

## **Let Your Light Shine**

### **Foundational scripture Matthew 5:14-16**

In Matthew 5:14-16 Jesus tells us our purpose and that is to SHINE. You are called to let your light shine for Christ. Wherever you are and whatever you're doing. This is our purpose, and this is the great commission-Let your light shine. Saint John Paul II reiterated these words to the youth of the world-on-World Youth Day in 1985; You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world"

Although this seems impossible at times, Jesus came to show us how to be a light in the darkness. He left the glory of the kingdom of light to come to earth to live in our midst, leaving a light-drenched path for us to follow. Jesus is our role model; He is our path. When we don't know the way, we are to follow Him. He is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6).

As Jesus walked this earth, serving and sacrificing and loving others, He referred to Himself as the Light of the World and then He passed the torch to us His followers when He said," You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14).

The problem is that the light in most of us has dwindled over time. Sure, there have been past seasons when we've shined unhindered, expressive, generous, bright, and bold. Others have been drawn to us at those times because we were open and welcoming and full of hope.

### **People are drawn to those who possess inner light like a moth to a window in the black of night. Natalie Quote**

During the past season of isolation, fear, financial insecurity, loneliness, and disappointments caused by the pandemic these two years, your light has flickered and grown dim and maybe it's all but dead now. You feel it, you know it. Nothing shines bright these days. You feel lost. You're in a dark place.

### **How do you know your light is flickering?**

You harp on your loved ones, count the minutes until you can go to bed, retreat into social media, and hide in the pantry or drown your sorrows in a bottle.

When you're with people, you spend your time complaining rather than rejoicing, spreading darkness rather than shining light.

### **Where did your light go? How did it get switched off?**

There are too many possible reasons to count, too many shadows darkening your life and **snuffing out your testimony, your purpose, your light.**

- the worries of this world
- the challenges of marriage

- the challenges of child rearing
- maybe you're an overwhelmed parent struggling with anger
- financial stresses
- broken hearts
- broken or stolen dreams
- dashed expectations ex. Not able to go on that vacation, move
- delayed answered prayers
- unhealthy lifestyle full of unhealthy habits
- the death of a close friend or family member
- failing health
- negative self-talk-ruminating
- fear and uncertainty of the future
- sibling rivalry
- betrayal

All these things can overwhelm you, zap your energy and throw your emotions out of balance, thus hiding the light of Christ within you.

When I was teaching, I used to sing the song, "This Little Light of Mine" with my students. It goes like this: This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. The children loved this part. Hide it under a bushel? No! I'm going to let it shine. Hide it under a bushel? No! I'm going to let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

We do not have time to address all the "**bushels**" that may be hiding your light BUT I want to encourage you to invite Jesus, the Light of the World, back into the dreary and dark recesses of your heart today. You see, He is the Light and He promises that when we walk with Him, we'll not walk another step-in darkness.

John 8:12 Jesus spoke to them, saying," I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

If you have let some bushels cover your light, then I hope that you realize it and shake them off by faith today. You may not feel like the light of the world, but the bible says that you are. Feelings are not truth. You and I can be everything that the bible says we are.

## Have you been struggling in the dark?

God promises that if we attach ourselves to Him, and walk by His side, as he stated in John 8:12 then we will walk in His life-light. We will become like **Moses** whose face shone with the brightness of God after he stood face to face in His presence for forty days (Exodus 34:35). Notice the length of time that Moses spent in God's presence, 40 days. We also need to spend time in God's presence to reflect His light and His glory. They say that to create a new habit you must do something repeatedly for 18 to 254 days. It takes an average of 66 days for a new behaviour to become automatic. The 21day habit formation formula is a myth. It takes much longer than that.

You and I will start to shine again. That's why we've been talking about creating new healthy habits that will help us to achieve our life's assignment and spread the light and love of Christ to those around us. New habits take time and effort to form. All good things take time. I believe that we can and will do it.

Friends, in this life we will encounter many dark trials, injustices, unfair things but be of good cheer-and **cheer is a lot like shining**-for our saviour has overcome the world and is overcoming still (John 16:33). "In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world".

Jesus' love and goodness radiates off our faces as we abide in Him. We must change some things. Don't go around moping, complaining about your circumstances and all the sacrifices you're making. Instead, splash your face with some water, fix your hair, get dressed, straighten your crown, go out there and shine! Yes, I said to straighten your crown. You're a child of the King. You're royalty. You've forgotten who you are.

Your spouse and children, your neighbours and coworkers should have to shield their faces and their eyes because you're suddenly so radiant and bright. You are radiating and reflecting Jesus' light to others. You are also reflecting light from within you now too. You've got light down in your core because you've plugged into the light source = Jesus.

**Are you able to let your light shine before others today? If not, I encourage you to run back into the presence of the Light of the world.**

If you have been complaining, be quiet today. If you have been gossiping, do not engage today. A good rule for life is: If you can't say anything good then say nothing at all. The bible says to listen more than you speak (James 1:19). That's why we've been given two ears and only one mouth because we're supposed to listen more than we speak. Instead of doing things that would hinder your light from shining try these instead; Practice some self-care and self-love. Take a shower, shave, color your hair, put on make-up, get dressed, then go for a walk and speak grateful blessings over your life and the lives of those around you. You deserve it.

Make a decision to speak grateful and positive words. Look for new ways to love and serve. Volunteer your time, talents, and resources to help others. This will ignite your light and encourage you and empower you to keep running your race with excellence.

Perhaps your children and spouse or family members or employer have been demanding and you've responded to them with nasty words and expressions, first nullify those words and then ask the Lord to shine His love in you and through you. Say "Lord, help me to walk in love today. Lord thank you for your grace today"

Maybe you're feeling lonely, go to the only One who can fill each hollow hurt with His healing love. Psalm 147:3 says that Jesus heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds. Psalm 34:18 says, "The Lord is near to the broken hearted and saves the crushed in spirit." Say "Lord thank you for being with me, thank you for never leaving me or forsaking me."

If you grumble under your breath every time you go into the lunchroom or staffroom at work because you encounter a temptation or a trigger-whether it be a plate of cookies, or a negative group of people gossiping around the water cooler, or your least favourite colleague-turn around and take your break somewhere else. Change your behaviour. Doing the same things and expecting a different result is the definition of insanity. When you're able, walk back in there and shine without complaining or gossiping or ignoring.

**We need to submit our triggered hearts to the lordship of Jesus Christ-only then can our triggers lose their tight hold on our hearts.** We are all triggered internally by our emotions and triggered externally by our circumstances. God wants to heal us from unhealthy eating, unhealthy habits, unhealthy living, unhealthy talking, and especially unhealthy thinking.

God wants to heal us from everything hindering us from completing our destiny. God wants to heal us from everything that is hindering our light from shining.

You are the light of the world-so shine-let your light shine.

Be encouraged by the fact that, light shines the brightness when it's the darkest. The flame of a single candle can dispel the darkness of an entire room. You and I were created to shine. We were created to shine like diamonds. Diamonds shine by reflecting light. They are cut in such a way that they refract light. It is the **refraction** that causes a rainbow effect and adds to the shine. The light enters through the top and then is angled around the inside of the diamond before being aimed back towards the top and out through the surface. God's light in us works this same way. It must get inside of us before it can be aimed back out. It gets inside us when we spend time with Him.

We are created to reflect the light of Christ from within us to a dark and dying world. The world may be getting darker as the enemy knows that his time is short BUT we the Church are getting brighter. God is preparing us to be carriers of His

glory. The days are coming when the glory and anointing of God will be so powerful upon us that people will get instantly convicted, saved, healed, delivered. In bible times, Peter's shadow alone would heal and deliver people (Acts 5:15). Hanger chiefs that were laid on Stephen were brought to the sick and they were instantly healed (Acts 19:12). Why can't we believe for that to happen again? Why can't our light shine as brightly as that?

Dear friends,

Although darkness is increasing at an unprecedented level in the earth today and the love of many has grown cold, and the light of many has grown dim, my heart is encouraged in the fact that the Church-you and I, are arising in this hour. We are consecrated ones who fear the Lord more than the opinions of men and are truly a "city on a hill that cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14-16). My calling is to champion you sons and daughters of the King to accomplish all that the Lord has called you to do and help you in any way that I can through lessons I have learned in my own journey.

Let's pray Psalm 139: 23-24 and ask God to give us spiritual wisdom and vision **to pinpoint our own triggers or bushels that hide and hinder the light of Christ in us from shining**. God knows us better than we know ourselves for He sees into the deep and dark recesses of our hearts where un-faced fears still reside. He made us and we are His with all our hurts, hang-ups, and habits. God isn't angry with us so no condemnation here. God loves us unconditionally. His love for us is so radical that He sent His own Son to chase us down in our addictions, our compulsions, our sin, our shame, and our messy lives and brings us into a right relationship with Himself.

Action Steps:

1. Make a decision. **"Your decisions determine your destiny."**

Make a decision to start turning your life around one step at a time by facing your fears, identifying the bushels in your life and submitting them to the Lord.

2. Pray according to Psalm 139:23-24 Search me O God and show me

**Prayer:**

Lord search me. Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts. My anxious and fearful thoughts. Know me and my triggered thoughts. And see if there be any grievous way/offensive way in me. See if there are any unhealthy habits in my eating, my thinking and my living and lead me in the way everlasting! I invite you, Lord to reveal to me why it is that I run to food, to people and to things instead of you. Teach me that You are what I need every time I'm triggered. Help me identify my triggers so I will no longer be powerless against them. Lord help me make a plan to cope with them in a healthy and holy way. In Jesus Name. Amen.

You are the light of the world so **"Shine On"** in Jesus' name!

References:

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