

Appearing As Lights In The World

Philippians 2:12-15

The Need ...

- There's a lot of darkness in the world.
- God needs **individuals and the Lord's church** to step up and be lights in this dark world.
- **Philippians 2:15**, "... *prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation ...*
... among whom you appear as **lights in the world** ..."
- Not to draw attention to self but to glorify God and lead others to Him. Matthew 5:16

What is our relationship with the world?

- **We can't hide who we are!**
– "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14
- **We can't be taken out of the world!**
– John 17:14-17, "... I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world ..."
- **Those in darkness do not appreciate light!**
– John 3:19-21, "... everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed ..."

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Consistent Obedience** – Philippians 2:12, "... just as you have **always obeyed**, not as in my presence only, but **now much more in my absence** ..."

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Consistent Obedience** –
- What makes us lights in the world is when we're obedient and faithful **ALL THE TIME!**
- When we're being watched and when we're not.
 - Matthew 23:27-28; Ephesians 6:5-6

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Consistent Obedience** –
- In good times and in bad. With small things and with big. When it's easy and when it's hard.
- **Daily successful habits**. Daniel 1:8; 6:10, "... *as he had been doing previously* ..." - 6:16
- **We're being watched**. 1 Peter 2:11-12; 3:1-2

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Diligent Effort** – Philippians 2:12, “... work out your salvation ...”

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Diligent Effort - Philippians 2:12**
- What this **IS NOT** saying –
 - We use our own wisdom to determine our own path to God (Proverbs 14:12; Jeremiah 10:23)
- What this **IS** saying –
 - We bear a responsibility before God to please Him and submit to Him ... we must work at it!
- **Do it with all your might.** Ecclesiastes 9:10; cf.
 - Run in such a way that you might win. 1 Corinthians 9:24ff; Luke 13:24

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Diligent Effort -**
- A well orchestrated life – 2 Peter 1:5-8
- Not just serving out of convenience.
- We shine when we exhibit the willingness to “*deny ungodliness and worldly desires and ... live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age.*” (Titus 2:12; cf. Luke 9:23)

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Reverence and respect for God** - Philippians 2:12, “...*with fear and trembling* ...”
- Reverence and respect for God in today’s world will shine forth as brightly as the sun. Hebrews 12:28 – shine by serving God with “*reverence and awe.*”
- Malachi 2:5 – reverence for God’s word.
- 2 Corinthians 7:1 – inspiring reverent conduct (1 Peter 1:17)

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Useful To The Master** - Philippians 2:13, “... for it is *God who is at work in you*, both to will and to work *for His good pleasure* ...”

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Useful To The Master -**
- How does God work in us? When we ...
 - Make it our desire (will) & our practice (work) to do **what pleases Him!** Romans 15:18; Acts 21:19
 - Through fellowship (joint participation).
- But first ... 2 Timothy 2:21, “Therefore, **if** a man **cleanses himself** from these things, he will be ... **useful to the Master** ...”

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Useful To The Master** –
- Make it your purpose to be useful to the Lord in His service ... you'll be a light in this world.
 - Why? Everyone else is pleasing self.
- Must be **willing to do His will** and not our own. John 4:34; Psalms 40:8; 1 Peter 4:1-2
- What does God need?
 - Someone willing to **"stand in the gap"** Ezekiel 22:30 and **"ready for every good deed"** (Titus 3:1)

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Consistently Proper Attitude** – Philippians 2:14, "Do *all things without grumbling or disputing* ..."
- Key: **"ALL THINGS"** in our duties before God and man.
- 1 Corinthians 16:14; Titus 2:7

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Consistently Proper Attitude** –
- **Without Grumbling** – to complain, murmur. 1 Corinthians 10:10-11
- In contrast ... Rejoice in the Lord **always**. Philippians 4:4-6
- In contrast ... a life characterized by contentment, you will blind those in the world you live in. Philippians 4:11ff; 1 Timothy 6:6
- We don't find God's commands **"burdensome."** 1 John 5:3

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Consistently Proper Attitude** -
- **Without disputing** – without objections, debates, or rationalizations. 1 Corinthians 3:18-20; James 1:21
- Jeremiah 36:23 – would cut out the parts we don't agree with?

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Higher Standards and Goals** – Philippians 2:15, "... *prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation* ..."

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Higher Standards and Goals** –
- We must live by a higher standard than our own. Proverbs 14:12; Isaiah 55:8-9
- The need for Holy conduct. 1 Peter 1:14-16
- Need to rise above **"Above reproach** ..." the standard of the world; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; **Ephesians 5:7ff**
- Come out ... be separate! 2 Corinthians 6:17

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Higher Standards and Goals** –
- It'll be noticed! 1 Peter 4:2-4
- In the world - not of the world. John 17:11-16
- Blameless and innocent – How so?
 - Forgiveness and repentance.
- Contrast the crooked and perverse generation
 - Crooked – *skolios* – warped or winding. Acts 2:40; Ecclesiastes 1:15

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Higher Standards and Goals** –
- We need ...
 - Lofty goals. 1 Peter 1:14-15; 2 Peter 1:4; Hebrews 11:24ff
 - To be adopted children of God and joint heirs with Christ. Romans 8:14-17
 - Think higher! Setting our minds/affections on the things above. Colossians 3:1-2

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Never Quitting** - Philippians 2:16, “*holding fast* the word of life, so that *in the day of Christ* I may have cause to glory because I *did not run in vain* nor toil in vain”

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Never Quitting** -
- Hold fast – Hold On!!! – Hebrews 3:12-14 – “*firm and secure*”, Hebrews 6:11-12.
- There's a vital need for endurance. Hebrews 10:32-39, “... *you have need of endurance* ...”; James 1:3-4
- Revelation 2:10, “Be faithful until death ...”

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

- **Never Quitting** –
- We need both endurance (to circumstances) and patience (to people).
- We need encouragement (Hebrews 3:13-14) to run our race with endurance (Hebrews 12:1-2)
- It's been said ...
 - The race is not to the swift but to those who keep running.
 - Success consists of getting up one more time than you fall.

How do we prove to be lights in the world?

1. **Consistent Obedience** – Verse 12
2. **Diligent Effort** – Verse 12
3. **Reverence For God** – Verse 12
4. **Useful To The Master** – Verse 13
5. **Consistently Proper Attitude** – Verse 14
6. **Higher Standards and Goals** – Verse 15
7. **Never Quitting** – Verse 16

It was Paul's mission to turn men from “darkness to light” so that we might receive forgiveness of sins. Acts 26:18