



*Let your light so shine before men,
that they may see your good works, and
glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Matthew 5:16

Offering Message: We continued our discussion on the 4 types of giving; Tithes, Offerings, Alms & First Fruits. We discussed the definition, purpose and the promise of Almsgiving and how Alms must be given in love from the heart and be done in secret in order to be blessed to be a blessing to others.

Matthew 25:40&45

40 "...Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

45 "...Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me."

Matthew 6:1-4

1 "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Lesson: What hides your light?

We discussed how the Bible often uses the comparison of "Light vs. Dark" and that Jesus is the light of the world. When we accept him as our Lord and Savior we no longer need to walk in the darkness of sin.

We talked about, as Christians, we are called to be the light of the world and to let our light shine for all to see so that they can see Jesus by our light, not to hide our light under a bowl. We are called to be disciples and to make disciples of all nations.

We discussed reasons why we may hide our light and not stand out in the darkness of the world such as being afraid of what others may think, too busy, fear, not wanting to get involved. We talked about some simple things we could do to share the light of Jesus by just showing love, forgiveness, grace and caring for others, even if we don't know them.

Finally, we listened to a story of one person sharing his light with someone in need, without even realizing it, and the amazing results that followed. The story is included at the end of this summary for you to share with others and perhaps one day someone may share such a story about you and the difference you made in the world by doing just one simple thing.

Bible Verse: John 8:12

12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Bible Verse: Colossians 1:13-14

13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Bible Verse: Matthew 5:14-16

14 "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 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. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Bible Verse: Matthew 28:18-19

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

One day, when I was a freshman in high school,
I saw a kid from my class walking home from school.
His name was Kyle.

It looked like he was carrying all of his books.
I thought to myself, 'Why would anyone bring home all his books on a Friday?
He must really be a nerd.'

I had quite a weekend planned
(parties and a football game with my friends tomorrow afternoon),
so I shrugged my shoulders and went on.
As I was walking, I saw a bunch of kids running toward him.
They ran at him, knocking all his books out of his arms and tripping him so he landed in the dirt.
His glasses went flying, and I saw them land in the grass about ten feet from him...

He looked up and I saw this terrible sadness in his eyes .
My heart went out to him. So, I ran over to him as he crawled around looking for his glasses, and I saw a
tear in his eye.
As I handed him his glasses, I said, 'Those guys are jerks.'
They really should get lives.

' He looked at me and said, 'Thanks!'
There was a big smile on his face.
It was one of those smiles that showed real gratitude.

I helped him pick up his books, and asked him where he lived.
As it turned out, he lived near me, so I asked him why I had never seen him before.
He said he had gone to private school before now.

We talked all the way home, and I carried some of his books.
He turned out to be a pretty cool kid.
I asked him if he wanted to play a little football
with my friends .
He said yes.
We hung out all weekend and the more I got to know Kyle, the more I liked him, and my friends thought
the same of him.

Monday morning came, and there was Kyle with the huge stack of books again.
I stopped him and said, 'Boy, you are gonna really build some serious muscles with this pile of books
everyday
' He just laughed and handed me half the books.

Over the next four years, Kyle and I became best friends.
When we were seniors we began to think about college.

I knew that we would always be friends, that the miles would never be a problem. He was going to be a doctor and I was going for business on a football scholarship.

Kyle was valedictorian of our class.
He had to prepare a speech for graduation.
I was so glad it wasn't me having to get up there and speak .

Graduation day, I saw him and he looked great.
I could see that he was nervous about his speech.
So, I smacked him on the back and said, 'Hey, big guy, you'll be great!'
He looked at me with one of those looks (the really grateful one) and smiled....
' Thanks,' he said.

As he started his speech, he cleared his throat, and began ...
'Graduation is a time to thank those who helped you make it through those tough years.
Your parents, your teachers, your siblings, maybe a coach...but mostly your friends....
I am here to tell all of you that being a friend to someone is the best gift you can give them.

I am going to tell you a story.'
I just looked at my friend with disbelief as he told the first day we met.

He had planned to kill himself over the weekend.

He talked of how he had cleaned out his locker so his Mom wouldn't have to do it later and was carrying his stuff home.
He looked hard at me and gave me a little smile.

'Thankfully, I was saved.
My friend saved me from doing the unspeakable.'

I heard the gasp go through the crowd as this handsome, popular boy told us all about his weakest moment.

I saw his mom and dad looking at me and smiling that same grateful smile.
Not until that moment did I realize the depth of what happened that day.

Never underestimate the power of your actions.
With one small gesture you can change a person's life.

For better or for worse.

God puts us all in each others lives to impact one another in some way.
Look for God in others.