

## Tending Ancient Paths

### The Paradigms, Posture, and Practices of Jesus

#### What's In Your Wallet?

No doubt we have all heard that question at the close of an advertisement implying that unless you have their credit card in your wallet you are at a distinct disadvantage. Truth be told, it is clearly an overstatement of reality! But in middle eastern history it really did matter what was in your wallet. They did not have a wallet as we do but merchants would carry bags to weigh the goods being sold. A common practice among the more unscrupulous and uncaring merchants was that of carrying weights that were purposefully inaccurate— often using one set of weights to purchase and another to sell - bringing a whole new meaning to the phrase **'what's in your wallet?'**



Yet just days ago, a major retailer in the U.S. settled a class action suit to the tune of 45 million dollars. Over an extended period of time this company was selling produce, apples and such, that did not weigh what customers were paying for - true story.

It was A.W. Tozer who once said *'what comes to mind when we think about God is the most important thing about us'*. What we hold in our mind and heart when we think about God really matters - the mind and heart really are the place we hold the measures of how we understand the things that matter in life. The scripture likens our heart to a fountain that can hold life and death. We really do live from the truths we have stored as 'true' in our heart. So it really does matter that we know **'what's in our wallet?'** is what is actually true and accurate. We live in a world that is constantly inviting us to fully embrace a set of *weights and measures* for both where and what life is about. We must be able to discern.

How does God measure beauty, worth, life, and abundance? Well, if we begin in the beginning -Genesis 1— we see what He provided in the Garden of His creation. A place of beauty, connection, abundance, communion, and partnership. Not just to meet physical needs but to anchor hearts in voluntary love. He called it good! It was when man accepted the invitation to another measure that separation, brokenness, and pain enter their story. The simple, yet repeated, invitation to find life, beauty, connection, abundance, communion, and belonging apart from God was the adversaries plan to disrupt man's relationship with God.

These are not just theological or religious words, they are a part of the fabric of the words we hear daily. Here we are told, even promised at times, that we will discover beauty, life, peace, and joy that is abundant...by getting, gaining, and securing boundary lines by force and power. The winner secures victory not by chance but by effort - by overpowering their opponent - oh how we love a good sporting contest! It touches something deep in our psyche and shouts to our heart - this is true - the weak don't find life, at least not the life of abundance we see in the media ads! Recently, during Holy Week, pictures of a muscular Jesus on a cross literally ripping it into pieces circulated on social media. Beloved, this is a perversion of the gospel - it is a false image of Jesus and the Victory of God. His victory was not secured by force but in weakness. **'What's in your wallet'** really matters, especially if we are using a wrong measure to understand both Jesus and the Victory of God, because this is what will inform us on what it means to walk and operate in the Kingdom of God today.

- *Blessed are the meek and gentle..for they will inherit the earth.*
- *Come to me...for I am meek and gentle of heart, and you will find rest for your souls...*

5907 W Wallen Rd, Fort Wayne, IN 46818

Phone: 260-403-4948 [www.tapfw.com](http://www.tapfw.com) Email: [ben@bouwersfam.com](mailto:ben@bouwersfam.com)

And the secret is simply this: **Christ in you!**

Yes, Christ in you bringing with him the hope of all glorious things to come. Col 1:27b, JB Phillips

Beloved, the measure of God that reveals God is Jesus (Hebrews 1) coming in self giving, self sacrificing love and forgiveness.

Jesus did not just come to rescue man from the tragedy of attempting to find life apart from God but to invite us to a place He proclaimed had arrived called the Kingdom of God. A place of beauty, abundance, connection, communion, and partnership. Yet, one of the biggest challenges He had with His disciples was their knee jerk desire to reach for what was in their wallet which had been filled with worldly ways.

Convinced anything that looked like a Kingdom would be marked by measures of what looked like the kingdoms of the earth - at least those are the measures they understood. And if we are honest, they are not alone. Major retailers are not the only ones who struggle with weights and measures. This is why we need a life of prayer that informs our heart and mind about what is actually good and beautiful. Everyday we are given definitions of a life that is good, beautiful, and satisfied using the wrong measures.

*'Blessed are the rich, the reign of this world is theirs'. And empirically speaking the rich rule our world while so many suffer in misery. Yet Jesus pulls out the real measure to proclaim blessed are the poor- those who have nothing, no power, not prestige, no possessions, no success. They will receive the first and greatest blessing, entrance into Gods reign!' quote from The Beatitudes: Manifesto of Nonviolence- The Beatitudes Center for the Nonviolent Jesus @ beatitudescenter.org*

What we most need is to give ourselves fully to the definition of what Jesus called the good and beautiful life. To live by the measure of Love in all things, by this will all men know you are my disciples. The most powerful weight and measure? *'Just as the Father loved me I have also love you, abide in my love...' What's in your wallet?*

A prayer for the heart today : *'Oh God help us believe your love will carry us on, even when we feel lost'*

### El Salvador Outreach—2024

- Pastor Louis Alvarado and his wife Doris will be in El Salvador April 8-27. We ask that you would join us in covering them in prayer as they go to minister in San Pablo TacaChico,
- The offering sent will help to rebuild homes, pay medical expenses, pay funeral expenses, purchase wheel chairs, provide seed, fertilizer, food, and more. All funds given go to minister to the people in the area of TacaChico.
- We are so very thankful they were able to take \$8800 to help meet the needs of the poor in three different communities as well as little dresses made by hand for some of the children.

To those of you who partnered, thank you. There is now a beautiful group of believers who gather regularly. They are loving Jesus and one another. Good News is Preached to the Poor...this year there are 100 families on our list -almost twice what we did last year.

- Two of these families recently experienced a sudden death of someone in their family. Please pray for this special gathering of friends.



With gratitude and integrity we steward your gifts. Thank you for partnering with the mission the Lord has given us in this hour as we partner with Him for His kingdom to expand.

Please make your **tax deductible** contribution to:

**Tending Ancient Paths (TAP) Fort Wayne**  
**5907 West Wallen Road,**  
**Fort Wayne, IN 46818**

Ben and Denise, Please agree with us over these prayer needs for the next month...

5907 W Wallen Rd, Fort Wayne, IN 46818

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