



WATCHMAN'S TRUMPET



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FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

Hello,

I welcome you to this new month and present to you February 2022 edition of Watchman's Trumpet. This month, our theme is "Family Life"

Biblically, a family is made up of parents usually husband - a man, and his wife - a woman living together with their children. Family life began with God when He conducted the first wedding between Adam and Eve. God ordain family relationship and condemns social isolation.

Unfortunately, the world is today promoting usefulness of personal liberty to an extent in which social disconnect becomes synonymous with enlightenment and civilization. In such a world, those who genuinely belong to God need to be reminded that if God stated that something is not good then it is not good. God said "It is not good that the man should be alone..." Genesis 2:18. A greater percentage of vices in the world have their origin in ineffective social bonding and dysfunctional families. Continuous erosion of kinship spirit, if it continues the way it is going now, may eventually bring about the ruin of many communities and nations.

Family is the bedrock of the society. Societies are built on this foundation stone. Family relationship is like fabric with which communities and even nations are woven. The first pronouncement of divine blessings recorded in the scriptures was addressed to the family and not individual. In essence, there is clear indication that there are blessings of God that we may not be able to actualize except we become responsible members of a family. Perversion and pollution of marriage institution as well as family discord as is not from God.

God gives perfect gifts and often for good purposes. Therefore, the problems we encounter and experience during social interactions especially as common among family members in these end-time (Luke 21:16) is not from God. It is most often the result of Satan's manipulation and man's selfish and sinful nature. Embracing the light of the Gospel, prayer and labour for its fire to spread as fast as possible to all our family members will solve a great percentage of men's family problems today.

This edition of edition of Watchman's Trumpet focuses on the role and responsibilities of individual members of the family to God and to one another that will make family relationship what God ordained it to be. It is my prayer that divine blessings will flood your homes as you read, digest and practice the contents of this spiritual menu. Welcome!

CARING FOR A TENDER AND PRECIOUS GIFT

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" 1 Peter 3:7
"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord" Proverbs 18:22.



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A wife is God's most precious gift to the man Proverbs 18:22. The scriptures directly linked possibility of receiving more from the Lord or obtaining eternal inheritance to how a man manages his relationship with his wife. 1 Peter 3:7 described the wife as "a weaker vessel". The word "weaker" in the reference is best interpreted as "tender".

The picture is that of a vacuum flask or breakable plate among household utensils - important, decent, presentable, useful but fragile and delicate; hence requires intelligent and careful handling so that it will endure. It must be stated then that many men has been ruined in marital relationship, spiritually and will likely be barred from heaven because of the actions and reaction generated from unwise and careless handling of their wives.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Responsibilities of a Christian husband
2. Recommended plan for profitable relationship
3. Result of godliness in Christian home

1. Responsibility of a Christian husband

"Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them" Colossians 3:19.

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" 1 Timothy 5:8.

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" Galatians 6:2.

"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" Ephesians 4:32.

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them ..." like the head stays with the body ...*giving honour to your wife*" like the brain gives special attention to delicate parts of the body. The Christian husband is expected by God to be a responsible head of the family, coordinating, Christ-like, cleaving, caring, communicating, consistent, considerate, compassionate, courageous and a comforting companion. The model of the husband's love towards his wife is the love of Christ for the church. Christ's love for the church is absolute, sacrificial, sincere, willful, purposeful, supporting and realistic; so should the love of the Christian husband be for his wife. Our text did not just instruct us on our responsibilities; it clearly revealed how to do it.

1. Recommended plan for profitable relationship

"And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived" Genesis 25:21.

"And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw,

and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife" Genesis 26:8.

"Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily" Mathew 1:19.

"...according to knowledge ... as being co-heirs together of the grace of life". Three areas of knowledge indispensable to the Christian husband include knowledge of the word of God on marital relationship; knowledge of his wife - because every human being is unique and peculiar, and knowledge of your duties as a husband - because relationship thrives better when everyone does their duty.

The fact that 1 Peter 3 started with practical instructions on Christian conducts and lifestyle is an indication that the knowledge mentioned here is not merely intellectual but one that leads to practical positive profitable relationship.

The knowledge that did not affect our conduct is unprofitable knowledge. The Lord wanted us to be tender and careful in handling our wives so we do not ruin them spiritually, physically, socially and psychologically.

You must always be conscious that as co-pilgrims; your interpersonal relationship could affect the road, the speed of travel and eventual destination. Of course and eventually, God will ask you to give account concerning your relationship with your wife just like the wife too shall give account of her conduct towards her husband before God in the end.



For profitable relationship, (1) Learn and study your wife, (2) Study about your wife (3) Study or learn from your wife. Stay together, plan together, and possess together. If we faithfully do these things, what will be the result?

3. Result of godliness in the Christian home

And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him" Genesis 18:17-19.

God holds the man responsible for godliness and maintenance of divine standard and order in his home. When the husband leads his family according to divine plan and programme, and takes good care of this precious gift that God gave him, (1) His prayers will not be hindered. (2) He will have victory over the enemy. (3) He will make progress. (4) He will enjoy God's presence. (5) God will command blessing upon his life and household. (6) He will be a carrier of divine power and know the mind of God. (7) His life will be a blessing to others and the nation.





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 February 2022

1. Thank God for all our family members and for our relationship with them
2. Resist every isolationist spirit ravaging the world today and destroying lives
3. Pray against every spirit that inspires domestic violence, child abuses, ineffective social bonding and other evidences of dysfunction in the family
4. Pray that the lord will bring back all run-away children, husband and wife; and absentees - mothers and fathers
5. Pray for godliness and Christ-like living among all our family members
6. Pray for stability and strength of our family ties
7. Pray for love and forgiveness to be virtues upheld by every member of our families
8. Pray for grace to act and live responsibly within the spiritual and physical families that God placed us
9. Pray that God's promise in Acts 16:30; promise of salvation for us and our household will be fulfilled today

" 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 in 78/80 Nepa (IBEDC) Building, Opposite U.I. Second Gate, Ibadan . Oyo - State. You can also follow us on any of our Social media platforms during the prayer session and send inquiries or prayer requests to any of our digital addresses.

For more info on the Mission, log on to: www.watchmanoutreachmission.org

A PERFECT WIFE

“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised” Proverbs 31:10-12, 30.

This topic presents strong relationship between perfection in the fulfillment of marital obligations and genuine faith in Christ. It is incongruent to think of someone who is a wicked, insensitive wife and a good Christian at the same time or someone who is irreligious like Delilah and Jezebel and are responsible wives at the same time. This means that Christ's parable of good and corrupt trees and their kinds in fruitfulness are applicable even in marriage as in other aspects of life. Mathew 5: 16-20

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. Definition of Christian perfection
2. Description of Bible's perfect wife
3. Devotion of a Christian wife to God and faithfulness to her marital vows

1. Definition of Christian perfection

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” Mathew 5:48.

“But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” James 1:4.

“Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” 2 Corinthians 7:1

The word ‘perfect’ as used in the Bible refer to “all round development, completeness and maturity”. To be perfect is to make a habit of always crossing our ‘t’s and dotting our ‘i’s. It involves a commitment to be methodical, deliberate and thorough; and to demonstrate a flair for doing the right thing at the right

time. The Lord Jesus commanded that those who follow Him should be perfect (Mathew 5:48). Perfection is required in every facet of believer's life and relationship; most especially in marriage.

1. Description of Bible's “Perfect Wife”

“She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy” Proverbs 31:13-20

Proverbs 31:10-31 presented to us the portrait of a model wife. The passage underscores the importance of making the right choice of spouse when considering marriage. We find in it very important traits that believers should look for in a potential wife. It epitomizes high social and moral standard that all godly women should aspire to have. This woman, described by Lemuel's mother as praiseworthy is:

Of noble character - verse 10, fully trustworthy - verse 11, an asset to her husband - verse 11, domestically skilled (verse - 11-12. She is concerned that her household should be well and nutritiously fed - verse 12 - 14, diligent, arising before dawn and busy until after dark - verse 15, endowed with a good business sense, even to the point of buying a field and planting a vineyard - verse 14, 16. She has her own profitable home-based business - verse 16, a hard worker - verse 17, generous to the poor and needy - verse 20, wise in preparing her household for the needs of days to come - verse 21. She is wise in ensuring that she and her family are well and appropriately clothed - verse 21. She is a woman of wisdom - verse 26, shows dignity and strength - verse 25. Her secret is in verse 30. She was described as a God-fearing woman; that is, a godly woman. In contemporary times people will refer to her as “a good Christian”. This brings us to our final point:

3. Devotion of a Christian wife to God and faithfulness to her marital vows

“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised” John 31:30

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” Hebrews 13:20. 21.

Self, Satan and societal influence are the leading hindrances not only to the attainment of Christian perfection but also to the achievement of high level social and moral standard like that of the believing, ideal model wife and mother described in Proverbs thirty-one. These we must overcome to be the kind of wife and mother that God wanted us to be. To overcome them, we need basic Christian experiences of new life in Christ (John 3:16, Romans 12:1-2, 2Corinthians 5:17, 2Corinthians 7:1). We need sanctifying operation in our hearts by which the Adamic nature is removed and the in-filling of the Holy Spirit that will abide with us and guide us through sensitive scripture saturated and well-primed consciences to do what is right at all times. God's power is available today to produce such changes and transformation in us and supply us with abundance and sufficient grace to make a difference in our generation, in the lives of our husbands, children and the society among whom we live as the virtuous woman described in Proverbs thirty-one must have done in her time.

The combination of abundance grace from God, fear of God, walk in the Spirit, unceasing love and forgiveness; and relentless prayer will make us the type of wife that God wanted us to be: a woman who is a devoted (good) Christian, dedicated to God and faithful to our marital vows.



BLESSEDNESS AND REWARDS FOR GODLY HELPERS AND HELPMEEETS

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” **Genesis 2:18.**

“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith”.

Galatians 6:2, 7-10

“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased”. **Hebrews 13:16**

Women have their lead role as helpmeets and help ministers. The idea of making a woman a helper to the man originated with God. According to the Bible, woman was created for man; for a particular man to complement his role and help him. Unfortunately, the idea of being a helper is not popular in the world today. Man think of helpers as inferior but in God's plan it is not so.

We shall consider three subtopics:

1. The meaning “*Helpmeet*”
2. Women's privilege of helping others
3. Blessings and rewards for Godly helpers and the godly

1. The meaning of “Helpmeet”

“And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him” **Genesis 2:18.**

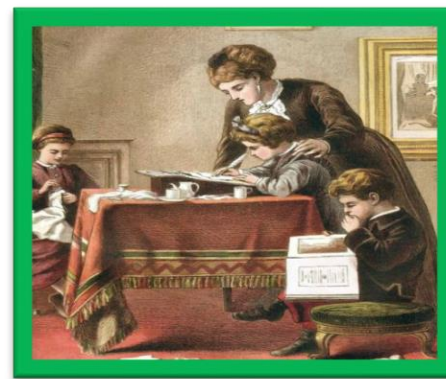
“The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me” **Psalms 116:6.**

The idea of woman being a helpmeet for man originated with God who stated that it is not good for man to be alone. The word “*help*” in the original refers to service. “*meet*” in the word “*helpmeet*” refers to opposite, fitting or complementing. The woman was created a helpmeet for the man to fill complementary role, to supply or do for the man what he cannot do for himself. It is within the context of this complementary best-fitting and serving partnership role that Eve emerged and became the mother of all living. Without the woman, man will never be able to reach his full potential. As it was at that time, so it is now. A woman is ordained to stand next to a single man, unite with him and have the two of them become one to fulfill a common destiny in God. That is what marriage is about.



2. Women's privilege of helping others

“Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it”. **Proverbs 3:27**



The people in the world will not exist without the creation of Eve. Man will be alone and unhappy. Research findings have shown that divorced couples are not happier apart than those who decide to stick together to iron out their differences. Two will always be better than one. Eve was to be Adam's companion. All other living creatures he named were in pairs except him.

None of these creatures are suitable companions for him. Adam recognized Eve immediately she was created and presented to him. He observed that she was like him in every respect. Animal pets such as dogs, dolls such as Teddy Bears will not provide effective companionship for man. Feminist movement's motive to promote woman autonomy does more harm than good. We are happier and fruitful when we are where God wanted us to be and are doing what God wanted us to do. In God's mind and plan, help does not carry a negative, inferior connotation. Helpmeet is a phrase of prestige. It is a great honour to help someone or be a helper to someone. Help is used to refer to God Himself more than 10 times in the book of psalms. If God is not ashamed to be a helper to fallen man why will a woman be ashamed to be described as helper to her own husband. It is a great honour and privilege to help others, to provide for him what he cannot provide for himself. We are to help our neighbours; that does not make us inferior to our neighbors. The wife is to meet the need of her husband.



They are to complement each other like the head complements the body, like the right and left hands, legs; ears and eyes complement each other.

Women have roles that are very important in the home and in the world. Neglect of these will bring disaster. Everyone on earth, man and women, young and old should recognize these, appreciate it and be thankful to God for it.

3. Blessings and rewards for Godly helpers and the godly

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again” **Luke 6:38**

“The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself” **Proverbs 11:25.**

Women are great and privileged people in God’s plan and in the world. We are on God’s errand especially if we occupy the space and place that God ordained for us. In the home, in the church and in the society we are on mission assignment for God. If we fulfill our role faithfully and effectively, God will greatly reward us in time and eternity.

The children of the virtuous woman arise and call her blessed. Her husband also praises her because she makes him happy. In time and in eternity, her works shall bring her praise.

The society and her generation will bless her saying *“this is the woman who has given godly and great sons and daughters to our world”*. Her God too shall praise her, honour her and bless her for her faithfulness. The respect for her husband in the public and the achievements of her children shall all compensate for her troubles, diligence and perseverance.

Along with these are God’s great promises to those who help and serve others. *“The hands the liberal shall be made fat and those who water others shall be watered”*. *“God has set apart the godly for himself”* Psalm 4:3 *“God will deliver the godly from temptation”* 2 Peter 2:9 *“It shall be well with the righteous”* Isaiah 3:10 and with those who fear God Ecclesiastes 3:12. Godly man marrying godly wife shall have by God’s grace godly offspring. Malachi 2:15.



God listens to the godly and answers their prayers John 9:31 Godliness will always profit those committed to it with blessings of the things that are now and that of the world to come 1 Timothy 4:7-8. When the wrath of God begins to manifest against godless, selfish and self-centred people who lived for themselves alone like the rich man in Luke 16, we shall be safe, secured and happy.



God is calling all women to rise up today, occupy our place and make full proof of our ministry. We are called to be sources of blessing to our generation, beginning from our homes, the church, and in the world at large. May God make His grace sufficiently available for us to do so.



“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken”. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

THERE IS A BOY HERE!

“There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?”

John 6:9

“There is a boy here!” was a statement made by Andrew Simon Peter’s brother when Jesus miraculously fed 5,000 men. He had been teaching them for hours. The meeting probably started earlier in the day. Now in the evening, the disciples wanted Jesus to dismiss them so they can quickly go into surrounding villages and towns to buy food before nightfall. Jesus told them that this was unnecessary, that the disciples should arrange to feed them. Phillip remarked that it will cost more than 200 pence worth of provision for everyone present to have just a little bite. In their search for solution, a little boy with a lunch pack was brought to Jesus whose love for Christ, for the people and selflessness saved the day. His generosity and related activities forms the focus of our study today as we consider three subtopics:

1. A mother’s love
2. A boy’s selflessness
3. Parenting and child-care responsibilities

1. A mother’s love

“But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice” 1 Samuel 2:18-19.

Somewhere hidden in the story of Christ’s abundant provision is the love, commitment and faithfulness of a caring mother who packed a lunch of five loaves of barley and two small fish for her son. While preparing the food, she probably never knew that her silent work in the background and backstage that day and the basic provisions from her kitchen, the evidence of a mother’s love for her

son will become a precursor of one of the greatest miracles of all times.

Mothers are great blessings and gifts from God to our world, most especially believing mothers. Diminution or absence of them in a community is a curse. The impart of Moses’ mother, Samuel’s mother and that of Lois and Eunice in the life of Timothy and many others clearly reveal how much under God’s guidance believing mothers can do in sharpening our world. We should cherish mothers, love and appreciate them. We should all do whatever we can including provision of support and resources to promote maternal responsibilities.



2. A boy’s selflessness

“There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?” John 6:9

The story of this little boy and his contribution to the success of that day’s outreach teaches us that no one need to live on the fringes of life as a result of seemingly deficient personal qualities or basic necessities of life. God provided sufficiently for all to be brought in to occupy the centre and there will still be enough room for more. There is an urgent need today to heal the world of marginalization, hate and prejudice on account of age, race, gender and social status. Let it begin with you. There is no one God cannot use especially if we follow this boy’s exemplary qualities. His story was that of care and concern for others, submission, love and sacrifice.

He most probably would have listened to Christ’s teachings. Certainly, what he heard from the Lord in the teaching made sense and affected his young and tender heart. His case testified to the fact that children can believe too and bear the fruits of repentance and fruits of the Spirit. This boy’s attitude is clearly a challenge to adult believers about the fact that love for God, for Jesus and for people – for His people are inseparable.

3. Parenting and child-care responsibilities

“Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him” Genesis 18:18, 19.

We are taught by this Gospel account and by the role played by this boy to place greater value on children and their upbringing; and to celebrate children. We are taught to be open to the possibilities of great things that God can do through our children. Children are loved by God and by Christ. Their sacrifices are welcomed and appreciated by Him. In their own little way, they have a role to play in meeting the needs of the world. A nation or people is as dynamic and progressive as can be found in their youth population. They can give us a better world by responsible living and accountability. Those who cannot sacrifice their lunch pack can serve with their youthful strength, vigour and intellect; as God is using adults, He can use children too. There must be individual and corporate efforts made by the adult population most especially parents and those involved in children and youth ministry to help our young people become what God ordained them to be.

Finally, it is more blessed to give than receive. If the boy had kept his lunch or ate it alone, his story would have ended there but by placing them into Christ’s hand he became an eternal Gospel celebrity. The same level of submission, simplicity, selflessness, consecration and commitment, loyalty and sacrifice is expected by the Lord from all Christian pilgrims today to get the best and achieve the best in life and ministry.

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www.watchmanoutreachmission.org

Mary Slessor was born in Aberdeen, on December, 1848. She moved to Dundee at the age of 11 in 1859. Her father was a shoemaker who lost his job due to an addiction to alcohol and eventually found work in Dundee's jute mills. Mary's mother was a strongly religious woman who ensured that Mary attended church and that she kept up her education by attending school on a half time basis, after family circumstances meant Mary also had to start work in the jute mills. By the time she was 14, Mary was a skilled jute worker, now working from 6am to 6pm each day having finished her formal education.

While still young, Mary joined a local mission to the poor, working to instill Christian values in Dundee's deprived areas. There is a famous story of her forcing a group of local youths to attend Sunday School. She was once threatened for her religious stand and compelling influence especially in promoting church attendance; she refused to flinch as one of these local youth swung a heavy metal weight close to her face.

In 1876 at the age of 28, Mary applied to be a missionary with the Foreign Mission Board of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. She received training in Scotland before setting sail on the S.S. Ethiopia on 5 August 1876, arriving in Calabar in south-eastern Nigeria just over a month later. The country she found was in a state of chaos. The colonial power, Britain, had seized control, but was more interested in the maintenance of trade than in the welfare of the Nigerians. The slave trade was still a recent memory in the country, and infanticide and human sacrifice still took place. Women's rights were next to non-existent, and disease was rife. Mary herself suffered from malaria but her determination steadily won her the respect of the Nigerians she came

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

MARY SLESSOR
1848 - 1915



into contact with. Unlike most missionaries, she lived among those she worked with. She became fluent in the local language, Efik, and developed a deep knowledge of local customs and culture. Eventually the regional Governor offered her Membership of the Itu Court. Mary also adopted a number of local children rejected by their parents: twins were considered at the time in Nigeria to be cursed, and could even be sacrificed as a result.

By the early 1900s Mary was helping vaccinate Nigerians against smallpox. But she was also suffering from increasingly severe bouts of malaria. Her strength declined, to the point where a woman who once embarked on all-night treks through the rain forest had to travel in a hand-cart pushed by an assistant.

Mary died on 13 January 1915. She was given a state funeral in Nigeria and in 1953. Her grave was visited by Queen Elizabeth. To Nigerians, she is simply remembered as "*Mother of All The People*". Her life is celebrated on a Scottish £10 note issued by Clydesdale Bank.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him"
Genesis 2:18

SONG OF THE MONTH

O GIVE US HOMES BUILT FIRM UPON THE SAVIOUR

- O give us homes built firm upon the Saviour,
Where Christ is Head, and Counsellor and Guide;
Where ev'ry child is taught His love and favor
And gives his heart to Christ, the crucified:
How sweet to know that tho' his footsteps waver
His faithful Lord is walking by his side!
- O give us homes with godly fathers, mothers,
Who always place their hope and trust in Him;
Whose tender patience turmoil never bothers,
Whose calm and courage trouble cannot dim;
A home where each finds joy in serving others,
And love still shines, tho' days be dark and grim.
- O give us homes where Christ is Lord and Master,
The Bible read, the precious hymns still sung;
Where prayer comes first in peace or in disaster,
And praise is natural speech to ev'ry tongue;
Where mountains move before a faith that's vaster,
And Christ sufficient is for old and young.
- O Lord, our God, our homes are Thine forever!
We trust to Thee their problems, toil, and care;
Their bonds of love no enemy can sever
If Thou art always Lord and Master there:
Be Thou the center of our least endeavor:
Be Thou our Guest, our hearts and homes to share.

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