**SUNDAY LIGHT (09/12/18)**

Watchman Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement

**Topic: CHRISTIAN FRUITFULNESS**

**Text: Matt. 13:1-23**

***MEMORY TRUTH***: “And beside this, all diligence, add to your faith **virtue**; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity” 2Pet. 1:5-7).

To be Christlike in word, thought and deed is the perfect will of God for His people, and it is attainable (Matt. 10:24,25). This is what identifies one in a crowd of spiritually goalless people as a follower of Christ (Acts. 11:21-26). The Lord’s parable of the fruitless fig tree is enough evidence that the proof of being alive in Christ is fruitfulness (Lk. 13:6-9; Matt. 3:7,8), for salvation is not theoretical but experiential and practical. To disregard Christian fruitfulness and argue that we are as fish in water that cannot deny water touching us, is to disregard the word of God and the power of God (Jn. 15:3; Eph. 5:26; Lk. 18:21-27); it is a sacrilegious stand. A Christian is not a sinner and a sinner is not a Christian (1Jn. 3:6-10). To conclude that a congregation is a Christian one because of the sacraments (members have received) without fruits is the same as to think of a hospital as a number of empty buildings with the sign post - “Hospital”. Some parishioners have accused the charismatics as false prophets that are to come toward the end of the world, quoting (Matt. 24:11 & 7:15), but have sadly neglected (Matt. 7:16-18) that determines who is who.

Our Sunday Light message shall come under the following headings:- ***(i) Cost of (Christian) Fruitfulness, (ii) Categories of (Christian) Fruitfulness and (iii) Cause of Unfruitfulness***.

**1. COST OF FRUITFULNESS**

**(a) The Word of God (Matt. 13:3-4):** The imperativeness of sowing the seed (and precious seed for that matter) cannot be over-emphasized (cp. Isa. 58:1; Matt. 3:1,2,17; Act. 1:8; 8:4; 18:9,10; 2Tim. 4:1,2). Sound seed-yam, seed-maize or seed-melon must be sown if germination and fruits are expected, for only those who go forth bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bearing their sheaves with them (Ps. 126:6). Corrupt or diluted word of God will yield no fruits of right-living, victorious praying and insight into the things of God (cp. 2Tim. 2:15-18).

Consider the following adulterated word in the light of the Lord’s word or His apostles’:-

1. Jesus is powerful, but our sin-nature is permanent (cp. Jn. 8:3; 1Tim. 1:15).
2. Jesus has saved us by His death, and resurrection, yet we will remain sinners (cp. 1Jn. 3:3-9).
3. His banner over us is love, notwithstanding what we do (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 1:18; Deut. 4:24; Heb. 12:29).
4. Jesus is the only way to heaven, however, a man is even more readily reached through his mother (cp. Jn. 14:6; Acts. 4:12; Rom. 5:2; 1Tim. 2:5) .
5. Prayer is in the name of Christ, yet there are those who have reached (who are now near God) whom we can ask to plead our case (cp. Jn. 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23; 24:26; 1Tim. 2:5).

**(b) Fertile Heart Soil (Matt. 13:8,23):** As fruitfulness depends on the fertility of the soil, so Christian fruitfulness depends on the fertility of the heart soil (Matt. 13:23; 1Pet. 2:1,2). A hungry, truth-seeking, receptive and baby-like heart soil will surely produce fruits (Matt:5:6).

**2. CATEGORIES OF FRUITFULNESS (MATT. 13:8,23)**

Contrast, in the light of different soil conditions, three orange trees in the compound of Mr. X the one bears fruit thirty-fold, the other bears fruit sixty-fold, but the third bears fruit hundred-fold.

The extent or category of one’s fruitfulness is determined by the extent of hunger, receptivity and baby-likeness of one’s heart soil.

Hence one Christian is holy/prayerful/zealous, the other is holier/more prayerful/more zealous, while the third is much holier/much more prayerful/much more zealous, depending on the conditions of their heart soils in relation to the word of God they hear.

**3. CAUSES OF UNFRUITFULNESS (MATT. 13:4-7,13-15,18-19)**

**(a) Lack of Understanding (Matt. 13:4,19):** As lack of understanding of the message leads to in-action, so does understanding lead to the appropriate action (cp. Matt. 13:19; Acts. 8:29-38; 2Kgs. 4:8-12). It is the responsibility of the sower of the undiluted word to sow with clarity to enhance understanding and the duty of the hearer to listen with rapt attention so as to understand (2Cor. 3:12; Mk. 7:14; Acts. 214; 7:2; 15:13). All hindrances to understanding, such as faulty p.a. systems, use of ambiguous statements and words, or those above the level of the hearer, etc., must then be avoided (2Cor. 3:12).

**(b) Persecution and Tribulation (Matt. 13:20):** Fruitfulness can be destroyed by persecution/tribulation (Matt. 13:20), yet faith in Christ which does not attract persecution/tribulation is presumption (cp. Matt. 10:34-36; Acts. 14:21-22; Heb. 13:12). Those who have not been slandered, hated, misunderstood, ridiculed, insulted, or even assaulted for Christ’s sake are simply sinners who go to church (Jn. 15:18-21). Those who have given-up their faith in/commitments to Christ due to the above are not exonerated because “fore-warned is fore-armed” (Jn. 16:14).

**(c) Care of the World/Deceitfulness of Riches (Matt. 13:22):** Multitudes of unsaved people today owe their unfortunate state to the above. But what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the WHOLE WORLD and LOSE HIS OWN SOUL (Mk. 8:36,37)? Again, “fore-warned is fore-armed” (Jn. 16:1-4).

**(d) Indifference (Matt. 13:10-15):** Part of those in the Lord’s meetings were just on-lookers, carefree, indolent, unbelieving, thoughtless, un-industrious and unenterprising, hearing with the right ear, but letting go through the left, thereby rendering themselves fruitless (Matt. 13:10-15). To such were parables spoken, peradventure they would think out some lesson.