

## Influencing your space for Christ

Scripture: Matt 5: 13-16

*"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (NKJV)*

*Let me tell you why you are here. You're here to be salt-seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You've lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage.*

*"Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven. (TM)*

This scripture is contained within the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 5 discourses of Jesus Christ in Matthew's Gospel. This first discourse (or body of teachings) is alternatively referred to as the 'sermon on the mount.' Jesus taught, preached and healed.

In the scripture quoted above Jesus was challenging his disciples to be influencers in their spheres of life. The same applies to us today. We are called to influence our space for Christ.

Our 'space' is a word I use to describe our areas of daily activity or operation. This includes:

- Our home/house
- Work place
- Community/Neighbourhood
- Wherever we are physically present at any point in time
- Wherever the 'soles of your feet' touch or tread upon

We are not only called to influence but to be a positive influence i.e.

- salt that seasons, flavours, prevents putrefaction; and
- light that dispels darkness and gives clarity of path to follow.

### Can we hide our light? Yes! But How?

- By being quiet when we should speak
- Going along with the crowd (perhaps in order to feel accepted or not 'rock the boat')
- Denying the light
- Letting sin dim our light
- Not explaining our light to others, or

- Ignoring the needs of others (Commentary, Life Application Study Bible)

### **And Why?**

- Fear
- Feeling of inadequacy
- Lack of confidence
- Lack of appreciation of what the Lord has done for us
- Thinking that witnessing is the work of 'the Evangelist'

### **How do you influence your space for Christ?**

- Simply sharing your testimony when the occasion arises or the opportunity opens for you to do so.
- Living your life the way God intended you to – *“walking worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him”* (Col. 1:10); your life may be the first or only 'Bible' that somebody else will read.
- Be an attraction, not a 'put-off'. What does your body language communicate?
- Wear a smile, not a frown
- Speak words that heal, not hurt. Let your words be a balm and not a bomb
- Speak life/ hope and not death/despair
- Confront and correct where and when necessary but out of love
- Determine not to leave a 'stench' behind you when you exit a place rather leave behind the fragrance of God's love, truth and salvation.
- Above all, pray and ask for the help of the Holy Spirit.

### **Let your light shine:**

There is urgency in the need to bring the message of Christ's salvation to the world today. Christ may come at any time or you may be the last person that somebody meets before the cold hands of death come knocking on their door.

We carry the mandate of the Lord to share the gospel because of our changed lives.

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. (Eph 5:8-11)

*If we have been delivered by God's power, we are witnesses to his power to save. We can carry the light of his Good News to people imprisoned in the darkness of sin. Sinful behaviours and warped relationships abound, and people are desperate for truth and light. We can make a significant impact on individuals, relationships and even societal structures if we are willing to shine our spiritual light for others to see. As we experience God's deliverance, we are privileged to share the Good News of God's love with others, extending hope to hurting people. (Commentary in Spiritual Renewal Bible, p.952)*