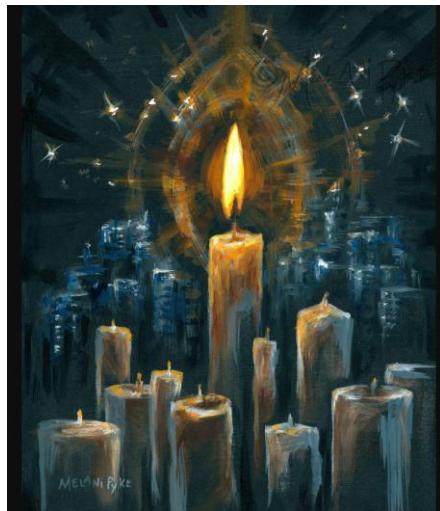


YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD



*"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid.
Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand,
and it gives light to all in the house.*

*Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."*

Matthew 5

All around us the clouds are thickening.

Things are getting darker and more uncertain.

History itself is "out of control."

But God put us in the midst of all this sadness to be his light.

It's not what church you belong to.

It's not how well you know the Bible.

It's not your theology.

It's not how many visions you have had.

It's not how many souls you think you have saved.

It's.... Are you the light of the world?

If you are a follower of Jesus, you are the light of the world.

You are far from perfect, but you are the light of the world.

You live in such a way that people are drawn to God.



They see how you live....and they know there is a God.

They see how you live....and their minds are lifted away from you to God.

They don't praise you; they praise God.

***Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works
and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.***

Two questions each of us needs to ask every day of our lives:

Does the Lord Jesus count me as one of his disciples?

Have I taken off the bushel and let the light shine?

Does Jesus count me as a disciple?

At some point in each of our lives we heard his voice calling us to follow.

It could have happened when we were still in our teens.

Or maybe we became aware of our call as we were walking through a valley of trouble.

Somewhere, somehow there was a moment when we knew that the invisible Lord had put his hand on us and said, "You are mine."

There may be someone reading these words to whom this has not yet happened. Perhaps, before darkness falls today, your heart will begin to hear that still small voice saying, "Wake up! Follow me."

Sooner or later that Voice finds its way to every one of us, calling us to follow.

A disciple is not just a "church member," not just a nominal Christian.

A disciple is a person.... who is living their life under the call of the crucified and risen Lord.

Sustained by his Word.

Obedient to his light.

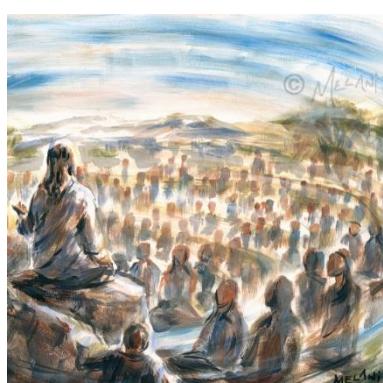
If I'm a disciple of Jesus, I no longer belong to myself, I belong to him.

My life is no longer at my disposal, it belongs to him.

I keep learning from my Lord, sustained by his Word.

His Sermon on the Mount has become a clear, strong, living guide for my daily life. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, & 7)

.... is now the light that guides my path.



When I read those words of Jesus, when I repeat them to myself,

I get strength to walk in his steps...

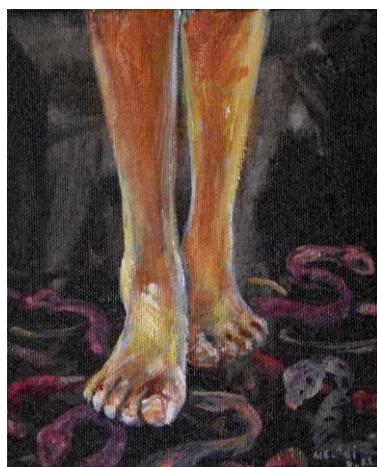
Even if the whole world is going in the opposite direction.

Even as the church is compromising his teachings.

Even though it costs me.

Even though my best friend misunderstands.

I can walk in his steps.



Have I taken off the bushel and let the light shine?

If I am the light of the world, I don't have to make a production out of it.

All I have to do is live my daily life under the eye of my Master.

I walk in his light.

My body and soul, and especially my tongue, belong to him.

All around us the clouds are thickening.

Things are getting darker and more uncertain.

History itself is "out of control."

..... But God put us in the midst of this sadness.... to be his light.

Simple faith, simple obedience to him, is all the Master requires.

If we walk with him in simple obedience, those wounded souls out there who are looking for God will find their way to him.

***This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you,
that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.***

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

1John 1

We are the light of the worldbecause we walk in the light with the Master.

Our light shines.... because we walk in the light with the Master.

People see this light, and find their way to God.



And all glory, ALL glory, goes to him.

Prayer: Holy Lord, even though we are imperfect and unworthy in so many ways, even though we quiver in fear and dismay as the clouds are thickening and things are getting darker and more uncertain, may we be your light in the midst of the darkness, the sadness, and the absurdity around us. How good it is that despite our flaws, you speak to our hearts and call us your own. Help us to honor you, to arise to your call, to be your disciples, to take off the bushels and to shine. Give us the strength to walk in your steps, in your teaching from the Sermon on the Mount... your way, your holy, beautiful way....so that your light does shine on us, in us, and around us. So, in this deepening darkness, sadness, and despair... people see your light, see your hope, see your beauty, see your truth and lift their souls in awe and seek fellowship with you. Amen.

Message: Richard E. Bieber 2016

Featured Artist: Courtesy of Melani Pyke at melpyke.com

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WHO WAS SLAIN
HAS BEGUN HIS REIGN