



MINISTRIES

A Ministry of the Athens Universal Life Church
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<https://aulc.us>

Welcome to our four part series called "City On A Hill".

Today's Sermon Title for Part One is "The Prominent Life: Salt & Light in a Sight-Seeking World".

Our Scripture lesson is from the Gospel of Matthew chapter 5 verses 13 to 16.

"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world.

A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Church, let me ask you a question this morning. Have you noticed how desperately our world craves attention? From the moment we wake up, we are bombarded with people screaming for a glimpse, asking for a "like,"

begging for a "share." Everyone wants to be seen. Everyone wants to be heard. We live in a time where people will do almost anything to stand out. But as followers of Jesus, our goal is not simply to be flashy or famous.

No, we are called to live a prominent life, a life that does not point to ourselves, but catches the attention of a lost world so they can see the beauty of our Father.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus looks at His disciples and gives them a divine identity. He doesn't just say, "You should be good people." He says, "You are the salt and you are the light."

He is telling us that our lives are meant to be effective. We are not meant to blend in with the furniture; we are meant to stand out like a city on a hill.

If we want to catch the attention of others in a way that matters for eternity, we need to understand what Jesus says here. We need to learn how to live a life that draws people to God.

So, let's look at three powerful truths from our text today.

Point 1: Salt Creates Thirst, Verse 13

Jesus begins by saying, "You are the salt of the earth." In the ancient world, salt had two primary purposes, and it wasn't just about making food taste better. In a world without refrigeration, salt was a preservative.

It stopped the rot. It kept things from decaying. And, second, salt creates thirst.

Just as salt makes us thirsty for water, a godly believer in the middle of a decaying, corrupt world should make the people around us thirsty for the Living Water. We live in a society that is rotting morally, spiritually, and emotionally. People are losing their marriages, their identities, and their joy to the decay of sin.

When you carry the presence of God into your workplace, your school, or your neighborhood, you act as a preservative. You stand against the moral decay. But notice Jesus warns us:

"if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored?" In other words, if you look just like the world, if you talk just like the world, and if you love the world's sin, you are useless. You've lost your flavor.

We catch the attention of others when we dare to be different, not a weird, annoying different, but a holy, pure, joyful different. When the world is bitter and angry, you come with grace.

When the world is corrupt, you bring integrity. That contrast will make people stop and say, "What do you have that I don't have?" That is when we catch their attention.

Let your presence create a thirst in them for something more than this world can give.

Point 2: Light Invades the Darkness, Verses 14 and 15

Jesus continues: "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden."

Listen to me, church. A light is not meant to be seen by itself; a light is meant to be seen in the darkness. You are not a flashlight meant to be kept in the drawer for emergencies. You are a city on a hill.

You are a beacon meant to guide lost ships to safety.

Jesus uses this metaphor of a lamp that is lit and placed on a stand. In the Jewish homes of that day, the first thing you did when you entered a dark house was put the lamp up on a stand, so it could illuminate the entire room. He says, "Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket."

God did not light you up just for you to hide your faith. If you want to catch the attention of others, you have to take the basket off! What is the basket? It is fear. It is insecurity.

It is the excuse that "I don't want to be too religious." Maybe it's a busy schedule that leaves no time for God. Maybe it's a fear of what your friends might say if they knew you stayed up late reading your Bible.

Stop hiding. Your life is the visible evidence that the Holy Spirit is still working on earth. The amount of darkness in our world is not the issue. The issue is the amount of light we are releasing.

When you walk into a room, the atmosphere should change—not because you are loud, but because the Light of Jesus is radiating from within you.

Point 3: Our Works Point to the Father, Verse 16

Finally, we come to the "How-to" of this whole passage. Jesus gives us the method in verse 16: "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

Here is the secret: We catch the attention of others through our good works. But notice the aim, the purpose, is not to gain praise for ourselves. The goal is that they will glorify your Father in heaven.

When you feed the hungry, clothe the naked, help the widow, and care for the orphan, people sit up and take notice. When you are honest at work when no one is watching, when you show kindness to the person who treats you badly, when you serve your family without complaining, that opens hearts.

We are not saved by good works, but we are definitely saved for good works. These works are the advertisement for the Kingdom of God. The world is watching us. They may not read the Bible, but they read our lives.

They are looking for authenticity. They want to see if this Jesus is real. When they see your good works, works done with joy, love, and no strings attached—they will not ultimately praise you. The Spirit of God will convict them, and they will look past you and say, "Your God is truly great."

Church, this week, I challenge you to be intentional. You want to catch the attention of others? Don't post about it; live it out.

1. Go and be salt. Invite a co-worker who has been struggling to lunch. Speak life into a conversation that is turning negative. Be the person who brings peace to a chaotic situation. Create a thirst for God in them.
2. Take the basket off. Share your testimony. Don't be ashamed of the Gospel. If someone asks why you have hope, tell them.
3. Do a tangible "good work." Look for a need in your community today and fill it without expecting anything in return. Mow a lawn, buy a meal, send a text of encouragement. Let them see the Father's love through your hands.

Altar Call

As we come to this time of response, I want to ask you two questions.

First, are you hiding? Have your faith become flavorless? Have you put a basket over the light God placed in you? Friend, if you are living just like the world, you are not doing anyone any good. You need to repent of your silence and ask God to reignite the fire.

Second, maybe you are here this morning and you have realized that you are still in the dark. You don't have that Light. You have been watching the lives of believers, seeing their joy, their peace—and you are thirsty.

You want what they have. If that is you, Jesus Christ died on the cross to give you that light. He is the Light of the World, and if you ask Him into your heart, His light will shine in you.

If you need prayer this morning, whether to recommit your life to shining brightly, or to surrender your life to Jesus for the very first time, I want you to come. Don't hesitate.
Come to the altar and let the Father restore your salt and reignite your flame.

Please bow your heads and pray with me.

Father, we thank You for calling us salt and light. We ask for forgiveness for the times we have hidden our faith or lost our flavor. Lord, fill us with Your Holy Spirit so that we can't help but shine. Help us to do good works this week that draw the attention of the world, not to our own names, but to Your great glory. For those who are coming to the altar today, we thank You for drawing them. Meet them right where they are. Let the light of Your Son Jesus Christ shine into every dark corner of their lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Go in peace, and let your light shine!

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