

“LIGHT OF THE WORLD”

“You are the light of the world.” —MATTHEW 5:14

The statement Jesus made to His disciples, “You are the light of the world” is intriguing, because in John 8:12 and 9:5, He said, “I am the light of the world.” In the latter verse, He qualified that by saying, “While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” The implication is clear. As Christians, what Jesus was on earth in terms of bringing illumination into the world, we are to be.

How are we to be what Christ was on earth? It is not by imitation, but by derivation. If it is by imitation, then we are the source of the reproduced light. We may be congratulated or criticized on the quality of light, but the source is from within ourselves, so the buck stops with us. If this light is by derivation the source is outside of ourselves. To derive is to draw from an objective source. We bear clear responsibility for the extent to which the light is visible, but it is not self-produced, because it derives from a source.

If I may impose an example of modern day electricity onto the ancient context of Scripture, we can see an obvious illustration in this. The light emanating from a bulb has its origin in the electrical source. Detach the bulb from its source and it ceases to give light. Whether it is light that comes from the wick in an oil lamp or a wick in a candle or a bulb in a battery operated flashlight, the consistency of light does not come from the wick or the bulb, but from the oil, the wax or the battery from which it derives its energy.

With the indwelling Holy Spirit, our energy as light of the world is derived from Christ. The purpose of being the light of the world is always in bringing benefit and blessing to others. Jesus said, “A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house” (Matthew 5:14-15). It is because the origin of the light is in God, not ourselves, Jesus says in the next verse, “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

It is to the measure that we allow Christ to live His life in us that His light will shine through us. The more consistently it shines, the more people will see our good deeds, but what they will recognize is Christ in us, and this is the light that has an impact!

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I pray that your light in me will shine consistently, and be a means of helping others and leading them to You. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Is the light of Christ evident in my interactions with others?