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by Pat Marrin

[View Author Profile](#)

patrickjmarrin@gmail.com.

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"There is nothing secret that will not be made known and come to light" (Luke 6:17).

Prv 3:27-34; Lk 8:16-18

Our political system seems stretched by disinformation and the underlying question of truth itself. By calling into question the integrity of elections and the validity of factual evidence, some candidates can skip over issues altogether and base their campaigns on conspiracy theories about truth. Institutional credibility is threatened as emotional support for personalities replaces rational analysis. Once trust is undermined, the basis for civil discourse disappears and communities are divided by suspicion and personal loyalty to their own set of ideas and beliefs.

The Scriptures remind us of the importance of a shared common understanding of truth and trust. In today's Gospel, Jesus offers imagery about light that is similar to the proverbs in the first reading about the essential transparency of discipleship. Just as a householder lights a lamp to be seen and not hidden, so a disciple is what he or she is, with nothing to hide. In letting our light shine, we are giving glory to God, who is the source of every gift.

This counsel continues with the fact that the truth will be exposed, so any deceit or attempt to hide something will not succeed. Reality is itself a kind of light that permeates everything. What and who we really are will be visible even if we try to hide, so it is better to step out into the light and to live in such a way that we have nothing to hide.

Maintaining a false appearance takes energy better used to just be ourselves, living simply, directly and transparently. And not surprisingly, if we live freely as the person we really are and as God sees us, the good news is proclaimed, and others are set free to live the same way.

The Gospel ends with a very Asian proverb about having light as the secret of increasing our vision and sense of reality. Those who have it receive more. Those who lack this clarity recede into the shadows of self-delusion. Those who speak the truth live freely. Those who deceive are soon entangled in their own web of lies as darkness becomes their false light. We must be vigilant, keeping our lamps trimmed and our oil ready.

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