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Written by Nathanael Vissia

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Written for February 5, 2023
5th Sunday after Epiphany
Lectionary Year A

Scripture: Matthew 5:13-20 [**Summary**: *Made To Shine God's Light*]

Supplies Needed: A non-transparent bag with a flashlight that is in it and turned on.

ASK (a.k.a *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning
- [*Hold up the bag with flashlight in it*] Can you tell me what this is? (A bag!)
- It *is* a bag! And it is carrying something special inside of it. Can you tell me what is inside of it? (No, because we can't see inside the bag!)
- Oh, right … you can't see inside the bag! Here – what if I take this thing OUT of the bag, then can you tell me what I have? [*Take flashlight out of bag*] (It's a flashlight!)
- Is the flashlight on? (Yes)
- And what do flashlights help you do? (See in the dark!)
- So what do you think …if a flashlight is on, but is in a bag like this one, is the flashlight very helpful to you like that? (No, not unless you take it out of the bag)?

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- In today's scripture story, Jesus is telling his disciples that they are the light of the world.
- In other words, Jesus is telling his disciples that they are to be flashlights that shine God's light, love, and healing.
- And, by shining God's light, the disciples would help everyone around them see God's better way for them to live.
- This is why Jesus also tells his disciples to not hide God's light, to not keep what they know of God to themselves where it can't be seen, but to let that light shine!

- And that's the whole point of a flashlight, right? It is to help people see – but if you put a flashlight in a bag and keep it there, it doesn't matter if it is turned on or turned off – it won't help anyone see..

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- The same thing that Jesus taught his disciples in today's scripture story is also true for us.
- We, too, can invite God into our lives and receive God's light, love, and healing.
- And while it's really good to experience God's light, love, and healing, we are reminded in today's passage that we are also made to then *shine* with God's light, love, and healing so that others can receive God's light, love and healing, too.
- When we do that, we are being God's light to the world, just like Jesus and the disciples were.
- And that is the good news for today.
- Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God…
Dear God…

Thank you for Jesus…
Thank you for Jesus…

…who teaches us…
…who teaches us…

…how to receive and share…
…how to receive and share…

…your light, love, and healing.
…your light, love, and healing.

Thank you and Amen.