

FRIDAY DEVOTION - GATEKEEPERS WORKCAMP 2019

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Matthew 5:16: In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

When you are living for Jesus your very presence will sometimes bother others. The things Jesus did and said certainly caused some problems because he often called people outside their comfort zones and challenged their assumptions. Few things are more difficult to put up with than a good example. And when you live this way, it really gets the attention of people.

Light reveals things. That can be a positive thing: You turn on the light when you enter a dark room so you can see your way around and not smash your toe; light reveals colors and shimmers on the water and allows us to see beautiful things. But light can also reveal things we would rather keep hidden, like when the sunlight shines through the window to show dust on the table and streaks on the glass. In the Bible, light is often used as a metaphor to represent insight or understanding. The light of Christ, then, may also reveal things inside us that we would rather keep hidden: sin, resentment, pride, jealousy . . . The good news is that light not only exposes what is hidden in the darkness, but also shows the way out. In the same way, the light that shines from Christians shows people not only their shortcomings and their sins, but it shows them the way out, the way to Jesus Christ.

What kind of general opinion do you think people would have of Christianity if you were its sole representative? What if every Christian lived exactly like you? How many would be attracted to or turned off by the gospel? Jesus said, "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). You may be the only representative of Jesus Christ that your friends, your family, your coworkers, and your neighbors may ever meet. And they will evaluate the whole idea of Christianity on the basis of what they see in you. They will form an opinion about what they think about God based on you. So let your light shine.

In what ways have you been "enlightened" this week at Gatekeepers? How have you had your comfort level or assumptions challenged? What have you come to see in a new way? Discuss some ways you can take what you have learned and experienced this week into the community in order to "let your light shine."

Prayer:

Lord, as we finish up our work and head back to our families and neighborhoods and jobs and schools, help us to be people who bring light to others, to all those around us. Help us to never be the one to snuff out the light of another— even though we have had our light extinguished at times. May we be light to the world as we live out our "Whole-Hearted Love" for Christ so that others may see the things we do and say and offer praise to God.