



Increasing our Light!
A Plea to our LORD for our 30th Year!
May 3, 2026

Holy Text: Matthew 5:13-16

- This Gospel was likely written by Matthew (or Levi), one of the Twelve (Matt 9:9-13). Matthew's mandate was to demonstrate the *Messiahship of Jesus* and expound upon the Kingdom-nature of Jesus' ministry (he mentions *Kingdom* in over 50 verses).
- The word *kingdom* comes from the Greek *basileia*, which means in this context, "The territory or country subject to a king; an undivided territory under the dominion of a king or monarch."
- It follows then that a Kingdom has a King! **Jesus Christ is that King!**

***Revelation 17:14 (KJV)** These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.*

- The Kingdom of Christ, by its very nature (**Light**), is in continual conflict with the kingdom of Satan (**darkness**).
- We see this immediately as Christ began His ministry (Matt 4:24). The breaking in of the Kingdom of God (reaching, teaching, and releasing) ALWAYS results in conflict with the kingdom of darkness. Kingdom citizens (the church) must understand that to increase our light is to increase our battles! Indeed:

***Ephesians 6:10-13 (KJV)** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. **11** Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. **12** For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. **13** Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

In His magnificent Sermon on the Mount, our LORD gives a Kingdom reality: those who truly follow Him (the Church) would be both salt and light.

- The image of **salt** (one of the most valuable commodities during this time) is instructive: salt
1) Is a preservative 2) Produces thirst 3) Adds flavor!
- Christ's church is supposed to do all three:

1. **We must preserve the truths of the faith through loving obedience!**
2. **We must set a Kingdom example of faithfulness in the midst of the darkness!**
3. **We must saturate the world with both love and holiness...the fragrance of Christ!**

- The Church is also supposed to be **light**! Again, the metaphor is instructive:

1. **Light is created by God.**

***Genesis 1:3 (KJV)** And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

2. **Light is in the person and character of God.**

***1 John 1:5 (KJV)** This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

3. Light illumines. It enables sight!

Luke 11:33 (KJV) *No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.*

John 9:5 (KJV) *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.*

4. Light opposes and dispels darkness.

Psalms 18:28 (KJV) *For thou wilt light my candle: the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.*

2 Peter 1:19-21 (KJV) *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **20** Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. **21** For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

5. Therefore, Light should characterize the people of God!

1 Peter 2:9-12 (KJV) *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; **that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:** **10** Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. **11** Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; **12** Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

- Light images God's creation. It models Christ. It purifies and clarifies. It pushes out darkness! This is the church!

Light vs darkness

1. May we remember that people are in darkness!

Matthew 4:16-17 (KJV) *The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. **17** From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, *Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

John 3:16-21 (KJV) *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. **17** For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. **18** He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. **19** And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. **20** For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprove. **21** But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.*

2. Darkness is emblematic of wickedness, deception, judgment, and hell.

Luke 22:53 (KJV) *When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.*

Matthew 25:30 (KJV) *And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Ephesians 4:17-19 (KJV) *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, **18** Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: **19** Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

Jude 1:13 (KJV) *Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.*

3. Christ's church must expose and fight against the darkness with Light!

Ephesians 5:1-13 (KJV) *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; **2** And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. **3** But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; **4** Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. **5** For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. **6** Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. **7** Be not ye therefore partakers with them. **8** **For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:** **9** (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) **10** Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. **11** **And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.** **12** For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. **13** **But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.***

Questions Worth Asking

1. What if, by God's grace, we labored over the next 12 months to more fully embrace who we are supposed to be, **that our light (the light of truth in Christ) might shine even brighter?**
2. Assuming CRC is on a good Kingdom trajectory, what if we gave ourselves more urgently to the things He has taught us? What might happen?
3. What is holding back our light? Are we willing to remove accursed things from the camp? (See Joshua 7 and the battle at Ai)
4. What if we took Paul's divine words to Philippi seriously?

Philippians 2:12-15 (KJV) *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. **13** For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. **14** Do all things without murmurings and disputings: **15** **That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;***

Our Role

Over the years we've humbly attempted to take several biblical characterizations of the church as our own. We believe these things are part and parcel of the role **Calvary Reformation Church** is commanded to play.¹

Be a Pattern House!

2 Timothy 1:13 (KJV) *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

Acts 2:42 (KJV) *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

2 Thessalonians 2:15 (KJV) *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*

Be a Pillar and Ground of Truth!

1 Timothy 3:15 (KJV) *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

Be Black Gate Attackers!

Matthew 16:18 (KJV) *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

An Opportunity

Out of years of the LORD's leading and shaping came what we call **CRC Distinctives**. We believe they fit the biblical pattern. We believe they are foundational and true. We also believe they address deep spiritual needs in individuals, families, and culture. They are LIGHT!

However, because they shine in specific areas of darkness, they elicit warfare. They are uncommon precisely because the world, the flesh, and the devil are against them. They therefore incur demonic wrath. Satan hates them all!

And yet they are an opportunity to let our light shine brighter! We must not hide! We must not put these things under a bushel! We must be a candlestick! Candlesticks are intentionally lit! They give light to all that are in the house! They allow men to see good and godly works and in God's providence, glorify our Father which is in heaven! (Matt 5:14-16)

We believe we have an opportunity as a congregation. If it be God's will, and by His grace, we believe some of the things that make us "stand out" are actually holy witnesses that can be a great encouragement to those "looking for the church."

Increasing our Light through our Distinctives

1. Finding contentment and peace in Christ alone. Jesus is Enough! (Php 4:11-13)

- People are stressed. Anxious. Worried.
- Christ's flock, in the Holy Spirit, can be joyful, at peace, at rest.

¹These characterizations are not meant to puff us up. Indeed, all good churches are supposed to model them. We know are flawed and sinful, so we approach these these things in great humility.

- Why? Because Christ died for sinners! Because He is LORD! Because He provides for and protects His children!
- **How much light would shine upon your home and in your circle of family and friends through a contented heart and a peaceful countenance?**
- Also, contentment aids patience, produces a heavenly perspective, and lessens struggles and strife.
- **How might the power of repentance and forgiveness manifest because pride has been reminded that Jesus is Enough?**

2. Preaching the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27)

- The motive of this distinctive is a certain view of Scripture: that it “is given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- This means it is authoritative and binding upon us.
- In a day where Genesis is attacked as non-history, Paul and the epistles are pitted against Jesus and the Gospels, and EVERY biblical doctrine that speaks directly to cultural collapse is mocked...
- **How many spiritual lumens will a church that holds to God’s whole counsel shine?**

3. Holding to expository preaching where the Holy Text drives the message (2 Tim 4:2)

- So many are focused on what they want from God. But who asks, “What does God want from us?”
- This is the power of expository preaching. To *exposit* a Bible Text is to explain that Text in context and ask, “What does the LORD say? What does the LORD require? What must we do to love and please Him?”
- Expository preaching is inherently God-centered and therefore consistently places God’s people under the authority of God’s Word instead of the false authorities of feelings and human desire.
Beloved, this is a bright thing! To be truly illuminated by Scripture is precious! To be taught by the Unction of God is powerful!
- **How might a church full of people consistently edified and exhorted to adjust their lives according to the Word impact those around them?**

4. Living out a loving holiness (John 14:15; 1 Pet 1:16)

- Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments,” “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,” and “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.” (John 14:15; 15:14; 15:10)
- Obedience is God’s love language. It always has been.
- **Deuteronomy 10:12-13 (KJV)** *And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, 13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?*
- Most people hate authority. Our flesh does too! And the devil certainly doesn’t want to contend with a lovingly obedient church!
- **2 Corinthians 6:14 (KJV)** *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*

- **How much holy brilliance does a holy, separate (2 Cor 6:17) church put out into the world?**
5. **Building according to the Pattern, obeying New Testament ordinances and instructions for the Church (2 Tim 1:13)**
 - We believe that God is not arbitrary; He actually has a way He wants His church to function.
 - Ordinances we must practice would include believers' baptism and the LORD's Table.
 - Other precepts and patterns include preaching, singing, prayer, discipline, fellowship, and more!²
 - **We believe a church that has the fragrance of the New Testament is a true candlestick in whom our LORD is in the midst! (Rev 1:13, 20)**
 6. **Holding to a biblical view of men's/women's roles in the home and church (Eph 5; Col 3; 1 Tim 2-3; Titus 2)**
 - This is a bright light friends...and a much needed one!
 - Husbands loving wives, wives submitting to husbands, male pastors/elders and deacons who are qualified are lights! (Eph 5, 1 Tim chapters 2 and 3)
 - Modesty, shamefacedness, home-keeping, and order are lights! (1 Tim 2; Titus 2:5, 1 Cor chapters 11 and 14)
 - **These beautiful doctrines have been greatly overthrown, even in the church. Reformation here will glow and pulse with Gospel witness!**
 7. **Making the LORD's Day a priority (Acts 20:7; Heb 10:24-25)**
 - Again, see our recent four-part series on not forsaking the assembly.³
 - But when we understand the command...that because Christ came, suffered, and died for our sins and deserves to be worshipped and that we actually have access to God by His blood...prioritizing the LORD's Day becomes a great privilege!
 - **Neglecting the assembly is so incredibly common that a body of believers who cannot wait to get to church on Sunday...who are excited and expectant...who actually honor the LORD's Day is incredibly luminous!**
 8. **Seeing the pattern of worshipping with our children as something beautiful (2 Chr 20:13; Ezra 10:1; Lk 18:16)**
 - Beloved, this IS the biblical pattern. We believe it is there for a divine and wonderful purpose and also starts our week with the right household vision!
 - How beautiful is a church where children are welcomed into the worship? What does that teach them? What does that say about God's love for children? How does such help our family reform?
 - **Indeed, how ablaze with holy fire might a church be that is in biblical order...fathers and mothers worshipping together and overseeing and encouraging the worship of God by their children?**
 9. **Believing the primary disciplers of children are parents (Deut 6; Eph 6)**
 - Most parents spend very little time with their children (school, summer school, camps, isolation the home, etc.)

² See our Jan 2026 message on the Ordinary Means of Grace. <https://subsplash.com/calvaryreformationchurch/media/mi/+mxxp536d>

³ <https://subsplash.com/calvaryreformationchurch/media/mi/+vb6yqw8>

- The biblical model is different: children walked alongside their parents into adulthood and beyond.
- The realization and acceptance of discipleship responsibility by parents is almost resplendent in its holy radiance precisely because of its neglect!
- **When this “light switches on,” it changes so much! Thoughts on screen usage, social media, and friends/influences change! Family worship begins! Education is rethought! Sound doctrine is sought out! And people notice. So does hell. Be ready for warfare!**

10. Pursuing biblical hospitality and community (Rom 12:13; 1 Pet 4:9)

- This was a consistent practice of the early church. (Acts 2:46)
- This “one-anothering” allows the church to go beyond loving words to loving acts. When we open up our homes, we open up our lives. We become a deeper spiritual family...
- **1 John 2:9-11 (KJV)** *He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. 10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. 11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.*
- **Such closeness and unity allows us to “abide in the light” of love, one to another.**

11. Living with as little debt as possible (Prov 22:7; Rom 13:8)

- We often take for granted the spiritual ramifications of money. Not only does our view of money reveal our heart condition (Matt 6:21), but our godly stewardship can be considered a “good work” by which men will glorify the Father.
- Think about it: how many people do you know who are worried about money? Or willing to do “whatever” to “get money?” Or who are “in distress, in debt, and discontented?” (1 Sam 22:2)
- **Biblical stewardship is light! Living different is light! Let us, even in the area of money, “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.” (Titus 2:9)**

12. Biblical generosity (Prov 3:9-10; Lk 6:38; 1 Cor 16:1-2; 2 Cor 9:6-7)

- Biblical stewardship enables biblical giving!
- Generosity is a heart-state. People who hold possessions loosely shine brightly as they worship, model an eternal perspective, give in faith, and love in deed and in truth.
- **A church that isn’t overly focused on money, refusing to trust in “unreliable riches” but is still “generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others” will shine brightly! (1 Tim 6:17-18, NLT)**

Closing Questions:

Will you embrace our **30th Year Opportunity** to take firmer hold of what we have been taught for the glory of God and Gospel-good of others?

Will you help us Increase our Light?

May the Master help us.

Amen.