

Title: YOU ARE THE LIGHT (NOW, MORE THAN EVER), MATTHEW 5:13-16  
(Chatham, NJ; 02/09/14, AM) [Pc – Topical]

Theme: God needs us to let our light shine as much, maybe more, now during this time of creeping and blatant darkness.

Purpose: To inspire the church to be the light despite the deep and slowly creeping darkness that pervades so much of our pop culture.

Introduction:

1. Audie Murphy's lone bravery and Congressional Medal of Honor award are described in the official report.
2. It is inspiring to hear of people who risk their lives to perform deeds of heroism and bravery.
3. True American idols are not entertainers; true idols are those who risk life and limb for a cause greater than themselves and for the sake of others.

## I. A Community of Salt and Light, Mt. 5:13 - 16

### A. Direct address to the audience

1. Jesus addresses the crowd (you) in verse 11.
2. He describes persecution as an indication of God's presence within them.
3. It provides the backdrop for his discussion of salt and light.
4. He continues to address them in this next section.

### B. You are salt, 13

1. The audience is not simply urged to become these things; they are these things
2. The challenge is not to lose their saltiness
3. Salt serves numerous function: preserving, flavoring, and purifying
4. Jesus probably has all these in mind: preventing decay, enhancing flavor, and killing various bacteria and viruses (sometimes it stings)

### C. You are light, 14-16

1. A world engulfed in the darkness of its sins, fears the light because its deeds are exposed, John 3:20
2. Yet light provides direction and protection from danger
3. It is a city on a hill, Phil. 2:15
4. Not hidden under anything: gives light to all in the house (Mt.); that all who enter may see (Luke)
5. Let it shine: good works, glorify God (a higher calling than self)
6. The role of God's presence in the world has fallen to the community of his people, the church.

## II. The Righteous Ones, Psalm 112:1 – "Blessed is the man"

### A. Light dawns for him, 4-5

1. His path is clear
2. Characterized by mercy, righteousness, and generosity
3. Conducts his affairs with justice

### B. Not afraid of bad news, 7-8

1. His heart is firm and steady
2. He trusts in the Lord and will not be afraid (or at least won't give in to it)
3. Eisenhower's attitude after an apparent defeat (see letter)
4. Note how the numerous small squads saved the war at this point
5. We will look in triumph upon our enemies, 8

C. The wicked react to the righteous, 10

1. He is angry at the righteous man; he gnashes his teeth
2. Yet he will melt away and perish
3. Such is the reaction of evil toward righteousness
4. Remember that the backdrop of salt and light is the attacks of the wicked

III. The Light Can Open Their Eyes, 1 Cor. 2:1-16

- Paul has already explained that the wisdom of the world is not the same as the wisdom of God; God's is way above it
- His wisdom is "secret and hidden" (7) only to those who keep looking elsewhere
- God has revealed it to us, 10
- 16 – We have the mind of Christ (the cross)
- Because we've been made privy to God's wisdom, we are the conduit by which it is communicated to others
- We are the light of the world

Conclusions:

1. We "shine as lights in the world" in the midst of crooked and depraved generation.
2. We must not cave in nor accept defeat.
3. In our small little corners of the world, we can be brave and perform great acts of light.
4. Commit yourself today to this task.
5. Come to Jesus and join us in our efforts. (Offer an invitation.)