IDENTITY CRISIS #14 Pastor Rick Baker

Where is the Church Going? May 2 2021

**The LIGHT Church**

*Jesus’ instructions for engaging an unbelieving, but very “enlightened” culture*

(Matt. 5:14-16)

WHERE HAS THE CHURCH GONE?

A hidden city? Entrusted with light under a bowl? Bringing reproach and scorn upon God?

WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD?

Enlightened. Educated. Steeped in human wisdom and philosophy.

IN DARKNESS!

*“All man needs is more knowledge!” “NO, man needs LIGHT!” – Jesus*

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since in the wisdom of God, the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

(1 Cor. 1:20-21)

WHERE IS THE CHURCH GOING?

As God’s people called to global service, we are not to bring negative attention on ourselves, but rather to bring much praise to our Father in heaven.

You are the light of the cosmos! (Matt. 4:16; 5:14)

WHAT DOES LIGHT DO?

1. Exposes the darkness and those things that belong to darkness—Be a **BRIGHT LIGHT**

*“The people living in darkness have seen a great light” (4:16) YOU (all) ARE—*Jesus passes his light mission over.

1. Explains the cause of darkness—Be a **WARNING LIGHT**

*“A city on a hill”—*intentionally put on display (5:14)

1. Exists for no other purpose than being light—Be a **SEARCH LIGHT**

*“…They put it on its stand and it gives light to everyone…” (5:15)—*if He lights you up, He will lift you up and set you prominently on the table of His choosing.

HOW DOES THE CHURCH/CHRISTIAN LET THEIR LIGHT SHINE? (How good deeds happen)

1. Keep the lamp full of **oil**

*We are light only because Jesus is light—the Holy Spirit is the essential oil of the Christian (Eph. 3:16-19)*

1. Keep the wick **trimmed**

*A smoking wick needs careful trimming –whatever doesn’t match the biblical character of a saint has to go. When you start mimicking them, your wick is smoking.*

WHAT DOES “YOUR GOOD” WORKS MEAN? – *your kind of good works (Christian kind)!*

1. Be different than what they expect.

*Modesty and mercy vs hypocrisy and showmanship (6:1), not just good things but in a good way.*

1. Demonstrate that God is more important than they understood.

*So people are impressed with God—unveiling the glory of God is our only purpose; not fixing the world, not saving the world, not making things right. God makes us light and uses that light to do what we can’t possibly do—work His redemption program.*