

As Unto A Light That Shineth In A Dark Place

I. Introduction:

A. We see in the Scriptures that days wherein evil abounded were not few, but many (**Genesis 6:5-8, Numbers 32:13-14, Isaiah 1:1-10, Jeremiah 4:22, Matthew 16:1-4; 23:33**, etc.).

1. There were times of hope (**Joshua 24:14-31**), shortly followed thereafter by evil (**Judges 2:6-15**).

2. Times when the only solution was for God to put away most of His people (**II Kings 17:18-23**).

B. There were false prophets even as there are false teachers (**II Peter 2:1-3**).

1. Cities wholly given to false doctrine (**Acts 17:16**).

2. Congregations that once were faithful; fallen or heading towards such (**Galatians 1:1-9, Galatians 3:1, Revelation 2:1-7, Revelation 2:12-3:6, and Revelation 3:14-22**).

3. Like the past, we see times now where people just do not want to hear the truth (**Isaiah 30:9-11, Jeremiah 6:13-18, and II Timothy 4:1-5**).

4. Like the past, those once thought to be faithful walked away (**John 6:60-66 and I John 2:18-19**).

5. In the deepest of dark days with many doctrines that abound which are false, how much more important is it that God's people shine brighter?

II. Body: Take Heed... After Seeing the Light (**II Peter 1:10-21**), Be The Light...

A. Brightly displaying there is but one standard to which all men are to follow (**Luke 4:4, Luke 6:46, Luke 11:28, I Thessalonians 4:1-2, II Timothy 1:13 [cf. Hebrews 8:5]**, and **II Timothy 3:15-17**).

1. Even men who were prophets, speaking as the Spirit gave them utterance (**Numbers 11:16-17 and II Samuel 23:1-2**), could not do as they saw fit of themselves (**Numbers 9:1-8 and II Samuel 7:1-7**).

2. There is only one faith (**Ephesians 4:5**). Therefore, we must display that we cannot each have our own beliefs (**Proverbs 3:5-7, Proverbs 14:12, Isaiah 8:20, Ephesians 5:10, Philippians 3:16, and I Peter 4:11**).

B. Brightly displaying that the church Jesus died to establish (**Matthew 16:13-18 and Acts 20:28**) still exists and we are that church.

1. Showing that there is but one body, the church (**Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:4-6**).

2. That we, being the people of the Lord, are that one body (**Acts 2:40-41; 2:47 and I Corinthians 12:27**).

3. Brightly displaying that as the house of the Lord (**Hebrews 3:1-6**) we hold fast to His standard alone (**I Timothy 3:15**).

4. Inviting the light of examination on us (**I Thessalonians 5:21**).

5. Showing the relationships we have as brethren (**John 13:34-35**).

C. Brightly displaying that one standard is still being followed today and is visible in this congregation when you examine our works (**James 2:18**; cf. **Titus 1:16**).

1. When one will look at what we do when we assemble on the first day of the week (**Acts 20:7**) they will see what we do is what congregations did/ where instructed to do in the first century (**I Corinthians 4:17**, **Ephesians 5:19-20**, **I Corinthians 11:16-34**, **I Corinthians 16:1-2**, **I Thessalonians 5:11**, **Hebrews 10:23-25**, etc.).

2. When one will look at what we do/will do with the funds collected on the first day of the week, they will see the church they read about in the New Testament (**I Corinthians 9:1-14**, **II Corinthians 8:1-9:13**, **Philippians 4:10-20**, and **I Timothy 5:3-18**).

3. When one looks at the congregation here they will see that men are not exalted above the word of God (**I Corinthians 4:1-6**).

4. When one visits they will not hear public prayers intended to impress (**Matthew 6:7**), but rather humble giving of thanks (**I Thessalonians 5:17-18**).

5. When one examines this congregation they will not see a group of people intended to dress to impress (**Matthew 23:1-5**), but rather a people determined to serve humbly (**Micah 6:8**).

6. When we shine bright under examination people will see that we are also prepared to prevent false doctrine from being spread among us or from us (**Titus 1:10-14** and **Jude 1:3-4**).

7. Let the world see a congregation balanced with Scriptural love (**Romans 12:9-16**) and loving discipline (**I Corinthians 5:1-13**).

D. So, if you're faithful, let your light shine (**Matthew 5:14-16**).

1. Your path (**Proverbs 4:14-27**).

2. With your path really being His path (**I John 2:3-6**).

III. Conclusion: All of this, with the right qualifiers (**Philippians 2:3-16**).