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If you could change one thing in the world, what would you do? Today is your confirmation. We celebrate that you are and want to remain part of our congregation and our church. We celebrate that God says yes to you and you say yes to God.

Confirmation ultimately means you say, "I want to continue my journey with you, God, in my life. Either in a completely new way or in a completely different way." In this sermon, however, I would like to emphasize something that resonates with confirmation for me and is particularly important to me this year, which is why I'm preaching about it now.

Because the moment you say, "I want to belong to the church, I want to believe, I want to walk with God," at that moment you're also saying, "I don't want to leave this world as it is." I'm ready to change this world for the better with God. And here are four of my thoughts on this.

The first, you are the light of the world. Jesus said this in the so-called Sermon on the Mount, one of his most famous speeches. I'll quote him briefly.

With this statement, "You are the light of the world," Jesus doesn't just mean the people who heard it 2,000 years ago; I'm sure he means us today, too. And especially you confirmation candidates today. You are light.

Not that you can perhaps become one, but that you already are one. And light is something powerful; it dispels darkness, it shows the way, it warms, it helps others see. Light is never just for itself, but always for others as well.

And Jesus believes you can do this. He says you have something within you that brightens this world. Not because you're perfect, but because God is within you.

You are a light for this world because God walks with you and, so to speak, shines from within you. Second thought: shaping the world with God. Faith is not just a feeling or a nice thought.

Movement and change are always part of the Christian faith. Part of faith also always has something to do with shaping the world with God. For you confirmation candidates, being a light in the world can specifically mean reaching out to someone at school who is alone.

Take the first step in a dispute, even if it's difficult. Make the world fairer, for example, through your own consumer behavior. Yes, and also rethink the churches with the ideas you have.

So fundamentally, being a light in the world means, I believe, simply asking oneself often: What would Jesus do? Is what I am experiencing or seeing here in God's will? If Jesus were living or dwelling here with me, how would he handle this situation? To be honest, I am sure that we all know the question or will encounter it sooner or later in life. Namely, where are you, God? In painful situations, when something bad happens. I believe that doubt and struggle are part of faith.

Yes, also and especially with God. But I understand the Bible to mean that God is also present in this world to a significant extent through us. So, he shapes this world through us, through you, through you.

And that's why I believe that quite often the question behind the question, "Where are you, God?" actually lies, "Where are we?" Or, "God, where were you when this or that happened?" Quite often, the question also arose or still arose, "Where were we?" We as human beings. You are the light of the world. Today, this applies especially to you, the confirmation candidates, and of course to all of you who are here today.

You are a light to the world. God shines into this world through you. Thus, God shapes this world through you.

When Jesus says, "You are the light of the world," he also says you have something to give. Make yourselves great, stand up for yourself, stand up for the things that are important to you. You don't have to change the whole world right away—of course, you can.

But you are also a light for those around you, for your family, your class, your school, your friends. For me, that, too, is confirmation: the firm commitment that is also a challenging reminder. You are a light for those around you.

And then there's something very important, namely the so-called three-quarters rule. My third thought: When Jesus says that you are the light of the world, there's something challenging about that.

Then it's about making something, doing something, saying something. And the Christian faith always has something active about it. But behind the "doing something" lies the much greater "taking something."

There is a letter in the New Testament called the Epistle to the Romans. The letter was written by a Christian named Paul, and he wrote to the Christian churches in Rome. Paul wrote this letter, and he wrote three-quarters of it about what God has done for us humans.

Three-quarters of the text is about what God has done for me, for you. And then the last quarter of the letter is about what we humans should do. And there's a very important word that lies between these two parts, and this word can be well translated as "because" or "therefore."

So Paul tells you everything God gives you, and then he says: So go out there and shape this world. Because God does good to you, you now do good to the world.

And I think that's important when we talk about being a light in the world, about shaping this world with God. Don't do it to please God. Do it because you please God.

Don't do it to be closer to God. Do it because God is close to you. And then the fourth, final thought has something to do with your confirmation candle.

Confirmation includes a candle designed by you, with your confirmation saying on it, which you'll also receive right away. But first, something confusing: Jesus didn't just say, 'You are the light of the world,' but 'I am also the light of the world.' And you might ask,

'So what, Jesus? Are you the light of the world, or are we?' I think the answer is, 'Jesus is,' and when we walk with Jesus, then we are too, because his light shines through us or from us.

And that's where your confirmation candle comes in. We're about to light your candles. We'll light them here at the front, on this big, thick candle, the Easter candle, which you could also call the Jesus candle.

And you receive this candle and take it home with you. Your confirmation candle, that was lit from the Jesus candle here. And symbolically, the following happens: you take Jesus with you into your world as the light of the world.

When you leave, the Jesus candle remains here, but the light of Jesus goes with you. It goes with you to your schools, to your families, to your world. When you go home today, confirmed, you go not only with a blessing, not only with relief that everything went well, but you go with light, with the light of Jesus.

And perhaps your confirmation candle will soon be somewhere in your home, and when you look at it, remember, hey, I am the light of the world. You are the light of your world, not because you do everything right, but because you are walking with Jesus. And that means, or can also mean, hey, live courageously.

Stand up for yourself, for others, for what matters to you. It may sound too big, but it's true. You help determine what kind of world we live in.

Whether it will be a world in which climate change is taken seriously or downplayed, in which hatred spreads or love remains strong, in which people open doors or raise borders.

In which someone says, "It's me that matters." Or, "Hey, how are you doing?" Your light makes a difference. So shape this world with who you are, with what you believe, with the light that sustains you and what you carry with you into your world today.

And do all this with the certainty that you are not alone. Jesus is with you.

For we now repeat to you the greatest promise of baptism, for me, in your confirmation.
For Jesus Christ says: I am with you always, until the end of the world.

Amen.

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