

THOSE WHO ARE REPROVED BY THE LIGHT

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." – Matt. 5:16.

GOD'S WORD is frequently referred to as the light, the lamp to our feet. But this does not seem to be the thought here. The meaning might be, partially, that we should let the Truth shine out. But the class mentioned in the text is the saintly class, the spirit-begotten ones. Of these the Lord has elsewhere said that they should take heed how they let the Truth go out to others – that they should not cast their pearls before swine. Hence it does not mean to let all the light of Truth shine upon the world. The world would not be able to receive all the Truth. This light here mentioned is elsewhere spoken of as the illumination.

This illumination comes, not only through the Truth, but also through the begetting of the holy Spirit. The holy Spirit becomes the illuminating power in the life of these. Their whole lives, therefore, should shine; their whole lives should show forth the light of him "who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Another text says, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness!" This is the light, or Word, that we should let shine upon men, although they cannot receive all the message. But many who at one time hated the message have been convinced, and led to the Lord by the illumination of the Spirit which they perceived in the lives of God's saints. Their minds were much beclouded by the smoke of the Dark Ages, but they were not so far out of harmony that they could not be guided by the Spirit of God. They took knowledge of Jesus and learned of him.

Nothing in either of the texts referred to guarantees that the world would receive the message, either from our Lord Jesus or from his followers. We are, nevertheless, to let our light shine as he let his light shine, though the darkness comprehend it not. The thought seems to

be that, while some may resist the light, because their deeds are evil, nevertheless, there are others by whom the message may be differently received. Therefore, we are to "let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works," whether they account for these works properly or evilly. Some may appreciate and see. Those who opposed our Lord were not of the common people, but of those who specially claimed to be the people of God, the Scribes and Pharisees, who were not living up to their own recognized standards. These felt reprov'd. They realized that Jesus' teaching was of a higher order.

Thus we find it today. Those who are most opposed to the message of Truth are the church elders, ministers, Sunday school superintendents. The brighter light of the Truth casts their own into the darkness to such a degree that they are reprov'd by the light. It makes their own standards appear to greater disadvantage. They also perceive our superior manner of living. They are then filled with envy. The Jews who delivered Christ to Pilate were envious; they were in a very wrong attitude of heart.

So with those who hate us. The light, however, has an influence. They may discern what is the right doctrine. There are some who take no stand at all, but nevertheless they see partly. Those who have "been with Jesus" commend themselves to this class, in spite of all the adverse influences. And so the Apostle Peter called attention to the fact that some who see our good works will glorify God, in the day of visitation, even though they do not become followers now. The effect in the end will demonstrate that the whole work was not in vain – that some will accept Christ now and that the influence of these lives will be something for the world in the future.

It should be true to a certain extent that all those who are intimately associated with the members of the Body of Christ in the present life – before he is proclaimed King of the whole world – should be able to recognize the largeness and grandeur of character in those whom the Lord is choosing for this place of honor in the affairs of

men. They should be able to take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus – should see in them the spirit of a sound mind.

