



WATCHMAN'S TRUMPET



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FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

Hello,

I welcome you to this new month and present to you December 2023 edition of Watchman's Trumpet. The theme of this month's edition is "Beatitudes".

"Beatitudes" refers to 'should be - attitudes' or attitudes to be seen in citizens in God's kingdom and those who are genuinely children of God. They are taught by Christ in the opening segment of His Sermon on the Mount in Mathew chapter five. The sermon fundamentally was to make those who follow Him and are citizens in His kingdom through the new birth experience to know what God expects from them. The tone of His instruction was authoritative and direct; as a king will instruct His subjects regarding what He expects from them.

Christ will have His audience know that true religion is about a symbiotic relationship. People who come to God to receive today hardly pause to consider the fact that God to whom they have come, also expects something from them. The teaching today that the only thing God demands or expects from us is nothing but praises and thanksgiving- is distracting and misleading. Beyond praising God with our voices, God expects us to consecrate to Him and dedicate to His service regenerated transformed lives that will make those

who benefit from it to praise God. These attitudes are eight in number. They include:

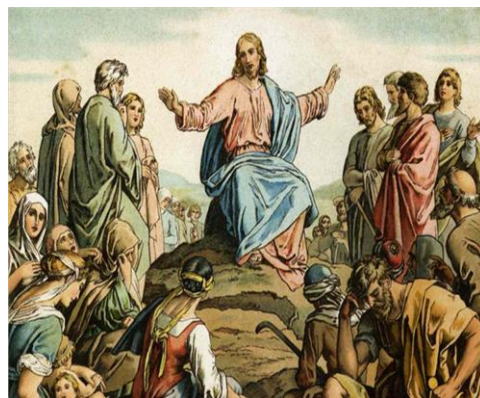
- 1. Poverty in the spirit*
- 2. Mourning over sin and human suffering*
- 3. Meekness*
- 4. Hunger and thirst for righteousness*
- 5. Showing mercy*
- 6. Purity of heart*
- 7. Mediation in conflicts or Peace-making*
- 8. Suffering for doing what is right and for following Christ.*

The peculiar blessing associated with each attitude was also clearly stated. They represent what we as children in God's kingdom stand to gain if we internalize these attitudes and exhibit them in everything we do daily. May these gains and blessings be yours as you read this edition of Watchman's Trumpet in Jesus name! Welcome!

1. POVERTY IN THE SPIRIT

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Mathew 5:3

Poverty in the spirit fundamentally has to do with making humility our lifestyle. We brought nothing into the world.



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Without Christ, a man is nothing and less than nothing. There is nothing we have which we did not receive. God ultimately is the giver of all good things. A man cannot become anything- either secular or spiritual without God's approval or help. Acknowledging this, and living with this as an attitude of total dependence on God for grace and power; and for everything in life throughout our lifetime is poverty in the spirit.

We shall consider two subtopics:

1. Understanding poverty in the spirit
2. Blessedness of the poor in the spirit

1. Understanding poverty in the spirit

The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Psalm 34:18

In spiritual matters, poverty in spirit is acknowledging our need for salvation and for Christ as our Saviour.

It is the recognition of the fact that nothing we are capable of doing in ourselves or by ourselves can sufficiently atone for our sins or guarantee us a place in heaven. Poverty in spirit is about coming to God with empty vessels so that we can be filled with His abundance. Poverty in the human spirit - a sense of emptiness or lack in our spirit- will drive us to the cross, make us confess our sins with earnest determination to forsake them, receive Christ as our Lord and saviour and receive grace from Him to live a life of consistent victory over sin. We will depend on God's grace and strength for a successful Christian walk throughout our life-time. The song on our lips most days of our walk shall be *"Rock of ages cleft for me...Not the labours of my hand...Nothing in my hand I bring...While I draw the fleeting breath...Rock of ages cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee"*. (Hymn AM 210)

In secular matters, we will acknowledge God as our source and depend on Him daily to keep us supplied. Poverty in spirit suggests modest estimation of our strength, value and worth including achievements- whether spiritual or physical.

2. Blessedness of the poor in the spirit

"But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." **James 4:6**

Poverty in the spirit is an attitudinal trait expected to be displayed by all children of God and citizens in His kingdom. Such attitude guarantees the possessor a place in God's kingdom. God's presence and closeness are sure inheritance of the humble including abundance of grace and potentials for greatness in the kingdom of Gd.

2. BLESSEDNESS OF MOURNING OR FOR MOURNERS

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." **Mathew 5:4**

To the world, it sounds strange to teach that blessings of the kingdom usually come upon those who mourn. People often think that merry-making, party spirit or accumulation of material wealth is an evidence of blessing, joy and happiness. The Lord stated *"No"*. Those who mourn in a godly way or exhibit godly sorrow are blessed, happy and rich.

1. Mourning that attracts divine blessings

"Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" **Joel 2:15, 17**

There is a segment of the society or of people in this world who are often troubled and constantly weep over the effect of sin and its consequences whether in their own lives or in that of others. It is not the kind of mourning or weeping that we do when we are judged and punished for wrong doing or for adding to the burden of corruption in the world. It is the mourning of those who desire and



constantly pray that God will bring an end to sin in the world and usher in everlasting righteousness. It is not mourning over any physical or earthly loss but one borne out of our need for grace and spiritual virtues. It is the kind of mourning that makes us to aspire to be better sons and daughters of God.



It is mourning in intercessory prayers that God should add to us whatever is lacking in our stride towards establishing an abiding relationship with the Lord; towards attainment of spiritual maturity and desire for a place in heaven at the end of our lives.

2. Promised blessings for gracious mourners

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

Revelation 21:4

Gracious mourners are assured of God's comfort. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. We shall all be glad when we see Jesus. We shall come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy. We shall obtain joy and gladness. Sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isaiah 35:10). Those who mourn over their own sins here in the world, praying that the Lord should give them the power to *"go and sin no more"* shall be comforted by a grant of salvation and assurance of acceptance into God's kingdom. Those who during evangelistic outreach mourns that God should grant repentance and salvation to particular souls they are trying to reach and bring into His kingdom shall be comforted by God's answer to their prayers and conversion of those souls. Those who mourn daily and desire a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells shall be comforted at Christ's second coming. They shall live and reign with Him. Godly mourning, mourning after a godly sort, gracious mourning, comes with guarantee and assurance of comfort from the Lord and King of the kingdom. Now and eventually in eternity, all mourners in Christ's kingdom shall be comforted.



ABOUT WATCHMAN OUTREACH MISSION

Watchman Outreach Mission as envisioned fundamentally comprises of men and women of faith who watch over one another and together watch for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next to this primary assignment is an equally important responsibility of bringing others into the same state of watchfulness and readiness as the coming of the Lord draws near. Ours is a trans-ministerial, trans-denominational mission. Our core values include expository teaching, prayer and counselling. We train in principles and practice of Christian discipleship and equip for effective Kingdom Service.

The Lord Jesus Christ in one of His parable said “*While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept*” **Mathew 25:5**. Watchman Outreach Mission is a response of faith to this and similar warnings about events in the last days. Our response is based on the premise that prophecies, visions and revelations about the future such as the one documented in the Lord’s parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins are sign-posts by which men are warned to keep vigil to avoid disastrous end. We serve to wake up the church and men everywhere to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return.

The Mission, based in Ibadan, Nigeria, was launched in 2009 and its maiden outing took place on the 20th November of the same year. On that day, we partnered with All Nations Evangelical Ministry (ANEM), Akobo, Ibadan for Evangelistic and Medical Mission Outreach to Idi - Ose Village on Arulogun - Olorunda Road in Lagelu Local Government, Ibadan.

In the years that followed we networked with churches and other Christian groups too to implement our mandate which include conducting gospel outreaches, discipleship training for new converts, organizing and facilitating workers and ministerial training, conducting administrative reviews in churches and ministries, writing of proposals for reforms and church growth strategies that can enhance social cohesion, improve church finances and foster overall development, unity and growth of such ministries; monitoring and/or supervision of the implementation of such reforms and strategies.

Some of these Christian groups and ministries include with Christ Apostolic Church, Oke - Ife in Ajangboju, Ibadan, Nigerian Military Christian Fellowship, Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment Chapter in Oyo - State Nigeria, Christ Gospel Mission International, Light of Jesus Evangelistic Ministry with branches in different cities in South Western Nigeria, and Ark of Salvation Church of Christ (ASCC) with headquarters at Molade, Monatan Ibadan.

Till date, although partnered ministries change from time to time depending on the leading we receive from the Lord, we remain committed to our main purpose and vision; that of service to the church and in the world to wake up men everywhere and encourage them to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return. Through our activities, souls had been saved, believers edified and church workers’ spiritual growth and development enhanced, all to the glory of God.

WATCHMAN PRAYER HOUR



Prayer Points - For December 2023

1. Thank God for clear revelation in the scriptures of all that He expected His children and citizens in His Kingdom to be
2. Pray for grace to become people who are always humble in our attitude and disposition, strong in faith
3. Pray that God will daily increase our spiritual appetite and hunger for His presence, for righteousness and for the things of God
4. Pray that God will purify your hearts and help you grow in graces of sincerity, honesty and transparency
5. Pray that we may be God’s peace ambassadors in a troubled world; pray for grace to live peaceful and peaceable life
6. Pray for all our sisters and brothers around the world who are being persecuted at this time that they shall have the presence of God and Holy Spirit’s comfort in their trials.

“..... *men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*” **Luke 18:1**

May the Lord hear and answer all our prayers - AMEN!

Watchman Prayer Hour holds every Saturday from 10.30am - 12.00MD. We invite you to join us at our office at Amazing Grace House, Joy Estate, Olorunda -Abaa, Ibadan . Oyo - State. Follow us on any of our social media platforms and send your inquiries or prayer requests to any of our digital addresses.

BLESSINGS OF MEEKNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

3. BLESSINGS FOR THE MEEK

"Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5)

In Matthew 5:4, is another shocking fact from Christ's sermon or teaching. He stated that happy, fortunate and spiritually prosperous are those who are saved and have become citizens in God's kingdom; who are mild, patient and long suffering. God shall favour them by granting them occupancy certificate in best, good, fertile portions of the earth.

Meekness suggests an attitude of strength under control and submission to the will and word of God. Meekness and quietness in the spirit goes together. Paul described these as ornaments that are of great price in God's presence (1 Peter 3:4). We are exhorted to pray for the grace to live a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty (1 Timothy 2:2b).

This is contrary to the opinion, programmes and activities of many in the world today who think that it is by fretting, fighting and fraud that we can get the best from the world. Jesus says "No". The world and everything in it belongs to God and under His control. He has reserved it and the best in it for those who submit to His counsel, His will and His word- even if that means allowing themselves to be maltreated or cheated for a while without retaliation or fighting back.

The statement of Christ about the ultimate blessing of the meek and their inheritance suggests that at some point, all that the wicked has taken away by force and fraud shall be restored to children in His kingdom who daily practice non-aggression and non-retaliation. God shall fight their battle and give them the best on earth.



Those who like Abraham walked in meekness -when Lot was choosing the well-watered plains of Jordan- will find out in the end that they did not miss or lose anything. Jesus is our example and model of meekness

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:" 1 Peter 2:23

Jesus was meek and lowly in heart; he was led like a lamb to be slaughtered. He opened not His mouth nor fought back. Eventually, God vindicated Him, fought for Him, delivered Him and promoted Him. He was given a name that is above every name. All children of God and citizens in God's kingdom are invited to walk in the footsteps of Christ; to follow His life of meekness in our Christian journey, life and walk to heaven. The Balance Sheet of businesses in the world has their profits and losses but in the kingdom of God and in Christ there is full recovery, full restoration and glorious rest. All that is meant for us, which God ordained, promised and which we prayed about in accordance with His will shall come to us. There is therefore no reason to fret. In every circumstance we should concentrate on God. He will meet our needs. *"But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." Psalm 37:11*

4. BLESSINGS FOR THE RIGHTEOUSNESS

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6)

Loss of appetite is sometimes an early evidence of sickness. Hunger and thirst which implies expression of great desire for food and drink (or water) is used here figuratively by the Lord to describe a spiritual state.

Such desire and its expression should mark the difference between those who are spiritually alive in Christ and those who are dead in sins and trespasses. Diminishing appetite for expository teaching and godly living are evidences of diminishing spiritual vigour and vitality. The leading evidence of true revival in any individual or nation is enhanced appetite for God's word and obedience to it, as well as renewed dedication and commitment to do always what is right. Compromises are evidences of spiritual sickness and backsliding.

On the subject of righteousness, the scripture makes a distinction between self-righteousness unacceptable to God and God's righteousness.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." Isaiah 64:6

Self-righteousness is a sum-total of all human efforts -without repentance and the grace of God- to keep the law, to do what is right and to please God. We are to seek the righteousness He prescribed- which is, acceptance of Christ as our redeemer and supplier of grace, as well as acceptance of His power for righteous living. Living righteous is the practical evidence that we have received the righteousness of God and of Christ. Dirty, corrupt, immoral lives are inconsistent with true Christian profession. God's commitment to consistently pour into our lives grace for righteousness is expressed in Christ's promise of the blessing that will attend hunger and thirst for righteousness. Those that hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled; God through Christ promised to make us righteous if we so desire. He will pour His grace and power upon our life to always do things right and do the right thing always.

BLESSINGS FOR THE MERCIFUL AND PURE IN HEART

5. BLESSINGS FOR THE MERCIFUL

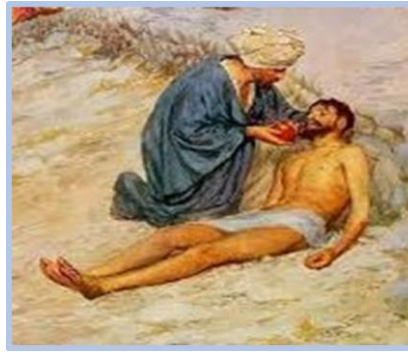
"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7)

Mercy is synonymous with compassion. It describes a feeling of inward tenderness towards somebody, precisely described as "*bowels of mercy*". It means to pity or show sympathy. Such feelings are outwardly manifested by acts of kindness and good deeds towards others. Mother Theresa stated that if we see someone in need and hurting; and nothing stirs in us to make us want to reach out to help, it means that sin is still lurking inside us.

"With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright,"
Psalms 18:25

Failure to show mercy is the main reason in Christ's story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16 why the rich man ended up in hell. We may not be able to feed everyone in the world nor solve every problem on planet earth. But there is surely a Lazarus laid at our gate, close to where we live and work. That is the person about whom God shall hold us accountable if we refuse to help. Concerning him we may be judged and condemned in the end if we refuse to help.

Christians and citizens in God's kingdom should live like Good Samaritans in the world, feeding the hungry, giving drinks to the thirsty, lodging strangers, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned (Matthew 25:35-46).



Our earthly and eternal reward is connected to it. The soul of the liberal shall be made fat. Those who water others shall themselves be watered. Those who show pity to the poor lend to the Lord; the Lord shall repay them. Mission activities directed at meeting different aspects of human needs have been an integral part of the Christian religion for many years. The selfless care and sense of accountability that prompted it- and our consciousness that we are stewards of the Lord and shall reckon in the end regarding our disposal of the resources that He placed within our reach -have brought tremendous relief and succor to nations around the world in different dispensations and during wars or natural disasters. Compassion towards others is an essence of Christ-likeness and in increasing proportion- the evidence of spiritual progress and maturity. The Lord's teaching on compassion in the beatitudes, carries with it assurance of reciprocal reward for the obedient.

6. BLESSINGS FOR THE PURE IN HEART

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" Mathew 5:8

Pure in Greek text is "*Kathoros*". It means to be clear and clean. It refers to something that has been washed and has had its pollution removed. Within this context, purity of heart portrays a heart that has been washed and freed from its burden of corruption and thoughts of wickedness; a clean heart, devoid of filthiness.

The word "*heart*" as used in Matthew 5:6 is not the human anatomical organ known by that name, but the seat of our affections and emotions; by which we express our feelings of sadness and gladness, fear or confidence, love and hate, good or bad desires. Such aspect of a person's life needs to be washed after salvation. According to the Bible, our thought patterns flow from our hearts. When our hearts are washed clean and clear, then we shall be able to express thoughts that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and brings glory to God (Philippians 4:8). A pure heart is free from guile and evil, negative, hurtful thoughts and ideas.

David prayed for such an experience in Psalm 51:10. The way he presented his prayer revealed clearly that such an experience requires a divine operation or surgery. Sanctification, purging of the heart and purity of heart is a definite Christian experience separate from salvation by which our heart and seat of our affection, desires and thoughts are cleansed and washed free of all pollution and defilement. The two-fold nature of sin demands that we not only receive forgiveness and power to stop outward, obvious, physical sins, but that our hearts be purged and purified so this source of our actions, choices and decisions are renewed and set right with God. The consequence is total freedom from sin and its defilement. We are consequently consecrated to God like a holy vessel, ready for His use. Only services offered under such state are acceptable to God and reward-able.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. We shall see God in action in our lives and that of others through us here on earth and we shall see Him in His glory and kingdom at the end of our earthly lives. Without Holiness, no man shall see the Lord.

**BLESSINGS FOR
PEACEMAKERS AND FOR
SUFFERING FOR
RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE**

**7. BLESSINGS FOR PEACE-
MAKERS**

Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God"
Mathew 5:9

Peace is an attribute of the triune God- the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. God the Father is called the God of peace (Romans 16:20). Christ is called the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). Publication of peace and goodwill towards all men accompanied His birth (Luke 2:14). The Holy Spirit is represented by a gentle dove in the scriptures- a peaceable bird used in the Old Testament for sacrifices and atonement. The gospel of Christ when accepted brings about reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Sin makes men enemies of God. The self-centeredness associated with sinful living creates relationship barriers among men. All these end when a person repents and submits to the Lordship of Christ.

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."
Romans 14:17

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end..."
Isaiah 9:7a



The kingdom of God and the church, is a kingdom that publishes and promotes peace and reconciliation. It is and ought to be an assembly of peacekeeping and peace-loving people (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Paul referred to Christ as our Peace (Ephesians 2:14-17). Through His death and sacrifice, we have a peace offering reconciling us with God and promoting smooth fellowship among men. To the repenting sinner, Christ is His peace offering. He broke down the wall of partition and abolished enmity between God and man; and between man and man including between Jews and the Gentiles. Christ assured His disciples when He was about to depart from the world that when faced with trials and tribulations in the world, they will never be in short supply of the peace that is in Him and comes from Him. The peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep our hearts and mind through Christ Jesus.

The ample presence, experience and enjoyment of divine peace among believers in different generations are such that over time it took a form of greeting- "*Shalom*" "*Peace be unto you*". This greetings form featured prominently in almost all of Paul's epistles and even earlier than that. It was part of greetings in the East and used as such since the time of Abraham. Since so much of peace is associated with God's work and relationship, it is expected that His children who shared His nature should be peace-lovers, peacekeepers and peacemakers. By featuring this in His teaching, Christ sought to highlight the importance of a practice that already existed by greetings of peace and wishing one another

well in Eastern culture and instructed that it feature prominently and practically in His kingdom. The teaching suggests that in a world of strife and division, true believers should remain one and be involved in the ministry of reconciling a lost world to the Lord. He indicated that our commitment to helping sinners who are God's enemies reconcile with God and helping to resolve conflicts among men shall attract great divine reward.

Peace and reconciliation ministry is a key ministry and mission that God gave all believers

"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" **2 Corinthians 5:18**

When we live peaceably with all men as much as it lies with us; when we seek peace and pursue it; the Lord shall reward our efforts with blessings of joy, happiness and divine favour. Even others who observe our ways will testify of our oneness and identity with God. They shall call us the children of God. God Himself shall own us as His if we imbibe, retain and exhibit His nature of peace. True children of God and citizens in His kingdom should not be the one striking the match or fanning the flames of strife and discord in the society. We are by the nature of God within us, ordained to be the one pouring cold water upon its flame and quenching it.

"We are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." **Mathew 5:14, 16**

This is our calling and ministry no matter the turn of events and circumstances in the world. Christ taught that peace seeking, peace-making and promotion of peaceful reconciliation and coexistence among all men are evidences that we are God's children and good ambassadors of His kingdom.

8. SUFFERING FOR DOING WHAT IS RIGHT AND FOR FOLLOWING CHRIST

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you and say all manners of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" Matthew 5:10-12

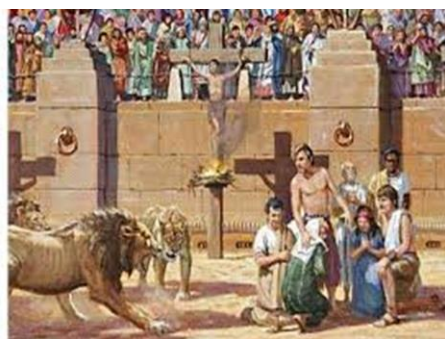
The character traits described in Mathew 5:2-9 are among the best that could be found among men and could only be possible by the power of God and the help of His Spirit.



Actually, if everyone on earth commit themselves to living such life, we shall have days of heaven on earth.



Interestingly, one would have thought that commitment to this kind of life will win loud and standing ovation. Christ wanted us to know that while this may be so in some cases, it is not going to be entirely so. In fact, the opposite will be in the case in other instances. Rather than approve of our ways and try to emulate us, there are places and times when commitment to doing what is right and following God will actually bring suffering and insults.



"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;" Philipians 1:29

Christ Himself suffered persecution. Those He came to save, whom He healed and fed crucified Him. It should therefore not be considered strange when His followers are treated in the same way. Great men of God in the days of old suffered too. So when persecuted, we must bear in mind the fact that we are in the company of great and honorable men of different dispensations. These men bore persecution patiently; we should (James 5:10-11). They were comforted and handsomely rewarded, we will. *"If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him: ..." 2 Timothy 2:12*

CONCLUSION

The Beatitudes prescribed and described the character traits that should be found in genuine Christians and children in God's kingdom. It shows us the fruits of true repentance and ways of distinguishing between those who are true believers and those who are not, so we can by their fruits recognize them. The population of worshippers in a church or denomination may be in its millions but we here learn that it is only those who possess and exhibit these traits that are reckoned by God as belonging to Him and are citizens in His kingdom (2 Timothy 2:19-20).

For the avoidance of doubt, genuine Christians are poor in spirit (humble), they are gracious mourners who have repented from their sins and labour to have others do so. They are meek, merciful, peace loving, peacemakers and peacekeepers. They love to do what is right at all times and are consecrated to God who in turn would have purified their hearts, enabling them to do all they do in pure conscience and with good motives. They are such that - if and when they suffer for doing what is right or as followers of Christ - would bear patiently and rejoice. They count such affliction light, in view of the greater and eternal weight of glory that they shall receive as recompense. They therefore are able to rejoice and praise God in everything. Genuine Christianity is therefore beyond 'identity label'. Rather, and in God's reckoning, it is and should be a recognizable and describable way of life.

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www.watchmanoutreachmission.org

Elizabeth Fry (née Gurney) was the third daughter born on 21 May, 1780 into a well-to-do Quaker family in Norwich involved in banking and manufacturing. However, their faith was central to their lives. The turning point for Elizabeth Fry came at 18 when the American preacher and slavery abolitionist William Savery spoke at her meeting house. It cemented her Christian faith and commitment to Quakerism. After hearing Savery again in London, she wrote her "*Mission Statement*" vowing not to waste time nor speak badly of people, tell lies or indulge in luxuries. In 1800, aged 20, she married Joseph Fry, nephew of the founder of the chocolate and confectionery company known as J.S.Fry. He was a partner in Gurney's bank.

Quaker missionary Stephen Grellet persuaded her to visit Newgate Prison in 1813. She was horrified by the conditions that she found. At first she concentrated on the conditions for the children but soon turned her attention to the plight of the women. She encouraged other middle class women to visit prisons and set up classes to teach the prisoners skills. In 1817, Elizabeth Fry began *the Association for the Improvement of Female Prisoners*, a group of twelve women who worked for these reforms. The Association provided clothing, instruction and employment for the women and introduced them to the Holy Scriptures. Newgate was transformed by the work of the Association. She lobbied authorities including Members of Parliament – a brother-in-law was elected to Parliament in 1818 and became a supporter of her reforms. As a result, in 1818, she was called to testify before a Royal Commission, the first woman to do so. The Christian principles by which she transformed the Newgate Prison soon led to prison reforms all around England, and into Australia, and eventually affected ways prisoners were treated in all Europe. In 1819, with her brother Joseph Gurney, Elizabeth Fry wrote a report on prison reform. In the 1820s, she continued to inspect prison conditions, advocated more reforms and established more reform groups, including many with women members.

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

ELIZABETH FRY
1780 - 1845



In 1822, Elizabeth Fry gave birth to her eleventh child. In 1823, prison reform legislation was finally introduced in Parliament.

Elizabeth built hospitals, started schools, established libraries, and ministered both practically and spiritually to countless needy people. When the King of Prussia came to visit England he asked to visit Newgate Prison with Elizabeth Fry. *"In his presence, she read to the prisoners from Romans about the surrendered life ... when she knelt, the king followed her example and listened attentively to her beautiful, extemporaneous prayer. The scene was a moving one – the monarch of a great nation, dignitaries of England, and common prisoners all praying to their common Creator. When they rose, the king offered his arm to Mrs. Fry and they walked out together."* Elizabeth Fry traveled extensively in western European countries in the 1830s advocating her preferred prison reform measures. In 1828 Joseph Fry became bankrupt. Elizabeth was able to carry on with her work as a minister but was forced to curtail her work with those in need. She died at Ramsgate on 12 October 1845 and is buried in the Friends' burial ground at Barking.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

1 John 2:7

SONG OF THE MONTH

LOVING FATHER, ALWAYS HERE

1. Loving Father, always here,
In our need You draw us near,
Weak in all we think and do,
Ever poor but rich in You,
Ever poor but rich in You.
2. From Your glory light is born.
Here we see ourselves and mourn,
Humbled as we glimpse the truth.
Empty, Lord, we thirst for You.
Empty, Lord, we thirst for You.
3. Mercy flows as we believe.
Now we give as we receive,
Vessels of Your healing grace.
Pure in heart, we see Your face.
Pure in heart, we see Your face.
4. Peace in You is peace profound.
Help us live it all around,
Peace complete though problems press,
Rich, eternal blessedness,
Rich, eternal blessedness.

Author: Ken Bible

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