

The Light of the World – Pt. 2

Matthew 5:14–16

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MAIN IDEA: In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus explains the purpose or mission that God has given to every Christian with regard to the world—to be influencers. Jesus teaches that if we belong to his spiritual kingdom, then he has given us the ability and the responsibility to powerfully influence the people in our lives.

A Brief Historical Perspective

1. Theological Liberalism defined good works solely as improving society, which they called “the social gospel.”
2. Fundamentalism defined good works as solely proclaiming the gospel.
 - a. Ultra Fundamentalism
 - b. Evangelicalism
3. The “Emergent Church” defined good works as solely humanitarian causes, which they called “social justice.”

OUTLINE:

- I. The Picture Jesus Uses (14a)
- II. The Point Jesus Makes (14b-16)
 - A. Our Influence Is Inevitable (14b) – “cannot be hidden”
 - B. Our Influence Is Intentional (15-16)
 1. To Give Light to the World (15)
 2. **To Bring Glory to the Father (16)**

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- I. **Our Good Works must be Deployed as a Means of Influence (16a)**
 - **We are light to the unbelievers around us through...**
 - A. **Our Message (2 Cor. 4:2-5)**
 - B. **Our Character (Mt. 5:3-12)**
 - C. **Our Good Works (Mt. 5:16)**
- II. **Our Good Works must be Defined by God in His Word (16b)**
 - A. **Only believers can perform good works (Jer. 13:23; Rom. 3:12; 8:7-8; Heb 11:6).**
 - B. **Good works are evidence of true saving faith (Jam. 2:14, 18, 26).**
 - C. **Everything a believer does for God’s glory is a good work (e.g., Mk. 14:6; 1 Tim. 5:10; 6:18; Titus 2:14).**

D. Doing good works for unbelievers is not the primary mission of the church (Mt. 28:19-20; Gal. 6:10; 1 Th. 5:15).

III. Our Good Works must be Directed toward God for His Glory (16c)

A. His Glory in Gracious Salvation

B. His Glory in Just Condemnation

BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

1. Read James 2:14–26. What do these verses teach about good works and salvation? What role do works play with faith? Discuss.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What are practical ways to ensure that our good works are done for God's glory and not personal glory? Discuss.
2. Why is it sometimes challenging/difficult to expose what is false and sinful in our world? Why do we shy away from engaging in these types of conversations? Discuss.