# **SOTM - The Similitudes Pt 3 - Light it Up**

Pastor Carl Van Vliet

Sermon on the Mount / Light of the World; Gospel / Matthew 5:14–16; Mt 5:13–16

**Matthew 5:13–16 NKJV**

13 “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.  
  
14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

You are the light of the world. This is a fabulous passage but it must be seen in the right context and to get that context we must turn back in our Bibles to the beginning, [Genesis 1](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ge1).

[Genesis 1:26–27](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ge1.26-27) “26 Then God said, “**Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness**; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 **So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them**.”

This passage of scripture in theological terms is called the **Imago Dei**, that’s Latin for the role mankind was to carry forth in the world. It means “Image Bearer”. God created you to bear, that word means carry - God made you to carry the image of the Triune God forth to the World.

**N.T. Wright, Theologian and Professor describes Imago Dei like this:** **Imago Dei, the image of God is the image of an angled mirror. By this angled mirror one looks to man and see’s vertically towards heaven and see’s God’s nature, character reflected**. I think of the angled mirrors we used to see in convenience stores and small shops before the days of countless security cameras, through these angled mirrors the clerk or cashier could look down the isle to that angled mirror and then see convexly the perpendicular isle. if we take this imagery off the horizontal as I just described and turn it on its axis to the vertical we see how this picture of Imago Dei makes sense.

That Humanity, that you were created the bear the image of God to the world!

But that Imago Dei was lost in [Genesis 3](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ge3) because of the fall. [Romans 5](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro5) tells us that by the first man Adam sin entered the world and death through sin and that death spread to all men (See [Romans 5:12-19](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Ro5.12-19))

Man in sin is unable to bear the image of God, to reflect God to the world.

Enter Christ: [Colossians 1:15–17](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Col1.15-17) “15 **He is the image of the invisible God**, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”

[Hebrews 1](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Heb1) says that Jesus is the “Express Image” of God

[2 Corinthians 4:4](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.2Co4.4) Also tells us that Jesus is the Image of God.

Jesus came and made perfect the Imago Dei

Why does this context matter?

[Matthew 5:14](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.14) “14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.”

The word here in the Greek for Light is φῶς (phōs) [fos] and it is the Greek word that is the root of our english word “photograph”. The word “photography” literally means “drawing with light”. **The word was first coined by the British scientist Sir John Herschel in 1839 from the Greek words phos, (genitive: phōtós) meaning “light”**, and graphê meaning “drawing or writing”

This last Friday, September 29th was the full moon, but not just a full moon but a supermoon. Did anyone notice how bright it was outside during the night? At my house coming through the widows it was as if someone had left a light on outside. It was bright.

But did you know the moon has no light source of its own. It is merely as reflection of the Sun.

Jesus called you the light of the world, but in one of Jesus' “I Am” Statements in the Gospel of John Jesus declares Himself the true light of the world: [John 8:12](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Jn8.12) “12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, **“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.**””

John in the beginning of his Gospel declared that the light of the world had come:

[John 1:4–5](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Jn1.4-5) “4 In Him was life, and the **life was the light of men**. 5 **And the light shines in the darkness**, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”

[John 1:9–12](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Jn1.9-12) “9 **That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world**. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. 12 **But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:**”

[John 3:16–21](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Jn3.16-21) “16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. 18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 **And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.** 20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.””

**John Piper says - “Images are made to “Image””** You are the Light of the world - Greek φῶς (phōs) [fos] - The photo of, image of the true light - Jesus.

The goal is to be Christlike, to be the reflection of Christ to a lost and dying world!

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[Matthew 5:14–16](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.14-16) “14 “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

A City on a hill top can be seen for miles around and its view cannot be hidden because by the very nature of its placement it is designed to be seen.

This verse and I am taken back to my childhood and the song we used to sing “This little light of mine”

#### VERSE 1

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.  
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

#### VERSE 2

Hide it under a bushel, NO!, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel, NO!, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Hide it under a bushel, NO!, I'm gonna let it shine,  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

#### VERSE 3

Won't let Satan blow it out, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Won't let Satan blow it out, I'm gonna let it shine.  
Won't let Satan blow it out, I'm gonna let it shine,  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

#### VERSE 4

Let it shine 'til Jesus comes, I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine 'til Jesus comes, I'm gonna let it shine  
Let it shine 'til Jesus comes, I'm gonna let it shine,  
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Let your light so shine - the word “so” here means “in this way”. In what way? As a city place on a hilltop that all can see, as a light set up on a stand so that it lights the whole house.

That they may “SEE” your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Remember our picture of the sermon on the mount as a new Christian Ethic containing three demonstrable parts:

1. Right action - What we do must be in obedience to Christ Commands [John 14:15](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Jn14.15) ““If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

2. Right Motivate - Why we do it - Must flow from the greatest commandment - “Love God - Love People” any other motivation is the wrong motivation [Matthew 22:37-40](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt22.37-40) “Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.””

a. ANY other motivation for right action creates legalism -

3. Right Goal - [Matthew 5:16](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Mt5.16) “16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” [Isaiah 43:7](https://ref.ly/logosref/BibleNKJV.Is43.7) “7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.”” The goal is that God is Glorified