

Matthew 5:14-16 *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.*

Is This Chapel, a town upon a hill?

Story of trip from BWI: When I was a mid, before there was I-97, we came back to USNA from BWI via Rt 2 from Glen Burnie, through Pasadena and Severna Park. As we passed Arnold and turned the corner, right where the Maryland WWII memorial is now... Behold the first view of Annapolis – a view dominated by the Chapel. Every picture sold in tourist stores is either the Sate Capital or the Chapel dome. The Chapel is a symbol of USNA and Annapolis

We are The Cathedral of the Navy

CNO's annual Navy Birthday worship services are held here, people come from all over our nation, all over the globe for weddings, funeral and baptisms. We are flooded with visitors every fall during football season during reunion weekends, we hold memorial services for these grads, they attend our services – *do they feel welcome in our midst?*

We ARE the Cathedral of The Navy; we ARE a town upon a hill...

But are we a place that shines the light of Christ? Are we a city on a hill that shines our into the darkness and beckons sinners to come in and find hope in the midst of their pain?

In order to be an effective Light of Christ we must be both

VISIBLE & RADIANT

Visible

Story of the Idaho Hunting Lodge – I had been hunting with a friend for over a week in Idaho, along the north fork of the Boise River. We were both dirty and unshaven; we hadn't bathed in over a week. We had been up and down the hills around our campsite trying to find deer and had been unsuccessful.

We were hungry, tired, and thirsty. I had been drinking over four liters of water every day, but it wasn't enough. It always ran out before we made it back to camp. The food we carried was out of a bag – old MREs that I had collected over the years. They were *Unpalatable*.

One evening while we were trying to make it back to our camp we saw a light become visible out in the distance. Before it had been obscured by a hill, and we had always returned to camp before dusk, but this day we had used all the daylight trying to find where the deer were. It was dark, a type of darkness that you could not see your hand before your face. But there was a small light off in the distance.

The light was a Coors sign. It wasn't very bright but it shown out clearly in the dark western night. It called to us, and I am not even a Coors fan. We went down

to that place: dirty, unshaven, and smelly. We were two strange men, who hadn't bathed in a week, caring our weapons we entered that place and were welcomed as long lost friends.

I am sure the burgers were probably mass produced ground chuck you get from COSCO, but they were the best meal that I had eaten in some time. The beer was served in cans that came out of a cooler filled with ice, it was cold, effervescent, refreshing. A far cry from the warm bag of water I had on my back all day. The people there were talkative, kind, and encouraged us to hunt over a different ridge the next day. It turned out that was the most profitable time we spent in the hills. My friend got his deer the next day.

How do we prevent our light from being visible? It is not because we have hidden it behind a hill or put it under a bowl. We obscure our light when we do not welcome strangers into our midst. Or when we are unkind to people who sit in our pews and disturb our routines.

We obscure our light when we become legalistic and judge others. When we have enough Christ to come out of the world but not enough of him to have true joy. We rather condemn or judge others – dirty, smelly, unshaven... those horrid masses.

What hunting lodge ever put up a sign that says no dirty smelly hunters allowed? What hospital ever turned away sick people, or has an Emergency Room ever said to an injured person we only treat healthy people. Come back when you are better! *This hospital is for the healthy!*

Sometimes we hide our light under a bowl when we hide that we are a Christian. A true Christian cannot be hidden, he cannot escape notice. A man truly living his life for Christ will stand out, like a city on a hill or a candle on a lampstand, his life will be visible to all those around him. In fact the true Christian does not even desire to hide his light. A man who has experienced the incredible grace of God, all that God has done for him, will not be able to conceal the joy he has in Christ.

And even the smallest light can overcome the darkness...

Do not be concerned about your paltry meal... do not be concerned about communicating the truth of Christ weekly... even mass produced hamburgers and cheap beer are a feast for the hungry. And Christ can feed thousands with just a few small loaves and fishes.

Even the smallest light can overcome darkness. But it must be...

Radiant

It must be the right light – the light that is needed.

Red Light in CIC illustration – it is hard to read under a red light. I once needed to read in CIC and turned on a white flashlight. Oh the complaints I got for breaking that rule! But I still could not read. I had to step out of CIC in order to find a white light to read.

We too need to reflect the right kind of light.

In order to be ***Radiant*** we must reflect the light of Christ.

Happy To Be The Moon

©1974 Buon Natalie Music

Clockwise

Released on the label *Mars Hill Records*

We're Happy to be the moon
Happy to be the moon
We reflect the light
In the middle of the night
And we are Happy to be the moon

We get our glow from the son
We know that He's the only One
Who can send forth the light
In the middle of the night
And we are happy to be the moon

Because we get our glow from the Son... We're happy to be the moon...

Are we a place that people are drawn to – that sinners can find the light of Christ... The light of Christ reflected in us as Christians?

Illustration: Dirty Mirror – Have you ever tried to look into a dirty mirror? Or have you seen an old or antique mirror that needed to have the metal film replaced? They don't reflect light very well. Mirrors in ancient times were made of metal, and they needed to be polished, when they became dirty they reflected light only dimly. Sometimes we let the darkness of this world tarnish our reflectivity. That is why our Epistle reading says: Ephesians 5:14-16

“Wake up, sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

We need to take every opportunity to share the light of Christ that we have. We should not ever attempt to hide it in any way – we need to be welcoming, gracious of all who come, quick to forgive wrongs.... a congregation that reflects the Love of Christ to all who come.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Are we a place that people are drawn to – that sinners can find the light of Christ? Is the light of Christ reflected by us as Christians? Do we reflect his love, grace and forgiveness?

For God demonstrated his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. John 3:16-17

Let us therefore commit ourselves today to be a congregation that loves. That reflects the light of Christ and proclaims it boldly in this city, and to all who come.