

♪This Little Christian Light Of Mine♪

One of my favorite childhood songs was *This Little Christian Light of Mine, I'm Gonna Let It Shine*. We always knew when it was about to be sung because the teacher would throw a finger into the air and ask, "Who has a Christian light?" And everyone would thrust their fingers into the air as high as they could reach. Of course the favorite stanza was, "Don't let Satan . . . whhhhhh . . . it out, I'm gonna let it shine!" As a child I never really appreciated what that song meant. It all seemed to be lost on our silliness when we would try to blow like a great northerly wind; or at least harder than the kids next to us. Then, throwing your finger around in a circular motion while singing "All around the neighborhood, I'm gonna let it shine," did not really seem to have the significance it has today either. Nor did "Hide it under a bushel . . . No! . . . I'm gonna let it shine." Looking back, the message of the song was simple enough. It really did not seem to be as hard a thing to do back then either, certainly not as hard as it is now.

I can hide my Christian light by just being me. We live in a time when individualism is of utmost importance in our culture. People are encouraged on every front to just be themselves. So, how can it be so bad to be yourself? Well, sometimes just being yourself causes you to do things you want to do, say what you want to say, and think what you want to think that may not be what is best for you, or what best emphasizes your faith.

How easy it is to hide our Christian light. Just think about all the things that make being a Christian light bearer such a struggle. Gossip, carelessness, worldly speech, stinginess, selfishness, going places Christians should not go, and doing things Christians should not do can devastate our Christian light.

The Christian life is about hiding behind the cross and letting Christlikeness shine through us. Paul said, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," Galatians 2:20. Living by faith in the Son of God is an every second of the day kind of life. And, if Christ truly lives in you, people are going to see it.

This brings up another most important point. There is no such thing as true individualism. No one can truly be themselves. Outside influences will always determine to a degree who we reveal ourselves to be to others. This is why Christians are told, "Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals," 1 Corinthians 15:33. This is also why it is so important to immerse yourself daily into Christian things. Christian friends, along with Bible study and prayer, continue to help you develop into what God wants you to become. Who you spend your time with determines who you will become. Paul also wrote, "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit," 2 Corinthians 3:18. In other words, the more you are around Him, the more you are like Him. Spend time with Jesus!

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven," Matthew 5:14-16.

♪ *This little Christian light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!* ♪

—Scott