



Sunday of the Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council

Today's reading has a simple message: let your light shine before everyone. But the real question is, what is this "light" that is supposed to shine? Since this passage comes right after the Sermon on the Mount, it's clear that the light is Christ's instruction—the very words that give us Life. Put another way, we are "lit" by the words of the Gospels just as a match lights a candle. The Fathers of the 4th Council were a light because they taught the world about Christ. We also have been called, like the Fathers, to allow Christ's light to shine through us.

Scripture: Matthew 5:14-19

Bottom Line: Because God has taught us, we are able to shine!

Discussion Questions

1. This passage says that not a single "iota" of the Law will pass away until all is accomplished. What do you think that means? Where does grace fit in? What aspects of the Law are easy for you? Which parts do you struggle with?
2. Learning and studying scripture is one way that God speaks to us. What other ways does God speak to us? What does it require for us to listen closely to what God is saying?
3. Everyone loves to be recognized for their accomplishments, but today's passage challenges us. Our good works are supposed to show forth *God's glory*, not ours. What are some ways to practice humility in today's world? How can you give God glory for the blessings and talents you have?
4. Following the smallest "iota" of the Law is hard and, sometimes, you fall. Confession is a way of getting back on track. How do you prepare for confession? How have you felt God's grace in previous confessions?

Moving Forward

Being taught by God through the church services, prayer, and especially through scripture reading means that you are equipped to shine. And, those around us should be able to tell there's something different about you. After all, St. John once said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (13:35). This week, what can you do to make your light shine even brighter?

Changing Your Mind

"Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:19)