

Keep the home fires burning

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Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

It began on a bumpy road in Cayaan Isabela. I had traveled to the far Northern Part of Luzon in the Philippines and was staying at the Bible School. The first full day and my first real sermon and my first speaking engagement as a missionary. God had called me there to travel with a well established evangelist and yet after a week in the field he gave me the shock of my life. "I believe God has said for you to go out on your own." How could I, a mere neophyte in spiritual matters be asked to take on such a big thing? I didn't say anything but wondered in my heart what was happening to me. How could I speak? So God said "read any five scriptures from Matthew Chapter 5..." An unusual statement from the Lord but there on the swing I opened my Bible and read "Ye are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid..." And so on it went but that scripture stuck to me like glue. "Ye are the light of the world...". What did it mean? I continued in an attitude of prayer and wrote down ideas and notes on scratch paper and then supper came and I tried to hold down my nerves.

Finally a large number of students loaded into the back of the open van and we drove through the pitch black night for a long time on the worst road I've ever experienced. I thought I would be broken apart by the bumps. We finally arrived at our location. The small village was called Turod in Ilocano. We walked up a steep incline where the church was located. Lanterns were pulled out. There were no windows just vacant slots for the doors and windows. I felt myself pulled in various directions as people began coming in. A number of children sat at my feet and stared up at me. Women began coming in and sitting and soon the small church was filled. And yet they came until every door and every portal was filled with people eagerly waiting. There was music and people sang and then I stood up with my interpreter and I said "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on the hill cannot be hid." And then the interpreter spoke and it was as if the Holy Spirit hit for their was laughter and people looking at each other in great wonder. It took time for the great turmoil to die down and even my interpreter looked confused at first. He did not understand until the people spoke. And they said to him that they, the village of Turod was called Hill in Ilocano. They the church of Turod were the light, the city that is set on a hill that could not be hid. For Turod had been built on a hill and the people of the hill had heard a message from God.

More then twenty years have passed since I gave that sermon and I have never forgotten it nor the lesson that God gave me. I was a light but they the people of this obscure village had been given a message by God Himself. That they were people of the light. People that needed to let their light shine.

And in all these years I am astounded at the wonder of God. In many ways Turod was a lighthouse. And as a lighthouse shines forth over the sea so too is this a special time in my life. I don't know fully what it means as yet but

once again these words from Matthew 5:14 are speaking forth from time. And once again there is a people of the hill that I am speaking to. Yet somehow I am part of this hill and I am part of the light that is meant to be shining at this time in history.

Many years ago, even before traveling to the Philippines, the Lord gave me a dream. I saw a river winding through the badlands. I did not understand it but the Lord spoke and told me "You will spend many years of your life on the river going through the badlands. Then one day you will reach the sea. The river, like Time, was one that kept me wondering where I stood. What was my purpose in life? What was God calling me to do? I think I am beginning to understand one of those purposes. That I am meant to be a light to the world.

As I was in prayer today I sought the Lord as to why I've been in such spiritual darkness. I have fought the good fight of faith and have searched my soul for anything that would be of darkness. I have given all such dark things over to the Lord and scoured my heart that I might remain pure before Him. Yet the volleys of darkness continued to roil in. God indicated there was a war on and this war was like a great storm upon the sea.

And that made sense to me but still I didn't understand. Then it was as if the Holy Spirit rose in me today and I spoke a mysterious phrase. "Let Christ remember to help keep the home fires burning..." I did not understand this until it hit me in multiple areas. Home Fires. In the old days the lighthouses were lit with flames of fire. They shone their light upon the seas so that the ships would be guided into port safely.

When Krakatoa, the great volcano blew up there was a man who was responsible for the Lighthouse in that area. A massive wave swamped the lighthouse and even his family was swept away and the lighthouse itself was torn from its roots. But somehow this man survived broken in body and in spirit. Yet he did not give up his post but continued to wave the lantern warning ships that land was near.

We often seem to forget that there is coming a day when the lights of heaven will be darkened. The stars, the sun, the moon will all give up their light. Yet there is a ship coming. Heavens ship. And when this ship comes will they find a light on earth to guide them into port? Some say that is a foolish statement but I believe it is what God showed me. Why was it so important for the wise virgins to keep their lamps trimmed? Why is it so important that our oil remain full? I believe its because God is coming back to earth for a people who are ready. But a people who have helped to prepare the way.

In a way Faith is like a great lamp. There is faith which shines in heaven but there is a need for faith to shine forth from earth. Jesus said in Luke 18:8 Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

If there is no faith on earth then how can we claim to be ready for the return of Christ?

When ships are covered in darkness or fog they blow what they call a fog horn. What if the ship that comes sends forth its angels to blow their horns? Will we know that the last trump has sounded? Will we be prepared for when

Jesus returns with ten thousand of His saints? Will we have our wicks trimmed and our lamps lit and still have oil left over?

We forget that this war creates fog. And fog is like disbelief. If you don't see it then it doesn't impact you. You are not hit by it and instead slumber and your oil runs dry.

Listen carefully. God is coming back and He wants to be welcomed. The city that is set on the hill cannot be hid. Their light is shining. I pray my light is shining and that is why God showed me living in a house next to the sea. I am here to help light the way for that ship to come in. Is your lamp lit? And if so what are you doing to help light the way for the return of Jesus Christ to earth.