WEDNESDAY IN THE WORD

THE BELIEVER - THE VISIBLE EXPRESSION

Matthew 5:13-16

13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.
14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Jesus said, ***"He is the light of the world" (John 8:12).***
Jesus said, ***"the believer is the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14)***

Ok, Jesus, which is it; You or me?
YES!

In a decaying society, the believer must be as salt

1) Preserving & Positive

a) Out of the Shaker
i) Active, permeating, preserving

b) Source of Flavor
i) Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, *"I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not acted too much like undertakers."*

ii) Robert Louis Stevenson wrote in his diary as if he was writing an exceptional fact*, "I have been to church today, and I am not depressed."*

c) Thirst for Life
i) When engaged with people, there should be such life-giving values that emanate from our relationships that people say; *I want, so of what he/she has.*

d) A Common Substance
i) Jesus uses everyday things (***1 Corinthians 1:26-29).***
ii) Adam was made from dirt
iii) God spoke to Moses from a burning bush
iv) Raise the rod, Moses
v) Strike the rock, Moses
vi) God spoke to Abraham from a dark cloud
vii) David used a sling and five stones
viii) Mary was a peasant girl, Jesus was born in a stable
ix) God uses small things and small people
x) God wants to use YOU!

13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

The opposite of good for nothing is good for everything. That's the believer

Will you let him use you? ***The book of Acts*** has ***28*** chapters called the **Acts of the Apostles**. We are to begin **CHAPTER 29.**

2) Accessible

14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

Under the picture of Peter Milne, hanging in the church he founded on the little New Hebrides Island of Nguna, these words are found: **"When he came, there was no light. When he died, there was no darkness."**

When Christ came into the world, there was no light. Matthew (quoting Isaiah) said of Him, ***"The people which sat in darkness saw a great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up" (Matthew 4:16).***

Harry Lauder once said that during his boyhood, he could tell where the Lamplighter was **"by the trail of light he left behind him."** Christ was the heavenly Lamplighter.

Think of some distinctive characteristics of light:

- Light is silent. No noise, no big splash, no banners—light shines. It's like a single lighthouse along a dark, rugged shoreline. All it does is shine.

"Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary use words." This statement is attributed to St. Francis of Asissi

- Light gives direction. No words, no sermon. Jesus says that others ***"see" a Christian's actions***; He says nothing about nonbelievers "hearing" what a believer says.

- Light attracts attention. You don't have to ask people to look at you when you turn on a light in a dark room. It happens automatically.
    - If you are a Christian on an athletic team with non-Christians, you are the light in the darkness.
    - If you are a Christian family in a non-Christian neighborhood, you are the light in the darkness.
    - If you are the only Christian nurse on your floor, a student in your school, professional in your firm, or salesperson in your district
    - You are the light in the darkness—a servant of God watched, who gives off light. You are a visible message.

BUT, light is no good under a basket, in the closet, turned off. It is time for us to come Out of the CLOSET! ACCESSIBLE, TOUCHABLE. The reason Jesus came was to flesh out in the world what righteousness looks like and become sin for us that we might become the righteous expression of the righteousness of God.

We are living epsitles…known and read of all men.

Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. II Corinthians 3:2

Engaged, interacting, readily available

3) Guiding

As a believer you are a guiding light

a) How?

i) Exposes dangers and safe places
   (1) Evil, darkness, loose talk, racisim, greed, selfishness, etc.
   (2) Safe places, loving caring people

ii) Never in a blinding manner
   (1) Holy Spirit blinded Saul for him to see clearly

iii) Growth through life revelation
   (1) A plant in a dark cave can grow if there is a bright enough light
   (2) Light through living

b) Who?

i) Those nearest you first *(Family)* – Jerusalem

ii) Those in the next circle of relationships *(Church & Friends)* – Judea

iii) Those in the next circle of relationships *(Community)* – Samaria

iv) Those in the next circle of relationships *(City, County, State, National, World)* – Uttermost parts of the World

2 Corinthians 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."

This light will guide in love, joy, peace, patience, goodness meekness, faith, temperance. These are the fruit of Jesus life that as we spend time in the light he is guidng us so that our life may guide lives from the evil to the places of safety.

15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

4) Glorifying

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