

Slide 1

Letting Our Light Shine

MATTHEW 5:14-16

Introduction

1. Becky and I have been with you for a little over 24 years.
2. Sunday, March 31, 2002 was our first day with this congregation.
3. Since that time I have been privileged to work with . . .
 - a. Fourteen elders (Mike Goodman & Mitch Snyder will make it sixteen)
 - 1) Ray Barger, Walter Collier, Larry Hayes, Gerion James, David Nowlin
 - 2) Les Glenn, Waddell Lee, Billy Spears
 - 3) Keith Carnahan, Ronnie Moore, George Palmer
 - 4) Robert Martin, Dan Schofield, Edward Toland
 - b. Three youth ministers (Gabriel Watts will make it four)
 - 1) Jeff LaCroix (Angie)
 - 2) Chris Dishman (Chasity)
 - 3) Kyle Mashburn (Kayla)
 - c. Five secretaries (Ann _____, Deanna Wilson, Susan Glenn, Debbie Hardin, Darlene Toungette, Renae Bowman)
4. During those years we have watched a number of our youth grow up and go on to pursue careers in other communities.
5. We have also bid farewell to a large segment of our congregation as many of our brothers and sisters in Christ crossed over to their reward.
6. We have also been called to respond to the aid of our friends and neighbors as the result of a number of disasters in our community.
 - a. Flood of 2010 (With the help of C of C Disaster Relief, we provided food

- boxes and cleaning supplies, along with meals prepared here in our E. Center.
- b. Flood of February 2019 (Furniture and appliances to many residents along Trace Creek here in our town).
 - c. Straight Line Winds in October 2019 (Helped cut up and remove a number of downed trees.)
 - d. Flood of August 2021 (Meals, clothing, shelter, monies, rebuilding supplies, furniture, appliances and other household goods.)
7. While we may not have grown numerically in a substantial way over those years, I believe we have grown in other ways.
- a. Our faith.
 - b. Our love for one another.
 - c. Our desire to be a church which honors our God.
8. Tonight, I want to spend the rest of our time talking with you about how to let our light shine in a most important way.

Slide 2

9. Following the Beatitudes in His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus added these words,
- “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”
- (Matthew 5:14–16, NASB95)
- a. In my humble opinion you as a congregation let your light shine as never before during the two years following the flood of 2021.
 - b. However, that time is past, and we must not rest on our laurels, but continue to look for other ways to continue letting our light shine.

Slide 3

10. In the upper room on the eve of His crucifixion our Lord gave a new commandment to His disciples:

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”” (John 13:34–35, NASB95)

- a. One of the things which draws people to a congregation is the knowledge that a body of Christians who worship in a specific place truly love one another.
 - b. I have seen people drive several miles passing up other congregations to worship with a body of believers where it is evident that they truly love one another.
11. Please permit me to share some of the things which God’s Word has to say about the way we respond to one another.

Slide 4

I. Encourage One Another

“Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11, NASB95)

A. IT STRENGTHENS HEARTS

1. When we are worried about someone’s physical, emotional or spiritual well-being, it encourages us to hear how they are doing.
2. “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.” (Philippians 2:19, NASB95)
3. “For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts;” (Colossians 4:8, NASB95)

Slide 5

B. IT BUILDS FAITH

1. Satan’s goal is to weaken and ultimately destroy our faith.

2. Because he is “a liar and the father of lies” (John 8:44), he works through “the deceitfulness of sin” (Hebrews 3:13) to harden our hearts so that our faith no longer moves us to godly living.
3. We must work to encourage each other in regards to our faith to prevent these things from happening.
4. Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica in order “to strengthen and encourage” the brethren there in regards to their faith (1 Thessalonians 3:2).
5. We must “encourage one another” every day because Satan will not rest in his efforts.

Slide 6**C. IT ENCOURAGES THE FAINTHEARTED (1 THESSALONIANS 5:14)**

1. Worry, fear, and discouragement can drain even the strongest Christian.
2. Through our encouragement, we help others . . .
 - a. To cast their worries and cares upon our Lord (1 Peter 5:7).
 - b. To overcome fear, knowing that God will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5)

Slide 7**II. Be Devoted To One Another**

“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love” (Romans 12:10a, NASB95)

A. “IN BROTHERLY LOVE”

1. The term “brotherly love” comes from the Greek word *philadelphia*.
2. It refers to the love that should exist between brothers and sisters within a family.
3. When we apply it to the church, it refers to the love which we as Christians

should have for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

4. The words “brother” and “brothers” (*adelphos*) is used to refer to the “Christian family” approximately 230 times in the New Testament, beginning with the Book of Acts.
6. The word “brothers” literally means “from the same womb.”
7. So what does brotherly love look like:
 - a. It binds us together as a family.
 - b. It forms within us an unbreakable union.
 - c. We have a deep affection for one another.
 - d. We nourish and nurture one another.
 - e. We are concerned for one another and look after each other’s welfare.
8. Does this kind of love exist among us?

Slide 8

B. DEVOTION TO ONE ANOTHER

1. In the first part of this statement, Paul emphasizes the extent of our brotherly love for one another.
2. We are to be “devoted to one another”.
3. We know what is meant when someone says that a particular man is devoted to his wife.
4. It means that a person is loyal to another.
5. Our devotion to one another in brotherly love isn’t just a matter of being polite to our fellow Christians because we are now members of the same church.
6. Our relationships must be deeper than that.
7. We are a unique family unit — we are “blood brothers” in a very real sense, because it is in Christ that “we have redemption, through His blood” (Ephesians 1:7).

Slide 9

III. Serve One Another

“For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” (Galatians 5:13, NASB95)

A. GOD IS CONCERNED WITH HOW WE TREAT ONE ANOTHER

1. Beginning in verse 13 and continuing through the end of Galatians 5, Paul focuses on what is often called relational Christianity.
2. Five times in verses 13-26 he uses the “one another” concept.
3. The first exhortation, found in verse 13, is stated positively: “through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13).
4. The other four are in the negative form in order to clarify what Paul meant:
 - a. “But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another” (Galatians 5:15).
 - b. The flesh and the Spirit “are in opposition to one another” (Galatians 5:17).
 - c. “Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another” (Galatians 5:26).

Slide 10

B. SERVING ONE ANOTHER THROUGH LOVE

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22–23, NASB95)

1. In spite of all this, there is a way to serve one another that will set us free.
2. It is a way which can create very satisfying and lasting relationships — it is

the way of love.

3. Through our Lord's death, burial and resurrection, we are set free from the dominion of our sinful desires.
4. Instead of having to serve one another selfishly, we can actually serve one another in love.
5. The result is what Paul calls the "fruit of the Spirit."
6. These are not personal emotions but expressions of love and joy.
7. There is peace — true unity and oneness in the body of Christ.
8. Patience with one another.
9. "Kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control"
10. These are the results of people in relationship with one another who are not serving each other selfishly but "in love".
11. When we "live by the Spirit," we find that we "keep in step with the Spirit."
12. The result is that we no longer "bite and devour one another" or "provoke and envy one another."

Conclusion

1. It is amazing what happens when we truly love one another as our Lord has loved us.
2. It changes who we are down deep inside and it changes the way we treat one another.
3. Ultimately, it becomes contagious and attractive.
4. I want to conclude this evening with the words to the last hymn we sang at the end of our worship this morning. Please consider these words carefully.

Slide 11

**We are part of the family, that's been born again,
Part of the family, whose love knows no end
For Jesus has saved us and made us His own,
Now we're part of the family, that's on its way home.**

**When a brother's in sorrow we all feel his grief,
When he's passed through the valley we all feel relieved
Together in sunshine, together in rain,
Together in victory thru His precious name.**

Slide 12

**And though some go before us, we'll all meet again;
Just inside the city as we enter in;
There'll be no more parting, with Jesus we'll be,
Together forever, God's family.**

Chorus

**And sometimes we laugh together, sometimes we cry;
Sometimes we share together, heartaches and sighs;
Sometimes we dream together of how it will be
When we all get to Heaven, God's family.**

GOD'S FAMILY

Lanny Wolfe