**Faith and Lamp Vs Pitcher**

[February 16, 202 3](https://faithencounters.impart.org/2023/02/16/faith-and-lamp-vs-pitcher/)[Martha Rodman](https://faithencounters.impart.org/author/martharodman/)

*No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light so shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:15-16*.

Lamps are outstanding things. They work so well to help us see. When you are in darkness, any light will do. But this morning, I feel like God gave me an interesting picture. I saw many lamps being held in one hand with a water pitcher in the other. People were lighting their lamps, and then inadvertently putting out the flame with the water in the pitcher. As I meditated on the “picture”, I saw these were genuine hearted believers, who sincerely wanted their light to shine forth in the darkness, but unfortunately, through their actions put out the very flame they were trying to light.

We often do that, don’t we? Our flesh is so fickle. We love and lash with the same voice. Jesus gives us some very clear instructions in Luke 6: 27. *But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken away from you, don’t try to get them back. Do to others as you would like them to do to you*. The question arises—are we willing to listen? Or do we go, “”nope I’m not willing.” I want to stay angry, bitter and slap first! I will keep my own hard earned things, thank you, and if anyone asks me for something, I will simply tell them I have a no helps policy. Justifying my selfish ways,and unfortunately pouring water on any light I have tried to be.

I wonder how many young people today could even quote the “golden rule” much less even consider living by it. Have we allowed our “me first” culture to infiltrate our hearts and our actions? So many social media posts deal with how they got people back, or no way would I give up my seat on an airplane so someone could sit with their young family member. We seemed shocked and surprised when we need a “Be Kind” campaign in our schools. Has our selfish “don’t bother me”? I am on my phone, or playing video games. Has society warped our caring and compassion? Impatience, judgement and anger have taken over patience, grace and love. Are we willing to be the light in our world? The light illuminates the person holding the lamp first! Our strengths and flaws are both exhibited. How much we need God’s grace, mercy and His love flowing through us.

Oh my friends, these are simple things to adjust until we meet someone who is arrogant, or belittles us or hates us. Then we need to draw on the fruit of the Spirit to touch their lives. If it was important enough for Jesus to encourage us in it, then shouldn’t we make it a priority? Begin praying today for those who “despitefully use you,” as the KJV version states in Matthew 5:44. It isn’t easy. Our flesh doesn’t like it. We may protest “it’s not fair”, but who knows what you will purchase if you walk it out like He asks. First, you will please Him, isn’t that enough? Maybe they will choose to follow Jesus and become your neighbor in heaven! It is really in His hands, but I have found doing things God’s way is always worth it.

*Father, I thank you for helping us to do unto others as you would have us do. I thank you for giving us the grace and vision to understand that you were not mistaken when you ask us to live a life for others. Turning the other cheek, praying for those who despitefully use us causes us to rely on your love, your grace and your strength. Teach us how. In Jesus’ Name, amen*.