

"You Can Trust Me"

The Beatitudes

Blessed
Are the
Pure in heart
For they shall
See God

Matthew Ch 5:8

As I began to write this devotional, I wondered what "Pure in Heart" actually meant. Some research showed many different meanings, but one stood out immediately to me. It said that a person who was pure in heart could be trusted with everyone's secrets and they would never talk about them with other people. They would never betray someone. I thought of an English teacher that I really admired. Her students wrote beautiful essays and when I substituted for her on several occasions they expected the same confidence and so we both were able to listen to the real meanings of our students and they felt free to write and know that no one else was going to know what they had written. She said she felt she was there so they could write in confidence. Her job was to teach them how to write, not be their preacher! It wasn't that they were telling us any deep secrets but they felt free to write what they

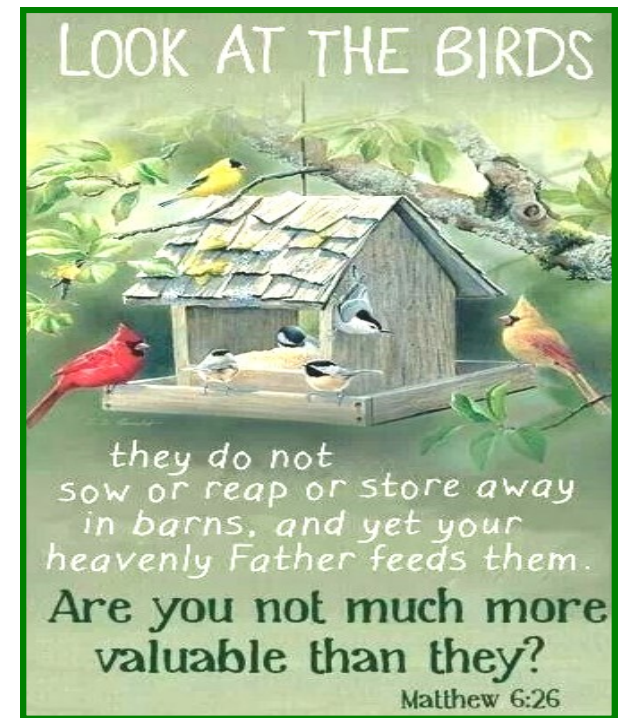
thought, not what they thought the teacher wanted to hear.

Stephen was the first Christian martyr. As he stood before the High Priest, he was asked to give up his God. Because he would not relent, they led him outside the city and stoned him to death. We are not called to be like Stephen. At times we are called to stand up for what we believe. Sometimes we do. Sometimes, it is easier to tell a little white lie, or to avoid the situation. I am afraid that far too often, we "run around" the situation rather than face it head on!!!

Our mind wanders, we do not "take the bull by the horns" and say what we know we should. We can say that we don't want to offend the other people. But, is that correct? Do you know of times that you should have done something a little different knowing in your heart that the action or reaction you were taking was not what God would will? Can we be trusted by friends, by God? Do we really think about the message kids have on a bracelet WWJD—"What Would Jesus Do?"

Eugene Peterson, in *THE MESSAGE*, translates the above parable this way: "You're blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world."

We are blessed when our "inside world" is put right. Why? Because we know we are doing right, and so our heart and mind are satisfied that we are doing what is proper. But, that is fine until we get into the "real world." Are others looking at us and expecting us to be like



them, or expecting us to be different. We have these choices to make every day.

We have a conscience. But sometimes we don't let it do the guiding. My husband's favorite character is Jiminy Cricket. I had never thought about him in any way except that he was the nice little character that helped Pinocchio get back on the right track when he wandered. If it hadn't been for Jiminy, Pinocchio would have ended up being a donkey! But Jiminy was always there, sitting on Pinocchio's shoulder. As I read, I found that Jiminy is sometimes thought of as a polite euphemism for Jesus Christ. That may be stretching it. But, we do tend to think of Christ in a very light hearted way sometimes.

As I continued to study this, I found a sermon by Tim Bertolet that gives a different light. He says "The sad thing is

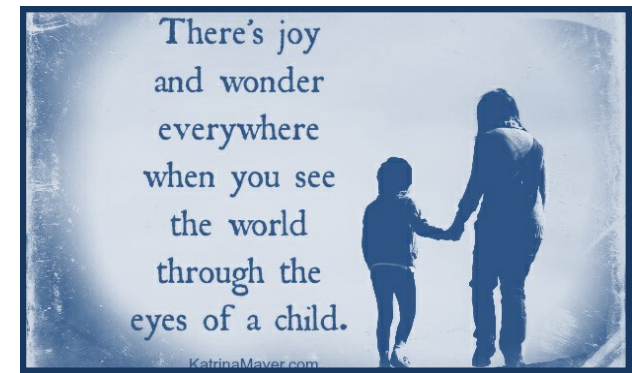


that Jiminy's 'When you wish upon a star' view of life is a lot like how many people view God and Jesus."

He takes the comparison and contrast a little further with this analogy – "Jesus cares in more than just a sentimentalized Jiminy Cricket kind of way. Jiminy is safe. Jesus is not. Jesus makes demands on our life. Following those demands can actually divide families and make enemies of the world, not because we are haters but because we have a higher loyalty. Jiminy is the kind of guy we keep in our back pocket to pull out when we need a little 'pick-me-up' of encouragement. Jesus is the kind of guy that challenges and reshapes our priorities. Jiminy fits in where we want him to fit. His kingdom message is basically: the world is our oyster. Jesus' kingdom message is one of Lordship--the reign of God." Perhaps we sometimes try to make Jesus into a Jiminy. Perhaps we can only learn through a tale about a little wooden boy and a cricket. The child accepts as he hears. We also need to have that young faith every day. Sometimes children can be very blunt but truthful. Perhaps that is one child characteristic we all should learn!

Whatever we choose, we have a Savior that loves us as we are. He is always there. He knows our frailties, our sins, and through his amazing grace He is willing to forgive us and help us to be stronger the next time. And we know that one day, we will be with Him, and then we won't have these worldly temptations to worry about. But, we will only achieve that through His love and grace when we ask.

His spirit in us is much stronger than the conscience of Jiminy Cricket. He is the power that can truly help us through any situation. We will never be pure as Christ is pure, but we can constantly strive to be more God-like in everyday life. In fact, that is exactly what we pray in The Lord's Prayer when we ask "Thy will be done." But we must remember that we need to help to do God's will when we pray for it. Jiminy is sort of like the little angel that people wear on their shoulder. It is a nice symbol, and it is sometimes very meaningful, but it requires us to act in a certain way to help that angel stay there!



Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, each day You give us many things for which we can be thankful. Each day, You call on us to make some decisions. Do we have time to do them? Do we have the strength to do them? Do we have the resources to do them? Help us to realize that through all these things You will never ask us to do more than what You know we are capable of doing, and then help us to do it to Your glory, today, tomorrow, and always until we see You face to face. Amen.

1. Why do we have a problem standing up for what we believe?
2. Is it o.k. to be the kind of person that others can say "You will always know where he stands"?
3. Christ offended many people during His short time on earth. Why? When and how are we called to be bluntly truthful?
4. What reward do we get for standing up for what we believe is right?
5. What is our "inside world"? Is it right with the Lord?
6. How do we get "right" with our inside world? Where can we find the strength to do it?
7. Have we put Jiminy or God on our shoulder?

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