

2.9.20 Pastor Jordan Gades Sermon, Matthew 5:13-20

Grace and Peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Did ya'll hear it today in the Psalm? Did you hear it in the reading from Isaiah? Did you hear it from Saint Paul? Did you hear it for the lips of Jesus from the gospel of Matthew? Did you hear it?

All these different people are talking about us.

Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in his commandments. They (that's all ya'll) rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous. It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice. For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever. They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord. Their hearts are steady, they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes

And they just keep going and going and going

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

That is our God. And this is us...

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Do you hear it?! I love it when the bible talks about us! Us, who live now, here, in this age, in this place.

I get the feeling that you might be in some sort of denial or confusion.

Really? Is there some self-doubt dragging you down, some part of you nagging saying that can't be about me?

“They are not afraid (that’s right we’re not) of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord (yup). Their hearts are steady, they will not be afraid” (we will not be!)

Do you not feel like your light is breaking forth like the dawn? Do you not feel that Spirit that resides within you from God? Do you not see your good works giving glory to your Father in heaven? Are you afraid and feel your heart wavering?

Now I know the answer for you may be “well maybe, maybe not, sometimes? There are days when my faith is more and some when it is less.” There are some days when your energy for justice, peace, and grace might be high and some it might be low. There are those days, and today might be that day, where it took everything for you to get here and just hope, just hope for something more.

Today is the day where we declare something more. We get to grab onto this higher truth.

WE are the ones who believe. WE, not you or you or just me, but WE are the ones who fear the lord. WE are the ones who hold one to the love and promises of our God. WE are the ones who support each other and we rise in the darkness as a light for those in need. WE are those who deal generously, who conduct our affairs with justice. WE are not afraid of evil tidings; OUR hearts are firm, secure in the Lord.

Somedays its' going to be you holding up the torch of the faith to inspire us, and other days it might be others. But that torch will always be held aloft. We never need to fear the light of hope lowering beyond our sight.

Our God has freed us of fear, of hatred. Our God has Given us this ultimate gift of Grace and Love through Jesus the Christ so that WE can show the light of God to the world. Alone we are and never will be enough, BUT WE ARE NEVER ALONE.

There are so many things in this world that are trying to tell us that we are alone. That we are individuals against the world. That you are too small to face the issues at hand. THAT IS A LIE. We are the city on the hill with the light of our God shining out. Not some tiny shack. That is the truth.

I am so tired of all these things trying to divide this city. There are just so many, it runs you down as a human being. But the gospel message of Jesus does not get to be co-opted by any earthly power. And those powers are trying. Especially in politics. What is going on? All I'm hearing out there are separate calls for Justice and Life as if we were ever supposed to choose between the two.

And WE sit here knowing that those are not different things. We are here today knowing that the word of God speaks to us and shows us the way through every experience in our lives. We know that God brings us together so that we can hold each other when some are weak and others are strong.

That is the world that God describes over and over again in the bible.

That's what all those verses are talking about and that is what we are trying to do here. Because God is Good, we have hope. Because God is Good, we get the opportunity to shine like a light for this world.

Because God is Good, we get to lean on all these people around us and lean on our God. Amen.