32; 10:39; 1 Peter 5:1; 2 Peter 1:16); similarly, we are to be His (Jesus Christ) witnesses (Matt. 10:7, 27; Mark 16:5; Luke 9:2, 60; **Rom. 10:14-17**; etc.).

(2) What do we have to offer?

“Holding out [to it] and offering [to all men] **the Word of Life.**” (Phil. 2:16a Amplified Bible. . . . (See also John 1:1-14; etc.)

- He is the Word of Life (Matt. 4:4; John 6:6; Acts 5:20; James 1:18)
- He is the Bread of Life (John 6:32-35, 47-51, 58)
- **Jesus Christ is Life!!**
 - Radiant Life (John 1:4)
 - Abundant Life (John 10:10)
 - Life for the Dead (John 11, NB Vv. 23-26)
 - The Way, the Truth, the Life (John 14:6)
 - Life Everlasting (Rom. 5:21; 1 John 1:2)
 - Death Abolished, Life Secured (2 Tim. 1:10)
 - He is the Only Source of Life (1 John 5:12)

(3) The Word, Jesus Christ, guarantee life!! Eternal life!!!

- Many seek the fountain of youth, determined to look and stay young. The objective is seeking eternal youthfulness.
 - The Word of Life not only brings eternal youthfulness, it guarantees perfection; a perfect world and a perfect life forever.
 - We seek the cure for cancer and other diseases but the Word of Life is the true source of an effective cure (Rev. 21:4); Jesus Christ guarantees the energy of everlasting life.
 - Note several Scriptures: 1 Cor. 15, NB Vv. 12-34, 35-50, 51-58; Rev. 21 and 22; etc.
 - The terrible tragedy is that many professing believers do not “hold out” the “Word of Life,” we hold back.
 - **“Holding out [to it] and offering [to all men] the Word of Life ...” (Phil. 2:16a Amplified Bible).**
 - The need is to hold on to this great truth firmly and make it available to all men; **not holding it back!!!**
 - Many believers do not share the message of the glorious gospel of life, although there is no other salt to salt the earth and no other light to dispel the darkness of sin (Matt. 5:1-16)
 - We must not hoard that which is of such great necessity to the human race!! God forbid!!!
 - Phillip Bliss in his hymn , “Wonderful Words of Life”, states:
 Second Stanza
 Christ, the blessed One gives to all
 Wonderful words of Life. Sinner, list to the loving call
 Wonderful words of life;
 All so freely given,
 Wooing us to heaven.

 Refrain
 Beautiful words, wonderful words,
 Wonderful words of life
 - **“The Christian’s witness is in Great Demand!” therefore we MUST “let our Lights Shine!!”** (John 3:16, 17; 5:25; 6:27; 10:28; Rom. 6:22 ; 2 Tim. 1:10; etc.)
- (4) Jesus Christ is both “Light” and “Life” (John 1:4; 8:12; 1 John 1:1)
- This **Word of Life** frees from sin and death (Rom. 8:2) ... we need to reach out to the perishing who need what we have freely received!!
 - It is Christ Himself, the Bread of Life, whom the Christian offers to a hungry and spiritually` malnourish and starving world (See John 6, NB Vv.35-40).
 - When the believer “hold out” Christ to the lost, he becomes to those who partake of the “savour of life unto life” (2 Cor. 2:16 KJV)

(b) Soul Winner's Joy (Phil 2:16b)

KJV: "... that I may rejoice in the day of Christ ..."

LASB: "... on the day of Christ's return, I will be proud ..."

Amplified Bible: "... so that in the day of Christ I may have something of which exultantly to rejoice ..." (*"exultant": triumphantly happy, delighted, etc.*)

(1) Fruits always give reason to rejoice.

- Paul had been the instrument of their conversion:
 - He founded the church.
 - He was their spiritual leader.
 - He showed deep interest in their welfare.
 - The exemplary devotion and holy lives of the Philippians church was a source of highest joy to any pastor.
- Paul would **"rejoice in the day of Christ return"** (Phil. 2:16b), provided his converts remained true to Christ.

(2) The Soul Winners Joy

Briefly noted due to time ... highlighted points will follow.

- Essential to Success in Christian Work (Psa. 51:12, 13)
- Comes from Bringing in the Sheaves (the harvest) (Psa. 126:6)
- In finding the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:6, 7)
- The Sower and the reaper Rejoice Together (John 4:36)
- Thrills the Church (Acts 15:3)
- Souls Won are a Crown of rejoicing (1 Thess. 2:19, 20)

(c) Spiritual Laborers

"... that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain" (Phil. 2:16c)

(1) Some laborers are faithful some are slothful (Matt. 25:14-30).

(2) Despite the demand and desperate situation, laborers are still few (Matt. 9:37, 38; Luke 10:2).

(3) There is no time to delay, action is urgently needed (John 4:35, 36)

(4) To the work, to the work there is labor for all!!

- Bringing in the Helpless to Christ (Mark 2:3)
- Winning Members of Your Own Household (John 1:41, 42)
- Recommending Christ to Personal Friends (John 1:45).
- Inspiring Other Workers (Acts 1:25, 26)
- It Means Seeking Souls from Death (James 5:20)

6. Workers Together (Phil. 2:17, 18)

Verses 16-18 could be discussed under the same pointer; however, I do want to briefly lift out a few other things.

(a) Spiritual Laborers (*Discussed above*)

(b) Self-sacrifice

(1) Paul was willing to suffer any affliction for the cause of Jesus Christ (for example see 2 Cor. 4, NB Vv. 8-14; see also 1 Cor. 3:9-13; 2 Cor. 11:16-33; etc.)

- (2) When we are totally committed to serving Christ, sacrificing to build the faith of others brings a joyous reward.
 - (3) Even if he had to die, Paul was content, knowing that he had helped the Philippians to live for Christ (Phil. 2:17). See also Acts 21:1-6, NB Vv. 12-14)
 - (4) Note also the following: Acts 20:24; 21:13; 1 Cor. 8:13; 9:23; 10:33; Phil. 3:8; 2 Tim. 2:10.
 - (5) Such service is the expected norm for all Disciples of Christ: Matt. 16:25; 19:21; etc.
- (c) Servants Together Serving the Same Master (*Note one reference*)
1 Cor. 3:9 Amplified Bible
 “For we are fellow workmen (joint promoters, laborers together) with and for God; you are God’s garden, vineyard and field under cultivation, [you are] God’s building. [Isa. 61:3].”

7. Worker’s Obligation . . . What is Necessary

How are we to shine as lights?

Briefly noting a few things:

(a) **They are to do it by example.**

- (1) We noted in previous lessons that we must have salt (Mark 9:50) if we are going to salt the earth (Matt. 5:13).
- (2) If we are going to be lights in this dark world of sin, we need the Light of the world (John 8:12). Read carefully John 12:35-36.

John 12:36a Amplified Bible

“While you have the Light, believe in the Light [have faith in it, hold to it, rely on it], **that you may become sons of the Light and be filled with Light ...**”

- (3) The fact is, you cannot help others to be what you are not. If you do not know Jesus Christ personally, you CANNOT shine for Him!!
- (4) As we imitate (“imitate”: *copy by following set example*) Christ, we set the example (**Eph. 5:1-14, NB v.1**).

(b) **By effort to send the gospel to those who need it.** (Prov. 11:30; 1 Cor.9:19-20; Jude 23)

- (1) We all can give one way or another and yes, God will bless the “two mites” (Mark 12:41-44). God will use to His glory that which the world characterizes as insignificant (1 Cor. 1:26-31, NB Vv. 27, 28; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:5-15, NB v. 7)
- (2) Indeed, Beloved!! Little is much when God is in it!! (**Ex. 4:2; Judges 15:15; 1 Sam. 17:40; Zech 4:10; John 6:9; 2 Tim. 2:20-22.**)

(c) **By conversation or your manner of conduct.**

- (1) This we discussed in the main study, “The Righteous Pursues Holiness”. For example see Chapter 2 Lesson 5, pages 7 to 8; note carefully emphasis on “all manner of conversation” 1 Peter 1:15.

- (2) I would also recommend a poem quoted several times in the main study: **“I Am My Neighbor’s Bible.”** For example see the main study, Chapter 4 Lesson 1, page 13.
- (3) Let us “hold forth the Word of Life,” not only by verbal communication but by our lifestyle. **“Let your Lights Shine!”**
- (d) **By defending the divine origin of righteous standards.**
- (1) Apostasy is not new but it is intensifying in these the last days before Jesus Christ returns!! (Matt. 24; 2 Tim., 3; etc.)
- (2) But irrespective of the consequences we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29).
- (3) Believers have freely obtained from God, that which is man’s ONLY hope and we MUST **“earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” (Jude 3)**
- (e) **By rebuking sin and as a result testify to the value of righteousness and true holiness.**
- (1) Habitual sinning is inconsistent with righteousness, no matter who may say otherwise (1 John 3, NB Vv. 7-10)
- (2) God’s standard of living for ALL HIS PEOPLE is still holiness of life (Lev. 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16; etc.)
- (3) I know the emphasis for popularity and all other inconsistent factors within the Church (Universal) but “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” (Heb. 12:14; Matt. 5:L20; Luke 1:74-75).
- (4) The defense of the truth, with the help of God, and the spreading (*dispersal, transmission, etc.*) of the knowledge of the way of salvation, rest on those who are Christians.

THE CHRISTIAN WITNESS IS IN GREAT DEMAND!! LET YOUR LIGHTS SHINE!!

2 Tim 2:15

KJV

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

Amplified Bible

Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.”

Chapter 4 Lesson 2 Review Questions

1. (a) In John 1:4, how is light defined? (b) How is it obtained?

2. As discussed in our lesson, what is the primary purpose of God’s light reflecting in our hearts?

3. In order for evangelism to be more effective than what we say, what is necessary? (Briefly explain)

4. Complete the following:

“Ye are the light of the world” – That is, the (a) _____ which God (b) _____ to make use to (c) _____ the (d) _____ of men; as He uses the sun to (e) _____ the world.”

5. In what way Christians are lights of the world; how is this practically exemplified?

6. What is the believer's character; how does this fact relates to him being a disciple of Christ, who is the Light of the World?

7. In our lesson we listed ten characteristics of light; list six, briefly explaining each with references.

8. (a) Answer True or False. (b) Explain your answer.
"The disciples place to share the "Good News" is the world."

9. Complete the following by choosing the correct answer:

“The gospel of Jesus Christ is glorious, enlightening, etc. and so is _____
_____.

10. Explain the statement: “Believers are to be lights anywhere they are.”

11. In Matt. 5:14-15, what two things are noted about (a) the city (b) the candle?

12. In our lesson, what was observed about the men who Christ called to be His disciples (a) their original status (b) who they became when He put His character upon them?

13. Complete the following quote from Barnes Notes, in his reference to the disciples as light on a hill:

“The (a) _____ of the (b) _____ were upon them. They must be (c) _____; and as this was the (d) _____ they ought to be (e) _____, (f) _____ and (g) _____.”

14. Based on Matt. 5:14-16, briefly list the practical lessons (noted in our lessons)

15. There are different ways that we can glorify God; list all five noted in our lesson; with references.

16. Choose the correct answer to complete the following:
“The supreme reason why our lights are to shine among men”
(a) the increase of our local congregation attendance.
(b) to stir them to glorify God.
(c) to show them how much we know
(d) to create excitement and make a good name.

17. In regards to Phil. 2:12, the following statement was made (complete the same).
“This is an exhortation to (a) _____ and (b) _____
commitment for those of the (c) _____ of God. We must
(d) _____ out (e) _____ (f) _____.

18. As a guideline, what suggestions were made in our lesson as to “How to work out our salvation?”

19. As seen in Phil. 2, what would you say is the primary reason for the Philippians loyalty to God?

20. Briefly explain: "It is God who works in you." (Phil. 2:13 NKJV)

21. (a) What is the believer's ultimate goal and how it is obtained (Give references)? (b) List with references four ways how to change our desires to be like Christ (Give references).

25. In witnessing to the world, what do we as believers have to offer? Expand briefly on this thought.

26. Five ways were noted in our lesson, how to “shine as lights.” List all five with brief explanation and references.

We will discuss the answer to as many questions as possible in our next class.