

**Message for July 22, 2018**

**Shine Like Stars**

**Philippians 2:12-16a The Message (MSG)**

**<sup>12-13</sup> What I'm getting at, friends, is that you should simply keep on doing what you've done from the beginning. When I was living among you, you lived in responsive obedience. Now that I'm separated from you, keep it up. Better yet, redouble your efforts. Be energetic in your life of salvation, reverent and sensitive before God. That energy is *God's* energy, an energy deep within you, God Himself willing and working at what will give Him the most pleasure.**

**<sup>14-16</sup> Do everything readily and cheerfully—no bickering, no second-guessing allowed! Go out into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this squalid and polluted society. Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God. Carry the light-giving Message into the night so I'll have good cause to be proud of you on the day that Christ returns.**

**The Apostle Paul as he writes Philippians tells us to take the “Light-Giving message into the night of our culture. That is, to take the Gospel into our world.**

**Now the only way you can do that is by experiencing it yourself.**

**It requires sharing the gospel of hope because you have experienced it firsthand yourself. You have the hope of Christ within you.**

**All of us have walked out of doors during the late evening and looked upward.**

**On clear nights the view can be breath taking, and you just stare amazed, sometimes only able to say: WOW!**

**With the dark back drop of the sky, the stars become even more apparent.**

**Paul is using the analogy of taking the Light of Christ into the night.**

**We are not to hide the light by not sharing our faith. God wants us to be shining stars.**

**The story of a little boy who went looking for the darkness with his flashlight. Every time he turned his flashlight on, there was no darkness.**

**Light and darkness cannot dwell together.**

**John 8:12 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

**<sup>12</sup> ... Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."**

**In the Bible light always symbolizes God.**

**Matthew 5:16 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)**

**<sup>16</sup> 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.**

**Paul is not teaching that our salvation is based on works but that our salvation expresses itself in upright living and in character and in doing good works.**

**We are saved for good works, not by good works.**

**In other words, our salvation reveals our Christian life and what it looks like.**

**This applies not only to the individual but also through the participation of the corporate body... the local church.**

**Here is what Paul is getting at: It's our obedience to the Lordship of Christ and the obedience of the local church as a congregation that is to be a shining star to the world.**

**Just like stars shine in a dark world, individual Christians as well as the gathered church is to lighten the moral darkness of the world.**

**As Christ followers, we lay it all down, just like Jesus did.**

**We lay down our rights and our reputations to serve others.**

**We do this for the sake of the gospel and the glory of God.**

**God works in us to will and to do for His good pleasure.**

**We are all a work in progress. But the more we submit to His will the faster the progress.**

**Some days we submit quickly and other days not so much.**

**THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE... THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF YOURS.  
LET IT SHINE... LET IT SHINE... LET IT SHINE.**

**Remember who you are and to whom you belong.**

**AMEN**