

A Light Shining in the World

Let us pray:

Dear heavenly Father, precious and Almighty Lord, we come to Thy throne of grace to listen from Thee, to seek Thy will. Lord, prepare our hearts to listen and to understand Thy word, so that, Lord, the seed which has been sowed will bring fruit in our lives. Lord, we are unwise people, but we have a wise Lord. We are weak people, but You are strong, Lord. So I submit myself and everyone under the strengthening blood of the Lamb. Lead us through. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

John 1:9: "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 2:13-16: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 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; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

Matthew 11:29: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Dear Lord, lead us as we meditate on the Word so that we may continue in it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

I was traveling with a few young people to a contest with my daughter. In the group, you have a combination of all teens which we often discuss here, moving in a combination of a secular world. You have believers, you have LGBTs in the group, as well as the regular, normal nonbelievers of different faiths. So that was in my mind, thinking: What do these children

think about the body of Christ? That is where my question has begun. They [these young people] are wise, they are talented, they are competing in the world in the championships. It is not that they cannot read or write. They do everything, but what do they think about the church? So that was the thing which was troubling me when I was traveling with them.

Today, the body of Christ has more responsibility than ever because of the way that communication is pretty fast. Never was communication so fast in the human history, whether it has been good or bad or distorted truth. Whether we like it or not, people are getting communicated. And today, someone else is also communicating what “church” means. What does the church mean exactly that needs to be communicated by the people of the Lord and not by the other worldly things? Today, young people may start thinking church is a place of condemning the people rather than saving the people. It was easy because this information was already put into their young generations. So they would avoid the people—I have seen this when I was trying to strike up communication. A few persons in that group tried to avoid me because they know it. They have heard from their parents, they heard from the church, they heard from the news what kind of idea I have towards them. Media is also actively working to support churches which fall in line with them, right? When I was coming from the Grove Baptist Church, I saw one banner there. It really hurts in my heart. People are prophesying different things about politics or about other things instead of saying about the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So there is all this information that is being fed into this coming generation, young generation. I am a father of teens and also toddler and myself enough adult. So all information is fed by different people. They are not interested in the church, they are not interested in the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ; they are interested in something, but they are communicating with the speed of light. Their communication is so fast, before you can say a word, they can communicate a series of

presentations of anything. So, we need to also see actually, what is the work of the church. Where we are standing in communicating, what is the exact mind of the Lord Jesus Christ? The dangerous thing in this world is that we are not able to communicate exactly the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are so busy in other things. The enemy is so wise and deceiving that we are looking at someone else to tell what Christ is all about and what are our beliefs. We are not looking into it ourselves. We are supposed to be the people who should show what is the mind of the Lord not anyone else.

When the 120 people were waiting on the day of Pentecost, they were not looking at the government to tell who Christ is. They were not looking for the leaders of the community to say who the Christ is; they were looking and waiting upon the Lord so that the Holy Spirit would come on them and they would be the lights of the world.

Philippians 2:5 says, "Let the mind of Christ be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

Paul was writing to the unit of the church, but it is also to us. Without knowing the mind of Christ, we cannot really do anything we are supposed to do, as the 120 people in that day did.

I was just thinking of Matthew 11:29 which you all know, when the Lord said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart."

When the Lord wants us to learn from Him, unless we learn from Him, we cannot really want what the Lord wants. Without learning, even though we are born again believers, and the light dwells in us, no doubt about it, but we cannot shine for the Lord.

In Philippians 2:15 it says: "Among whom ye shine as a light." That is the desire of the Lord. We can go everywhere, but if we cannot shine as the light, then we are losing the complete purpose of why the Lord has saved us. You can shine as the light where you are, but generally we have

an opportunity to go out and preach everywhere which is amazing, but the Lord also has kept you in some place to shine as the light so you can communicate. Although the communication is pretty fast, humans always believe in personal experience. When we say, “Hey, I have this thing,” whatever it is, he says, “I have a personal experience of what it is.” So shining as a light we have an opportunity to give a personal experience to wherever the Lord has kept you. So we are really competing with the world which is distorting the truth of the Word of God. Especially, it is very easy once we leave this place, we start looking at someone or something else to shine as the light.

So the reason the Lord has saved us as in the 15th verse that says as sons of God the Lord is encouraging us to shine as the light. In the 6th and 7th verse, it speaks about the Lord Jesus Christ, (and we have read this word so many times,) “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation.”

I was thinking that all these three verses are a quick summary of what the Lord went through. It is not everything; it is a quick summary. We take up these things and worship the Lord so amazingly, but it is a regular human life that the Lord has been living. He was facing day to day humiliation, He was verbally abused, He was physically abused, He faced nakedness. What else has He not faced? His brothers did not trust Him, but the Lord still shined as light. He was continuously doing His work.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today, we also as born again believers, are going through one of those things. We are not going through all the things the Lord has gone through, but we are going through many other things which is not really encouraging us to be as the light. But when we understand the mind of the Lord, when He was going through all types of what humans can face, still He was being the light of the world. So this really encourages us.

I just want to put up this slide of dots. This is a local gathering as a church. (I’m a very bad artist, so I just put it in circles. It is easy.) I am not

saying this is the church because the church is a group of blood-bought believers; everybody has a light. But this is locally gathering as a church. So all the white dots are the born-again believers, but the black dots still are not born again. There is a 100 per cent possibility that all are sitting here, but still we have the people who have not been caught by the Lord. So when we are in the church, these white circles who have the light have so much responsibility to help the circles that do not have the light to go to the Lord.

Even today, I would really encourage you, if anyone is still in the dark circle, it is easy for you to ask the Lord to be your personal Savior. It is nothing much that you should do. It is easy to come into the Light, and all you need to say is, "Lord, I believe You are the Lord and that You died for me." You do not need any great help. But dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the white circles, [the born again believers] have very much of a responsibility to shine the light and help the people to move from the darkness to the light, and the Lord is working. This is not just the Word of God that we can preach. We are preaching the Word of God, but you have a responsibility, each and every one, has a responsibility to shine as a light.

I know many churches that started with children in the midst, the children are not available today. It is not our fault, but the lightning speed of the world is attracting them. So we have this responsibility to shine upon them and bring them to the Lord. Without this, the church will become weaker and weaker and weaker. Everyone has a responsibility to shine. Maybe we do not know which white circle influences which dark circle and which behavior of the white circle [believer] will bring the black circle [non believer] to the Lord. It is very simple. I am not saying something different, but we are seeing this since we are raising the children, and the children are observing us, the dark circles are observing the white circles. Every move has been observed. People observe and when they do not find the answer, they start going to the lightning speed

of the world and gathering all the information that they want, and they remain in the darker place.

And the next slide [picture representing the world] I was surprised when I saw the black dots in the world. There is so much darkness in the world. What can we do? I was thinking: is it really so dark? Maybe it is darker than this big picture. It is so dark; the Lord really wants us to shine as the light.

I was thinking: how do we shine as the light? What kind of life can we live? Then I was reading in Philippians 2:13: “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.” It is the Lord. When you start getting trained under the Lord, as it mentioned, the Lord is the one who makes the desire to do good and also will do it. How much do we do good things personally,? How much do we donate? How much do we talk? How much of what we do in whatever way? We can not [shine as the light]! The training of things should come from the Lord because the Lord is the light. He wants us to be trained, and He wants us to be that light. Without that light, you cannot light the dark circle into the light. So that is the reason we need to continuously go to the Lord, walk with the Lord: “Lord, train me, lead me, what can I do? Lord, how can I shine as the light?”

We are already praying as the church. No doubt about it, we are praying for the perishing souls. We are praying for the ministries. What we are doing is appreciated, but still we need to compete with the lightning speed that is outside—when you are in your office, when you are with your children, the in laws, the son-in-law, the daughter-in-law, and the neighbors. When they see you, when they see the decisions that you make, they should be able to come to the Lord. Without that, actually instead of preaching the gospel, we are being a hindrance to the gospel.

So as the children of God, as I mentioned, it is God who gives the desire to do good, and it is He who also helps us to do the good. We also know in Hebrews 13:20-21 how the Lord has washed us with the eternal

blood, and He wants us to do perfect things for His good pleasure. So the training of the Lord, continuously implementing things in the life is such an important thing. Otherwise, we are definitely failing. We are coming, we are the saved, we are doing the work of the Lord, but we have stopped shining for the Lord.

Philippians 2:15: “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.”

We have a responsibility and accountability as the sons of God. To be the sons of God is a privilege. You have been given some authority and some responsibility. So as believers, suddenly when the time comes to make a decision—whether about yourself or your children or your neighbor—we stop acting like the sons of God. We start making decisions; we start moving in a way which pleases our mind, pleases our ego or we start speaking about the Lord, but we never speak or behave as the sons of God, and that is what is pushing the people away from the Lord. When you do that, whenever you make a decision in relation to someone else, not as the sons of God, you are becoming a hindrance for the gospel of God. You are knowingly or unknowingly pushing the people into the blacker zone, more and more into the blacker zone. Some people in the black zones [unbelievers] do not have a connection with the white zones [believers.]

Brothers and sisters in Christ, you have this privilege of being sons of God; you have the responsibility and accountability to live a life as the sons of God. That is what makes you shine as lights in the world.

It also mentions so beautifully in the 14th verse about without murmuring and disputing. This is about the body of Christ, but it can be extended more and more. Today, once we leave this place, once we go out, the body of Christ is still you and me; we are the body of Christ. Many people do not know what the definition of the church is. They know what is church by looking at you and your actions, your decisions. We can make decisions with such lightning speed. You know, sometimes everything

which is legally correct is not spiritually right. We so want to be legally right, we so want to be ethically right, but we do not want to be so right as the sons of God.

The reason I am saying this is because it says, “blameless and harmless.” This is really the nature of the salvation that God has given. God wants us to stand holy and blameless in His presence, as it says in Ephesians. So this is the very nature of the salvation we should show forth in our lives day to day. And maybe you are missing the very nature of the salvation when you see your neighbor, your family members, your external family begin to go away from the Lord. The enemy is so smart. He allows us to worship, he allows us to preach the gospel, he allows us to work, but he will never allow us to live the life that is to shine as a light.

It is a very simple thing. Even preaching the gospel is a very big thing when we go and do it somewhere, but sitting and making small decisions, living a small life, really lights up the people around you.

The reason it is blameless and harmless is because in Ephesians 6:12 it talks about whom the fight is with, what kind of fight we are in. As a believer it is very easy to end up fighting with the people rather than the enemy, very easy. If you look at today’s world—the political situation or the family situation—these are not the fights mentioned in Ephesians 6.

Ephesians 6:12: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood.”

It is easy for us since we live in the flesh to end up fighting with ones with the flesh. It is easy to fight against the people. Our fight is not against the people; our fight is against the enemy. The world, the rules and the regulations, the policies are perfectly designed so that the fight is always with the people. The fight is with the neighbor, the fight is with your colleagues, the fight is with your family, there are so many relationships that I do not want to give names. But it is so easy also in the college and school. Then, when our fight is against the people, the enemy has become successful in making the dark circles [unbelievers] a little darker. We can examine our hearts. If your fight is with an individual, if your fight

is with a person, then you are a hindrance to the gospel. And that is when you have been trapped by the enemy.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, people look at you and me and say, "What is the church?" I come from the west side, so many people wrongly think what the church is. Some people think that whatever they see on Fox News is the church. Some people think that whatever they see on CNN is the church. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the Lord wants you and me to show the people what is the church, what is the mind of the Lord, what is the heart of the Lord.

I was going to give you three quick examples because who can train us except Christ? So I want to take three simple examples from the Word of God. One is compassion. Let's look at these one by one so that you don't guess. Many people know the Word of God so much that before I say the word, people know it.

Compassion

I was looking at this matter of compassion. The Lord had compassion as we find in Matthew 9:36 on this great people, looking like they had no shepherd. These black circles can be our daughters, our sons, our friends, our close friends and whoever it is, what we need to have is compassion. Without compassion you cannot win them. That is the heart of the Lord. The mind of the Lord is to have compassion. You can have everything, but if you do not have compassion, then you do not have the mind of the Lord. It is with all of us. The Lord does not have any other plan than us. I do not know if it is true, but once I heard one brother's message: "When the Lord went to heaven an angel asked, 'What is the plan?' The Lord said, 'I do not have any plan. Those 120 people are my plan.' Such a big word? That's it.

So dear brothers and sisters, today the plan of the Lord is you and me. If you do not have that compassion, you will miss everything. The first thing and the foremost thing you have is compassion. When you have compassion, everything, all your complaints from the person are done.

Every complaint you have is nil. Without compassion you cannot move forward. The first thing that the Lord has is compassion. We know that we are not worthy to be saved. What is good in us? It is the Lord's compassion that one day so many people might have prayed for us out of compassion. So many people have a thought for us out of compassion, and today we are standing here.

The Lord has such compassion for those lost sheep. Today, that is the thing we need to have, not to look at anyone without compassion. Once we look at anyone without compassion, we have lost it. The structure of the society, the structure of the world, knowingly or unknowingly, compete in an unhealthy way. There is no compassion in this world. The church is a very small group of blood-bought believers if you look at this circle. I mean it does not take much time; they are strong, but our God is strongest. The people are more, but we have a living Lord within. We have the responsibility to move in a direction so that we do not fall in that trap in which the enemy has kept us, so we do not reach the thing.

The Work of the Light

The second thing is that the work of the light is not to burn the things, but to light up the things. We so easily condemn the people. We so easily burn them. We forget that we are the light, not the fire. The fire is there, and one day the Lord will judge. We all need to go through the fire, but we are supposed to be called as a light, not as a fire. I was also like that. It is so easy to become like a fire and burn up the people, burn up the relationship, burn up their ideas. If your friends are there around you (I like this circle which is surrounded by all black circles), then you are so blessed. God has given you an opportunity in keeping you as a white circle [believer] between all the black circles [unbelievers]. Now, your job is to show compassion and also to stop burning them. It is not to act like a fire, but act like a light.

I like this word in John's gospel, and the way the Lord spoke with that woman caught in adultery. She said, "No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:11).

Love, patience and kindness.

Sin should be navigated with love, patience, and kindness. If you look at the LGBT people, what can you say to them? Whether we accept it or not, it is growing like a fire in the schools and in the colleges. So what plan does the church have? The church is always looking at the government to do something. On the day of Pentecost, those 120 people did not look at the government; they looked at the Lord. There is a reason that we come back to the Lord and be trained by the Lord to say, "Lord, what do we need to do as the church? How should the church respond? How should we address the sin?" All the discussions of sin should be navigated with love, patience, and kindness. That includes murder, LGBT, or adultery; whatever it is. It is sin, and it should be addressed as sin.

We can sit here and panic, but it is not going to do anything unless we shine as the light. The young people are going to college, and they have so much responsibility. What kind of things they face! Are they the rare people or the common people in the society? They are not common people. It is easy to be common—black circle. They are rare people, and we need to strengthen them, help them. Whether it is in the families or in the church, we need to help them and engage them so that they can talk about sin but in a loving, patient way.

The Lord had so much patience towards that adulterous woman, and she was with them later, also. He had so much patience. Coming to this simple statement speaks volumes about His patience, His love, His kindness. That is called shining as a light without blame and harmless, like a dove. There are so many of God's great servants in the Word of God that are innocent, not wise. They are innocent to how they need to deal with people, but they are lovingly dealing with the people. It is not our job to condemn the people because the Lord Himself did not come to

condemn. “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world” (John 3:17). The mind of the Lord is not to condemn any human, but to have that light so that we can get really close in a very, very subtle way. If they see a dot of condemnation, a dot of judging, they will not come to you or me. They will jump into the black way again.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today the Lord’s coming is delayed. If God comes today, it is so glad. But if God does not come for twenty-five years or thirty years, in church history we do not know what people will say about us. Will we be the generation that is afraid to address sin in a proper way? The generation that has failed to shine as a light for the Lord? There is no excuse. It can be anything. I just put LGBT because that is in the news so often.

When I was coming past Grove Baptist Church, I saw people with a big banner, and it had politician’s names on it. We are coming to worship is very important, and that we are shining as lights is also very important. At this time, the media or people can sweep you from your feet to make you forget that you are a light. They make you like sheep that follow those people who are better at speaking on the stages and giving the pep talks. We do not want to be good; we do not want to listen to the greats; we just want to shine as the light. You want to go to the Lord and say. “Lord, train me, I want to shine as a light.”

It may be your simple neighbor. You need not think of the whole world, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ. It may be a simple neighbor, it may be a simple daughter, it may be a simple son-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, uncles, aunts, your neighbor, your colleagues. Let’s start from the root. Let’s not think about the whole big picture of the world. We cannot do that because for the whole picture of the world, you can only talk. But the action comes in the small picture of your world. Your world is not big. You feel that your world is big; it is not. It is very small. Really, big things do not make us worthy. The small things make us

worthy. So, make sure you are shining as the light with the immediate person whom you are contacting because that is the only way to change the world—change the people.

There is no other way, not what people putting on the media. Media is a business; it is a simple business. We should understand that. And everybody invests in the stocks; everyone wants money. If you are investing in CNN or Fox, you do not want them to go down because you do not want your money to go down. It is like the transitive property—A to B, B to C. If C goes down, A goes down. We do not want that because we know that is not the solution, so let us come back to the basic. That is not my solution, that is not my worry. My worry is the people who are around me.

Lord, if there are some of God's servants who are called to go across the world and preach, that is an additional blessing the Lord has given them. That is also very important. But for us, we can just influence the immediate people who are around us and make them shine.

I was just thinking, how amazing it would be if all the black circles [unbelievers] turned into white [become believers in Christ]. What it needs is for you to shine as the light and for me to shine as the light. Nothing else. The enemy can do all his schemes. The world is so attractive, the science is making us to believe it. I think kids always have questions, as well as the young people going into universities and studying so many subjects; they have questions inside. If it is not properly addressed, it is gone. So, I think there are many ways that we can learn to show the love of God.

Intercession

The last one is definitely intercession, praying for them earnestly. What I learned in Sunday School is that you should pray for the person who is troubling you more. You should be able to really intercede for the person who is troubling you more in your mind. The more you think he is

trouble, the more you think he is not with the Lord, the more you think he is cheating you, the more you should pray for him.

I was just thinking, the Lord might have prayed for Judas also. He prayed for Peter and everyone who were His disciples. We do not know how the Lord chose them. It says in Luke's Gospel that on the cross the Lord said, "Forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." He was interceding; He did not stop interceding.

You need to intercede for the immediate people whom you are around because this is the pattern. Even children are observing us in our lives. The children are not learning something from outside. Half of the things children learn, they learn from the home. They will definitely learn from the school; I am not saying they will not. I do not want to talk against other things, but home plays a bigger role for all of us.

So, even the Lord knew that Peter would deny Him. Who will really cosign for someone to buy a home if he would deny you? Anyone can be a cosigner. If I want a brother to be a cosigner when I am buying a property, and he knows that I am going to cheat him, will he be willing to sign it? No, but the Lord did it for Peter. He prayed, but Peter denied the Lord. Denying is a very big thing. The Lord knows that Peter is going to deny Him. In fact, the Lord said, "Peter, the enemy wants to take you." But still He prayed.

It is not our job how they will be saved, but I am just trying to bring these few things concerning the mind of the Lord. So personally, it may be anything. We are going to be compassionate, be light, not fire, and interceding which are such simple ways we can influence a person.

John's Gospel 9:5 says, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

So Christ is sitting on the right side of the Lord, now we are the ones who are to shine as the light. The Lord is still the light, no doubt about it, but we are the carriers of the light. We are the carriers of the testimony

of that light. We are the ones who are moving among the people, but people are not seeing the Christ; they are seeing us. We should be able to lift up the Christ in our lives, then people can be attracted towards the light. Otherwise, unless the Christ is lifted up, they are not attracted to the Lord Himself.

This is why, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we should be very careful. This is the way we need to compete with the lightning speed of the world. The way to conquer the lightning speed of the world is getting trained under the Lord, understanding the mind of the Lord so that we can introduce the beauty of the Lord's mind which we have seen. I was thinking, the work of the light is to light up the dark places. We have complained so much about the dark places, but we forgot that we are lights, and we have an ability to light up the dark places.

What is the work of the light when there is no darkness? That is heaven. Christ is the light in heaven, so there is no complaining about not judging the people. Whether you are in school, whether you are in college, whether you are with relatives, in an office, business, coffee shop, politics, light up these dark places. You need not do anything extraordinary, just do the simple things that the Lord has put in you to deal with them. When the light comes, darkness automatically goes away. There is no place for the darkness. If light tries to avoid the darkness, then who can help the darkness? The reason I was thinking that we need to really examine ourselves is: Are we shining as the light?

There is something about fundamental Islam. There is something about fundamental Christianity, also. I do not know, but people say that. My Hindu friends say, "You are a fundamental Christian." You know what fundamental Islamic means? Fundamental Islamic means, "they do all but bad things for Islam." You would not say bad things, but according to them they would say, "It is a good thing to spread Islam." That same people call us fundamental Christians. That means they are looking at the media, the politics, all these things. So let us not be anything they say we

are. Let us not be what the media paints us. Let us shine as the light and introduce the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ to the people.

Last words are always very important for us: “Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain” (Philippians 2:16).

What are we doing? It is not what we are winning over here; do we really rejoice in the day of Christ? Let us just keep His word.

Let us pray:

Dear heavenly Father, dear precious and Almighty Lord, unworthy people we are, but You have chosen us to shine as lights in the world. What a great responsibility! There is no other thing which can really introduce You, Lord. It is our life, it is our behavior, it is our decisions, it is our compassion on the people. Lord, help us to train under Thee and have the very mind of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that we can introduce the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ to the people. It is not the work of the media; it is not the work of anyone. It is the work of us to shine as the light. Lord, we are Your plan. Thank You, Lord, for choosing us as Your plan. Thank You, Lord, for leading us in this time. We give You all glory and honor. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.