

2015 Lighting the Way!

Part 5: "You and Me, Keeping a Lighthouse!"

"I have set you to be a great light to the unsaved, that you should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth!" Acts 13.47

We are... Fully convinced that we are called to bear the light to a darkening world... More than a dozen fundamental scriptures say it's true! Designed to be a lighthouse beaming a light into a dark, stormy, world!

Lighthouses... Originally designed to mark an entrance... Individual "signatures" marked locations... To light up the darkness... Warn of imminent dangers... They are beacons of hope in a storm... In antiquity were large fires that burned up on tall platforms...

"Everyman that lights a candle puts it on a stand that all may see..." Mt 5

...Require Lighthouse Keepers!

"Being a lighthouse keeper was anything but a 9-to-5 job. A typical tour of duty began before dusk and continued well past dawn. The keeper tended to routine but essential duties, made repairs as needed, and was always prepared to respond to any emergency, including shipwrecks.

"Constant and faithful attention to their duties shall be required of all persons in the service, and no employees shall be absent from his station or duty without authority," *Instructions To Employees of the United States Lighthouse Service*, 1927 edition.

Lighthouse Keepers... Turned on the lights punctually... Ran them at full intensity... Put things back in order for relighting... Made sure the lenses were kept clean... Checked the supply of fuel/refilled... Trimmed the wick... Made sure the "mechanisms" worked... Surveyed weather/tide conditions... Prepared for rescue operations... *Did "whatever" to save lives!*

"Lives depended on the light-keeper and the light-keeper depended on his instruction manual as official orders and procedures of service!" "In the larger, more complicated, lighthouses there was a keeper and assistant keepers to share the duties!" The church is a life saving organization, and without keepers/servants, there is no church and no lives saved!

Asides... Last week we talked about the fact that it will take much more than our \$\$\$ giving to accomplish our mission! Requires our affections/compassion... Requires our time/focus... Requires our presence/energy... Requires our creativity/flexibility... *"Nothing but people's needs are going to be etched in concrete!"* Meeting those needs will require it all of all of us!

Demonstrated the importance of mutual cooperation to make things work! Talked about the 1:4 response to the Church council vote... "122" voters determined the outcome... *How, in a benign act, that only requires a once-a-year response...* Could see the flaw in our participation and stunting of our potential! *It's important for us to know who is with us in this dark hour demanding lights!*

You and me, "keeping" a Lighthouse... The church is a life saving organization, and without keepers/servants there is no church and no lives saved! Add a "tower" and "magnified lights" and you have greater reach and life saving potential!

Dark and Stormy Nights... The world is sailing in stormy seas... Been here before in world history... But not in American history! We are facing a new "debauchery:" *dissipation of morality, allegiance and duty!* Reckless wastefulness known in the ancient world... like Rome! Sensuality driving the worst in humanity! Spirits providing the fuel/inspiration!

Allegiance and duty of elected officials/ public servants is at an all-time low! Senseless murders have taken on new dimensions! Societal response to “mis-genders...” with pronouns/public restrooms! The new “contribution and character” movement...

“What you do (did) validates who you are, therefore who you are is morally acceptable no matter what you do (did)...”

Questions... “If I save lives will you pardon my adultery?” “If I contribute to science, art, economy, will you tell me that my alternative lifestyle is okay?” “If I help make life better for others will you allow me to abuse my wife?” “Be together. Not the same.(?)” A: “Let me give you credit for doing good and hold you accountable for right character!”

Every contributor in life is a sinner and every sinner is accountable to God! We can’t change that... and it can’t be changed!

People can find teachers, commentators, movie stars, intellectuals, politicians, even christians, to say what they need to soothe their souls... But sin will never be normalized... it can only be forgiven in Jesus!

As a Lighthouse... We beam light/hope into stormy nights! Some are so fearful they are ready to jump ship and end it all! Don’t have to go further into end times for “signs to appear and anxieties of nations to rise, *the sea and the waves roaring*; and men’s hearts failing them for fear!” **Lk 21.25,26 cp Mt8.23ff/14.22** Time for lights, combined in the greatest way, to light up the skies! **2Cor4.6 Ph2.15** “Let your light so shine before men that they see your good works and glorify God!” **Mt5.16 1Pet2.12**

We mark the entrance to safe harbor and new life! Salvation! **Acts 4.12 Jo3.5 Rom10.14,15** Wed: 17 yr. old, leading Youth Alpha group, leads first peer to salvation! Noah: Jr Hi: leading Youth Alive/60 kids has lead 12+ peers to salvation! Dozens of other Jr. Highers leading peers to Jesus and 15% come here for further training! Wed: 2-4/5th Graders lead two peers to salvation! **[Acts 13.47 2Cor5.18-20] Repair!** **Mk 16.18 Lk 9.1-6 10.1-9** Every week: little kids are laying hands on little kids for healing, for family restorations, for courage... 7th Grader: chose to shine out for friend contemplating suicide – prevented the darkness, involved a keeper! 9th grader who comes, gets saved, brings entire family for restoration! **Outfitting!** Tina walking across parking lot, parents standing around while waiting to pick up kids... Had no idea what light was about to get into their cars and change their world! Abundant testimonies of teens, college aged and adults purposely “shining” the lights... Repairing broken down parts/LIGHT UP!

We are expanding/extending the light! Classes that are working fantastically to build better keepers of light... Sundays and Wednesday night keepers setting an example... Weekly prayer in the Annex, simultaneous to Vida, to lay hands on the sick, tormented, intercede... (spiritual service) Connections to get people to the right spot for counseling... (soul service) Connecting people for benevolence... (physical needs)

As a Lighthouse... Needing a miracle to build a bigger lighthouse! But if we have the people to serve... If we meet the needs of the community around us... God will do what is impossible for us at the size and reach that we have... It will require our faithful giving, our time, energy, creativity, flexibility... *But at stake are the lives of people we know and love!*

You and me, “keeping” a Lighthouse...