

Devotional Thought

Week of June 23, 2008

THEME: The Call to Influence

**"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."**

*Matthew 5:16 (NIV)*

There is the story of a young man striving to perfect his skill in hang gliding who noticed a flock of gulls as they flew effortlessly – up and down, around and over the hills and high mountain peaks. They seemed to know exactly where every updraft was and how to use the downdrafts to their advantage. *I'll simply follow their flight pattern*, he thought, and *I'll have no problem finding the right air currents*.

He waited for just the right moment and then precisely at the right time, he took flight behind a large group of gulls. His experience was thrilling beyond description.

He continued, what seemed to him to be hours, in wonderful, delightful and thrilling flying time. The gulls, however, had more in their plans than an afternoon of flying pleasure. Their destination was a site in the outskirts of a small mountain town. And with this same skill they negotiated hills and mountain peaks and landed right in the middle of a garbage heap with the pungent odor of rotting garbage. The young man, helplessly under that influence of the seagulls, found himself up to his knees in orange rinds and coffee grounds.

Our scripture lesson suggests that the Christian has the light. The light is already in us. We are to be the light of God upon the earth. We can refuse to let the light shine. We can turn it off, refuse to turn it on, shade it, darken it, turn it away, direct its beam in another direction but Christ intends that we "let our light shine".

Christians are to let their light shine in this world in order to show forth good works. "Let your light shine" means *let your good works be seen*. The believer, the child of God, is to show good works to the world, but he must be careful how he does his works and where he is leading others. Our prime motivation should be to live lives that will lead others to Christ that He might be glorified. This is something that every Christian should consider very seriously. The aim and purpose of our lives should be to live so that others will be led to Christ.

Our lives are an influence to those around us. We should strive to influence someone for Christ. Don't lead them to the garbage heap.

**Prayer Thought:** Father, help us to be a beacon of influence for you. We pray this in Jesus' name.  
*Amen.*

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