

YEAR 2 (6 of 12) June 2026

5 & 10 – Victorious Christians You Should Know: Catherine Booth

Dear Church Family,

Some victories in the Christian life are won not on public platforms, but through quiet persistence, unwavering conviction, and a willingness to stand firm when others hesitate. The life of Catherine Booth reminds us that faithfulness to Christ often requires courage to challenge both culture and expectation for the sake of the gospel.

Catherine Booth (1829–1890), often called the “Mother of The Salvation Army,” was a woman of deep spiritual conviction and remarkable clarity of thought. Though frequently limited by poor health, her influence was anything but small. From an early age, she demonstrated a serious commitment to Scripture, reading extensively and developing strong theological convictions that would later shape her ministry.

Raised in a Christian home in England, Catherine was deeply affected by the moral and spiritual needs she saw around her. She became convinced that the message of salvation in Christ must be taken not only to the respectable, but also to the overlooked and the forgotten. This conviction would become a defining mark of her life.

One of the most significant aspects of Catherine’s ministry was her defense of women in preaching and leadership. At a time when many believed that women should remain silent in public ministry, she carefully studied the Scriptures and wrote persuasively that God calls and equips both men and women to proclaim the gospel. Her writings and example helped open doors for women to serve more fully in Christian ministry.

Though she initially preferred to remain behind the scenes, supporting her husband, William Booth, Catherine eventually stepped forward to preach publicly. One early occasion came when a meeting needed a speaker and hesitation filled the room. Though naturally reserved and physically frail, she sensed the Lord’s prompting and rose to speak. That step of obedience marked a turning point—not only for her own ministry, but for many who would later be strengthened by her example. When she did preach, her words carried both conviction and compassion. She spoke clearly about sin, grace, and the need for repentance, while also urging believers to demonstrate Christ’s love in practical ways.

A defining feature of her life was her concern for the poor. Catherine believed that the gospel must be both preached and lived. She encouraged efforts to meet physical needs alongside spiritual ones, helping to shape the mission of The Salvation Army as a movement committed to both evangelism and compassionate service. It is said that she would often plead earnestly for the needs of the suffering, urging others not to look away but to respond with Christlike

compassion.

Her strength was especially evident during seasons of suffering. Despite ongoing illness, she continued to write, speak, and encourage others. Even when confined by physical weakness, her resolve remained steady. She understood that faithfulness is not measured by ease or visibility, but by obedience to Christ.

One passage that reflects Catherine's life is: "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute." (Proverbs 31:8). She lived this out not only through her advocacy for the poor, but also in her willingness to speak truth where it was needed, even when it was unpopular.

Another Scripture that shaped her perspective was: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation." (Mark 16:15) For Catherine, this command was not selective. It applied to every believer and extended to every corner of society. She believed the church must not withdraw from the world's brokenness, but engage it with the hope of Christ.

Her legacy continues today through the ongoing work of The Salvation Army and through the countless lives influenced by her writings and example. Yet her true victory was not in what she built, but in how faithfully she followed Christ.

Catherine Booth's life reminds us that Christian victory is found in steadfast obedience, in courage to stand on biblical truth, and in a heart that seeks both the spiritual and physical good of others.

Most of us will not face the same challenges she did, but we are called to the same faithfulness – to use our gifts, to stand firm in conviction, and to serve others with the love of Christ.

"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 15:58)
Catherine Booth lived this out with quiet strength and enduring faith.

May her example encourage us to stand firm in truth, to serve with compassion, and to follow Christ with wholehearted devotion.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Chris