

David Capener-reflections on Matthew 5:14-16

*You are the light of the world. 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. In the same way, let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

V16 is our school verse –focus on doing good and doing good for God –that He is the focus, the One to be praised and glorified.

Comes in the context of the Sermon on the mount, some of the most challenging teaching there has ever been. A bit like 1 Cor passage on love that is often used at weddings, but is actually a rebuke to Jesus' followers to show love. Here it is not a rebuke, but is a challenge, an encouragement.

Notice start of v14 **You** are the light of the world. Wow! We know Jesus said in John 8:12, 'I am the light of the world.', so how can we be the light of the world? Well, verse 12 goes on to say, 'Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' We've seen this light in the other readings, the light of creation, of Jesus and in our hearts.....we can be light because Jesus light of the world gives us the light of life, it is not from or within ourselves...it is from Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

Next we notice that it says **Let** your light shine..... so to a degree it is a choice, to listen to, respond to and show the light of Jesus from within (the Holy Spirit > Fruit of the Holy Spirit).

We let our light shine by doing good and find many verses to encourage this:

And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good. 2 Thess 3:13

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 1 Tim 6:18

And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds, Hebrews 10:24

Would want the above for our staff children and ourselves. Times this year we will have felt weary of doing good, but this is an encouragement to keep going.

And why...because it is for God's praise...the source of light.

Reflection:

Do you and I know the light of creation –get out for a walk, pause and look around and praise God.

Do we know the light of Jesus –our gospel hope.

Do we know the light in our hearts? Not just in our heads, but in our hearts. At times the light can be diminished, so need to keep close to the Light or draw back to the light.