

HEART CRY *of* GOD



D.JASON

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First Edition : January 2017

No. of Copies : 5000

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Printers :

Babuji Printers

5, Kurban Ali Street,

Woods Road, Mount Road,

Chennai - 600 002

*Dedicated to all the
Missionaries
of
Blessing Youth Mission*

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Introduction

‘A man after My own heart’ – This is what God said about David. Though David was a king, his heart was always after God. David longed for Him. He desired for God. He wanted to be with God always. He said in one of his Psalms that one day in God’s temple would be better than thousand elsewhere (Ps 84:10).

People followed the Lord Jesus Christ expecting to be healed. Some followed to find fault with Him, while others wanted food (Jn 6:26). But there were only a handful who were fully committed to him. They did not expect anything in return. Though Jesus was filled with compassion when he saw the multitudes, He chose twelve men and designated them as Apostles. Their basic calling was ‘to be with Him’ (Mk 3:14). What a wonderful experience to be with Him! Even today God wants men and women who would be with Him.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, people sang songs and praised Him. But the singing crowds soon vanished; the people who received His blessings did not stand with Him in His darkest hour; the apostles whom he chose ran away and finally His inner circle of failed Him when He needed them the most. In Gethsamane he was alone. ***The Saviour stood alone.*** Even now he stands alone. He looks for men and women with whom He can share His burden and who would stand with Him.

Many claim to be the followers of Jesus Christ, but with varied expectations. There are several millions who like to enjoy His blessings today. They want to be healed, receive blessings and make sure that their children are blessed and well-settled. This is not wrong in itself. But we should love Him with all our heart and mind. His Kingdom should be our priority. There is always a price to be paid for anyone who desires a closer walk with Him. We need to say good bye to the world and its toys. We need to bid farewell to our near and dear ones. When all our wills and desires are brought to the Cross, we would start hearing the Heart Beat of God. As you stay close to His bosom like apostle John, you would definitely start hearing His Heart Cry.

The writings in this book are a direct result of a burdened heart. If you are sensitive enough, you will hear the heart cry of God.

Read with Prayer! Read with Tears!

Prologue

The Kiss of Judas

*"He (Judas) came up to Jesus at once and said,
"Greetings, Rabbi!" And he kissed Him." - Mathew 26:49*

He was with Jesus for three and a half years.
He listened to Jesus' teachings.

He travelled with Him. He witnessed all the miracles.
He ate with Him and slept with Him.

And yet, he confided with the enemies of Jesus Christ.

For him, 30 pieces of silver were worth
more than the Son of Man.

For him, Jesus' teachings were impractical.
He did not fit into his version of Messiah.

Rather than deserting his Master,
He made a business out of Him.

He negotiated with the people
who sought the life of Jesus.

The deal was done and the plan was hatched.

His heart was hard like a flint even when Jesus
stooped down and washed his feet.

Beholding Jesus in the form of a slave
did not bother him.

Jesus' warning regarding his betrayal fell on deaf ears.

And finally, he decided that he would betray
the Son of glory with a kiss!

A kiss! Yes, with a kiss he betrayed the
Rose of Sharon!

He could have slapped Jesus' face
like the Roman soldiers.

He could have spit on Jesus' face
and that would have been better!

To betray the Son of Man with a kiss!
Kiss! A symbol of love and affection!

Yes! The Saviour deserved the love;
but this kiss was of a different kind.

The kiss of Judas would have been
more painful than the thorns and the nails.

"Lord, I love you, I love you!" – we say a million times;

"Lord, I serve you, I serve you!" – we sing,

But our hearts are far away from Him,
Still too far from His Heart.

We are preoccupied with our own world;
our life, our family and our future.

Not bothering about what the Lord wants;

Not committing our lives into His hands;

Not knowing that we too have been kissing Jesus with
the kisses of Judas Iscariot!

Where is the passion for His Glory?

Where is the priority for His Kingdom?

Where is the prominence for His Will?

Jesus took the form of a slave,
but is He still a slave in our lives?

Chapter I

The Second Touch

The Cry of Revival!

*“I will put my Spirit within you,
and you shall live.”*

Ezekiel 37:14

We need another Revival, said revivalist Leonard Ravenhill. Believe it or not, our spiritual life is on the decay. We Christians are like patients admitted in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). The pulse-rate is going down. If not revived, then the patient may die. We no more resist sin and devil. We have learned to live alongside sin. We have tolerated evil in our Churches and congregations. We have believed in the lies of the enemy, “Everyone is like that,” “Everybody does it” and “Everywhere it is the same.”

There is still another group of Christians who believe that the Revival has already come. But we need a clear understanding of revival before we can long for it. Mere excitation and exuberance do not amount to revival.

The Bible is clear in its purpose of Revival:

Acts 1:8 – “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

I believe in the Holy Spirit revival. But there is a lot of misconception today. We have received the power of Pentecost but have not understood its purpose. It is like receiving electricity into our house and not knowing how to use it. Have you ever shared the love of God with someone? - with your friends, or relatives or in the neighbourhood? If not, you have received the grace of God in vain. You have not experienced true revival.

Let us turn our attention to Ezekiel 37th chapter.

Note what God tells Prophet Ezekiel -

Ezekiel 37: 4,7,8 - "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them."

Ezekiel was God's prophet and God took him to the valley of dry bones. The bones were very dry and the possibility of life seemed distant. ***As the prophet prophesied, there was a sound. I believe this is the starting point of revival.*** This is not the end. Bones came together. There was a move of the Spirit but there was no breath in them.

Too often, we mistake this sound as revival. We sing songs louder and think that revival has come. We dance and clap and think that revival has come. We shout, "Hallelujah!" and say revival has come. We see the number of people who attend our meetings and say revival has come. We see the size of our buildings and say revival has come. Indeed, it has come. All the above said things are the work of the Holy Spirit. But! I say it

again- It is only the starting point of revival. The bones came together; the sinews and flesh came upon them. But it was only a dead body. If you are satisfied with the sounds, you should never forget that you are still dead. There is no life in you. Bones are no different from the dead bodies. Both are useless. In fact the sight of the dead bodies would have been more terrifying than that of the bones.

In the past century, God poured out His Spirit mightily all over the world, but we all misunderstood the rattling sound as the revival fire.(There was the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and many missionary organisations came into being).

Prophet Ezekiel experienced a true revival. On seeing the bones coming together and hearing the sound, he did not get back to his office and start writing a report about the wondrous work that the Lord has accomplished. He knew it was only a beginning! **Revivals need no advertisements!** And as a prophet he was basically called to do what God told him to do! Oh! How we need prophets like Ezekiel today who would not care about the results! Who would not bother about the statistics! Who would not worry about publicity and popularity! **He simply obeyed God!**

As prophet Ezekiel was standing in the midst of the dead bodies, God's word came to him again.

Have you experienced the initial move of God in your life and now feel that you are standing among dead bodies? Is your ministry heading nowhere? Have you hit a road block? Are you dissatisfied with your current spiritual condition? Are you longing for something deeper?

You need the second touch of the Holy Spirit!

Let me include myself! We all need Another Revival! We all need Another Pentecost!

Ezekiel 37:9-10 – “Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.” So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.”

When Ezekiel prophesied the second time, breath came into them. They stood upon their feet as a great army.

This is the purpose of Pentecost. To stand as an army; to fight the Lord's battles; to penetrate darkness; to win souls; to preach the Gospel; to shine for Him; to be a witness; to go forth and to die victoriously.

Apostle Paul called Timothy, as a soldier in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 2:3 – “Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

A soldier is basically called to fight. He doesn't worry about the wounds that he may receive. We are called to be soldiers. We as children of God should grow into maturity to be soldiers for Him.

Colossians 2:6-7 - “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

This is the purpose of revival.

An army raised for God!

Chapter 2

War Cry!

The Cry For Christian Leadership

“Who is the man who will begin to fight?”

Judges 10:17

Who is the man who will begin
to fight against God’s enemies?

Who is the woman who will begin
to fight against God’s enemies?

You, who are called and anointed by God,
how can you keep silent?

Excuses are not for those who are called to lead;
wounds and hurts are marks of a warrior.

Never say that you are not accepted by people,
God has called you.

Never say that you are young,
God is the source of wisdom.

Never say that you are weak,
His Grace is sufficient.

Never say that you are old,
God will strengthen you.

Go in the strength that you have,
God is with you.

Don't wait for favourable circumstances,
You are called to change it!
Don't look for company,
the righteous are bold as a lion.
Don't say that this message is for someone else,
Don't point to someone else.
No! It is for you.
You cannot keep silent; You cannot remain static.

We are at War! Blow the trumpet! Gather the troops! Let the war begin! Too long have we tarried; too long have we been harassed; too long the enemy has roared; too long have we suffered. Enough! Arise from the ash heaps! Arise Joshua! Arise! Purge out the sin that Israel have committed! Arise Deborah ! Arise! Barak is still trembling with fear and he needs your encouraging prophecies!

We are at War! Small wounds and hurts cannot hold us back! As soldiers of God, let us march ahead courageously not heeding the wounds. ***And let us fight our enemy, the only enemy- the devil, the old serpent, the schemer, the divider, the accuser, the tempter, the discourager, the blinder.*** Let us fight until victory is won. Let us not fall back for we have heard the war cry. The Lord himself is fighting on our behalf. Though the enemy might look mighty and strong, we have the ALMIGHTY GOD on our side. Surely Victory shall be ours!

We are at War! This is not the time to seek great things for ourselves. This is not the time to seek recognitions, posts and positions. This is not the time to receive appreciation! Only Heaven matters! Only Eternity counts! Neither is this the time to hoard wealth and become rich. The worship of Baal is rampant. False gods have given false promises to secure false blessings. We, who have the TRUTH should preach it, write it, and proclaim it.

We are at War! This is not the time to sleep or slumber. This is not the time to seek refreshments and entertainments. This is the time to seek the Lord. Wait at His feet and cry for more power, more grace, more wisdom and more love. This is not the time to give ourselves to petty pleasures of the world. This is the time of War! There is much to conquer! More victories to be won!

We are at War! The front-line soldiers need supplies. The enemy has targeted the supply lines. He has demolished the bridges over which the supply vehicles were crossing. The supply vehicles are stranded. The bridges need to be rebuilt. Waste no time! Mend the relationships! Heal the wounds! Forget the past hurts! Initiate the healing process! There is balm in Gilead and you are that physician!

We are at War! The enemy has desecrated the Most Holy Place. All the walls have been broken. God's people live in disgrace and in bondage. Arise! Nehemiah! Come from the king's palace. The elders and the people of Israel are waiting for your leadership! The Church needs your service. Her institutions are in danger. The foundations are shaken. The King of kings needs you Nehemiah, Deborah! Are you hearing His cry?

Take The First Step

The difference between a leader and a follower is that, the leader takes the first step. The first step is crucial. It is strategic. It is directional. It changes the course of history. And yet, there are only few who take this first step. This first step requires an act of boldness and courage. There would be no precedent. There would be no example to follow. We only will need Divine Direction, Courage and Timing. Yes! The Church is in need of such leaders and you are one among them.

Those Excused From Going

*Those who believe that the world is not lost and
does not need a Saviour.*

*Those who believe that Jesus Christ made a mistake when
He said, "Go into all the world, and preach Gospel to every
creature."*

*Those who believe that the Gospel is not the power of God,
and cannot save the heathen.*

*Those who wish that missionaries had never come to our
ancestors, and that we ourselves were still heathen.*

*Those who believe that it is "every man for
himself" in this world, and who, with Cain ask,
"Am I my brother's keeper?"*

Those who want no share in the final victory of Christ.

*Those who believe they are not accountable to God for the
money entrusted to them.*

*Those who are prepared to accept the final sentence:
"Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the
least of these, you did not do it to Me."*

- Horace Bushnell

Chapter 3

The Heavenly Call

The Cry for the Harvest

*“Whom shall I send, and
who will go for us?”*

Isaiah 6:8

The 20th century is rightly considered as the century of the Holy Spirit. In this century the Holy Spirit started to move in a strange way restoring the Church. There was a renewed interest in the indigenous missionary work and many such organizations came into being, of which Blessing Youth Mission is one. God used many individuals in a mighty way to accomplish His purpose.

In God’s perspective a thousand years are like a day and a day is like a thousand years. Now we are in the 21st century. I believe, in this century, God is raising every Christian and every believer to be a missionary and to operate with the apostolic authority. Theologian Philip Schaff, when writing about the First Century of Christianity says,

*“Christianity once established was its own best missionary. It grew naturally from within. It was a light shining in the darkness and illuminating the darkness. **Every congregation was a missionary society. Every Christian believer, a missionary, inflamed by the love of Christ.**”*

In the light of this, it is necessary to have a clear idea of this call and of the cost that has to be paid, if we want to be a part in God's Kingdom business. This is a high calling, and so is the cost. Though many are called only few are chosen. Only those who are willing to pay the price will be counted worthy of the Saviour.

The High Calling of a Missionary

The word 'Missionary' is not found in the Bible. It is the Latin equivalent of the Greek word, '*Apostolos*' which is found in the Bible. The word means "the direct representative of the one who sends him." **Hence a missionary is basically an Apostle.** Though a missionary may have sponsors and supporting groups, he is basically called and sent by God. Missionary work is apostolic work.

Note what the Bible tells about the Apostles:

1 Cor 12:28 *"And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues."*

Eph 2:20 *"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone"*

In the above verses we find that the apostolic ministry is the basic and foundational ministry of the Church. Apostolic ministry is nothing but the ministry of aggressive missionary evangelism. It is the ministry of authority and glory. Most of us have tender feelings towards missionaries. There is nothing wrong with that, but we should never forget that they are ambassadors and representatives of God. They will be more accepted

and glorified in their own country i.e., Heaven. Amy Carmichael, missionary to South India, wisely said, *"Never pity missionaries, envy them."*

The Great Commission

Matt 28:18-20 "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The Great Commission is great because,

It was commissioned by our Lord God Jesus Christ.

It is a Heavenly calling; it concerns Eternal Life.

Sadly, most of us seldom give a thought to the Great Commission. Or, if we ponder it from time to time, we shy away because of our carelessness and ignorance.

The Holy Spirit is the initiator of Mission work. He calls and appoints men and women in the Church. He calls and sends them to the places where there is darkness. If we are not concerned about missionary work, then in all probability we are in a backslidden state. We may boast about the Church choir and the Church programmes, but if there is no missionary fervour, we are probably on the death trail. The Church must send or the church will end.

I want to give seven reasons why we don't obey the Great commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1) Because We Value Earthly Relationships More Than The Cross

Matt 10:37-38 - *"Whoever loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me."*

In order to be worthy of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Cross, we need to be careful about the unreasonable bondage of our friends and families. Certainly, we need to love our parents. We need to love our relatives and friends, but if anyone comes between us and God, then that relationship is wrong. That's was what Jesus meant when He told to His disciples, "**He is not worthy of me.**" Note the piercing power of these words. We can be believers in this world but to be a disciple of Jesus is altogether another matter.

Jesus commissioned us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. The main thrust in the Great Commission is '*Going.*' There is no obedience without '*Going.*' There is no discipleship without '*Going.*' And there is no Gospel without '*Going.*' When we decide to go, we may need to leave something. There is no going without leaving. Too many Christians are unwilling to pay the price when it comes to leaving.

Note the following verses:

Mark 10:29-30 - *"Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has **left** house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life."*

Notice the word, **left** in the above verse. To be a missionary, we may have to leave our loved ones; we may have to leave our parents; we may have to leave our native country; we may have to leave our children. Yes, in order to "Go" we have to leave. A young man may be hindered by his girlfriend ; a young woman may be stopped by her brothers; children may be held by parents and parents are discouraged by children. This list goes on and on.

Have you ever been stopped by somebody? Or have you ever hindered anybody? Get ready to meet the Saviour at the Judgement seat. Have you never pondered Calvary's love? God sent His only Son to die for us. And yet, we fail to go just because that might displease somebody. Let us walk worthy of our calling.

We need to ask ourselves this question: *"What have I lost for Christ?"* – If you have a list of things that you have given up, Praise God! Great will be your reward in Heaven. If you have not lost anything for Christ, then ponder, decide and act.

2)Because of our Spiritual Ignorance

Rev 3:17-18 - *"For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked."*

See what the Holy Spirit says to the Laodicean Church. The Church said they were rich and blessed and they needed nothing. But God said that they were poor, pitiable and naked. What an irony! We boast about our ancestors; brag about our material blessings not realizing that in God's sight we are poor and should be pitied. We want to give for missionary work but would never think of becoming a missionary. We preach about Missions but would not send our children as missionaries. What a hypocrisy! We think too much of ourselves. We do a little and brag about that little to everyone. We minister for our own satisfaction. We talk of victory but we have never entered the battle. We talk about missionary work but are not willing to do it. **Our spiritual pride has made us spiritually blind.**

Some people say that there is no need for missionaries; all the work can be done by local, native workers. I wonder how this kind of capitalistic mindset

entered into our work for the Lord. *"We pay; you work"* is the slogan of capitalism.

Even in mission circles, people want to become funding machines.

We want results without paying the price.

We want to obey the Great Commission without Going.

What a shame that we are rewriting the truth for our own sake! Of course, we need to give for missions, but that should not be a substitute for our personal call and commitment. This is what God expects from each and every one of us.

I want to give the examples of two countries which once were missionary sending nations but now desperately in need of missionaries.

- 1) At one time, England was the largest sender of missionaries all over the globe. Then came a time when the Church emphasized more on missionary giving than sending. The sending Church lost the missionary zeal and now most of the Churches are becoming empty.
- 2) Another example is the nation of Denmark. Whether it is Ziegenbalg, the first protestant missionary to India or William Carey who came to Bengal, it was the Danish Government which gave strong support for the missionary work. And now we have gay priests and bishops in the Church of Denmark. Can you imagine such a thing in India? Yes, we are already in the same track. If something drastic doesn't happen, if something is not done, if there is no revival, then the Church in India is going to die. I am not being pessimistic but only stating the fact. The Church is suffering as if it has cancer and only a few people are doing anything about it.

3)Because of Our Materialistic Mindset

Matt 6:19-21- *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Materialism is a virus that affects nearly everyone. Most people want to be rich and comfortable. Materialism considers luxury as essential. Many people stay at home and hoard wealth. They want to have the latest trend and buy anything which is new in the market. Many people spend and over spend. Some people get loans and spend more and more. Slavery is back! We are slaves to materialism. This was the problem with the young man who came to Jesus Christ. Let us not forget what Jesus told him:

Matt 19:21- *“If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”*

I think this is the starting point of a life of faith. How many of us are ready to sell all that we have and count this world as nothing? C.T. Studd, the famous Cricketer who became a missionary, did that when he inherited a fortune. He gave away every penny and went as a missionary to China, India and Africa.

This is the Christianity I am talking about. This is the Christianity that the Bible talks about. This is the New Testament Christianity. 2000 years of Christianity in India has produced only 2% of Christians, most of whom are infants. Children always cry and always want something. They always need someone to guide them. They would give away gold and silver for a one rupee

chocolate. They can never be satisfied. This is the sad state today. The enemy, Satan, tries to keep believers in bondage. And materialism is one weapon that he uses.

There must be at least one missionary from your family, fellowship, congregation or Church. I am not talking of missionary sponsorship but of SENDING missionaries. Beware of Christianity which does not value the Cross. A “Cross-less” Christianity is not Christianity at all. There are still others who think that God will bless them if they give money to God. They are trying to “bribe God!”. Beware of such kind of idolatry.

4)Because We No Longer Believe In Hell

Matt 10:28 - *“Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.”*

Many people have come to a point in their spiritual lives where they no longer believe in hell.

Consider this:

If hell is real, we would do everything possible to win souls;

If hell is real, we would cry out to God for the salvation of our relatives;

If hell is real, we would cry for our colleagues, friends and neighbours;

If hell is real we would cry for our schools, institutions and missions;

If hell is real, we would cry for our cities, villages and nation.

Approximately one person dies every second in India. By the time you finish reading this chapter, nearly 500 people in India would have gone to hell. When was

the last time you cried for the perishing souls? One sixth of the world's population is in India. Yet, our country remains the most non - evangelized region in the World. We have the most language groups without the Bible; The IMA(India Missions Association) has identified 154 people groups that need Bibles in their native language. We have 205 people groups still without a Church. Of the 639 total unreached people groups in the world, 485 are in India (1/3rd). We still have districts without Churches and villages without a witness. The Hindi heart-land of the Ganges plains (the central and northern regions of India) with the population of 38 Crores have fewer than 1% Christian witness. Students number over 1.1 crore in 320 universities and we hear reports of suicides every day. Even then, our country is still open to the Gospel. Though the challenge is high, we have an opportunity to serve God. *Missionary life is simply a chance to die for Him.*

In Chennai, we can visit the grave of St. Thomas, one of the disciples of Jesus. He was speared to death. We have the cemeteries of the missionaries who died for our country.

Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, a young German missionary, died young but gave us the Tamil Bible.

The scholarly Cambridge University graduate T. G. Ragland lived in poverty. in Sivakasi, a town in South India. He was beaten and humiliated. Yet he led more than 1000 people to Christ.

William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward, known as the Serampore trio, died with their wives and children in India.

All the Churches in India are built on the graves of the early missionaries. Their tears, sweat and blood

still speak today. We are blessed now because they were willing to pay the price; they were willing to die; they were willing to count the cost. Their unrealized vision of India cries still. Are you listening? How are we going to face them in Heaven? Are you ready to follow their footsteps? Are you willing to pay the price?

5)Because We Consider The Matter For Too Long

Judg 5:15 - *“Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.”*

Deborah was a prophetess called by God to lead Israel in its worst times. The people of Israel were oppressed by the enemy. Deborah called for war. She needed men of war. She needed men of valour. She needed men of courage. She needed men of boldness. She needed men who would pay the price. She needed men who would die fighting. She needed men who would rewrite history.

Now, once again, the trumpet has sounded. We need to respond to the call. It is the hour of decision. It is not the hour of considering pros and cons. But strangely, the tribe of Reuben were considering, thinking, pondering too much and they lost the opportunity to serve God and share in the victory. Of course, thinking is good and necessary, but too much of contemplation may spoil God's plan for your life. If God has called you, simply obey. If God is burdening you as you are reading this article, you simply need to obey. No questions; No doubts; No hesitations. The One who calls is awesome. He is mighty in War. The battle is His. You only need to obey. You only need to stand and see the victory.

Whatever you can give to God, give it. If you are a teacher, there are vacancies in the mission schools. If you are a doctor, there are vacancies in mission hospitals. If

you are available, God will take you and use you. You can even consider moving as a tent-making missionary. Apply for transfer and move to needy places. Minister to the dying masses. Be a beacon of hope to the younger generation. There is no time to think and ponder. Take the first step and leave the rest to God. Decide now!

6)Because of Our Weaknesses

Josh 14:10-12 - *"..now, behold, I am this day eighty-five years old. I am still as strong today as I was in the day that Moses sent me; my strength now is as my strength was then, for war and for going and coming. So now give me this hill country.."*

We find the faith and courage of Caleb in the above verse. He was a bold man and made a bold request. He asked for a hill country, not just the plains. He asked for a hard thing in a difficult time. Caleb was 85 years "young." Your age and weaknesses matter nothing to God. You may be old or may be young. The Bible tells us that even the youth will stumble and fall (Isa 40:30) but people who wait on God will renew their strength like eagles. Even if you are old, ask God to reveal His plan for you. Is there anything God wants you to do? Be open to God's leading. Don't write yourself off and wait for the chariots of fire to take you to Heaven.

Remember the story of C.T Studd mentioned already. God burdened him about the needs in Africa after his retirement. Penniless and rejected by his Mission Board because of health reasons, he simply obeyed God. He ventured into the jungles of Africa and formed the Heart of Africa Mission (HAM).

Nothing is impossible for God. Your weakness is an opportunity for God's name to be glorified. Your sickness is an opportunity for God's power to be manifested (1 Cor 1:2,27).

Your weaknesses aren't the important thing;

Your age counts not;

Your present financial position doesn't matter.

God's grace is sufficient; His power is awesome and His Word is true. To the young doubting Jeremiah, God said that He would be with him. To the hesitations of the 80-year old Moses, God replied that He would be his mouth. To fearful Gideon, God asked him to go forward with the strength that he had.

So dear reader, what are you waiting for? God has already told you what you must do. Don't hesitate. Don't wait. Do it! May His Name be glorified.

7) Because We Don't Consider The Eternal Rewards

Dan 12:3 - *"Those who turn many to righteousness,...shall shine like the stars forever and ever"*

John 14:2 - *"I go to prepare a place for you"*

2 Tim 4:7-8 - *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness"*

No eye has ever seen what God has prepared for those who have considered this world as nothing. The Bible tells us that those who turn many to righteousness will shine like stars. God is preparing a place for us. The future glory cannot be compared with anything in this world. Our momentary troubles will fly away. We will be rewarded justly. Heaven will be a place of many surprises. Many who are first here will be last there. Men of prominence, wealth, influence and power will take a back seat. People who gave themselves up for the will of God will take the front seat. Eternity is more than 100 years; more than 1000 years; and more than 1 billion

years. The time we spend on earth is only a tiny drop of water in a titanic ocean. But what we do here will reflect in eternity. It is not the length of life that matters but its depth. It is not what you get in life but what you give that counts. There is only one life to live. Why would you live for the world, when all that the world can give is pain and discouragement? Why would you live for people when they are like swaying reeds?

God sent His only Son as a missionary for you and me. He came for us. He died for us. He gave everything for us. What can we give Him in return? Will anything less than a fully surrendered life be acceptable for Him? If God gives us a chance to die for Him, is it not the greatest privilege, a mortal man can have?

On 23 January 1999, Australian missionary, Graham Staines, with his two sons, Philip (10) and Timothy (6) were sleeping in their station wagon. Suddenly, a mob attacked and set the vehicle on fire, preventing even the children from escaping. All the three of them were burnt to death.

In the context of Church history, this incident will be a turning point in the end time revival that is yet to come. The spark has been lit. The fire has started to spread. The fire that burnt the Staines is still burning. It will never die out. It is the fire of evangelism. It is the fire of the missionary movement. It is the fire of apostolic anointing. All the apostles in the first century except John were martyred. ***Being a martyr in apostolic ministry is a norm. We are just entering into the age of martyrdom.*** The Holy Spirit is raising up people who are willing to give everything for Him, even their dear lives.

Are you the one whom God is speaking to? Will you count everything as dross and follow him? Will you

give your life as an offering on the altar to be burnt for Him? God is counting on you. Do not disappoint Him. Pray right now. Commit your life into God's hands. God will take care of the rest.

Mathew 16:25 - *"For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."*

Chapter 4

The Quest For Meaning

The Cry of A Wise Man

*“Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher,
vanity of vanities! All is vanity.”*

Ecclesiastes 1:1

The above statement was made by one of the famous king who lived on the face of the earth. He was the wisest, richest and greatest king. He was king Solomon. I always wonder how a great king like Solomon could utter such a thing. The Bible records that he wrote more than 3000 proverbs. He studied plant life and animal life and also wrote 1005 songs(1 Kings 4:32).

What can we say of Solomon? - Scientist, philosopher, king and musician. Never had history seen a man endowed with such a diversity of wisdom. In fact he had Ph.D. in Botany, Zoology, Philosophy and Arts(1 Kings 4:33). The Bible also mentions about his riches(1Kings 10:21). It is said that silver was considered very cheap in Solomon’s days. His everyday dining had ten oxen and hundred sheep and a lot of other stuff. He undertook great projects and built a magnificent temple and a palace for his wife(Ecc 2:4). His throne was majestic. He also married 700 princesses. They were not women of ordinary class but were princesses of kingdoms (1 Kings11:3).

Alexander the Great conquered the world with the sword but Solomon conquered it through tact and wisdom. He had the world to the full. He must have been a happy and successful man!

Solomon himself admits, *“And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure”* (Ecc 2:10).

But he called everything as vanity and meaningless? What made Solomon to utter those mournful words?

He himself answers all these questions in the beautiful book, Ecclesiastes which is found in the Bible. This book is given for mankind to find for themselves what the world can offer them.

These are timeless truths for every generation which struggles for meaning in life.

Why Solomon Found Life To Be Meaningless?

1) Life Was Boring

As Solomon enjoyed the pleasures that the world gave him, he started to wonder whether anything would be new. The repetition of things was very much boring to Solomon. The same Sun, the same Moon and the same things. Though Solomon built many new buildings, he felt that it did not have any meaning. Eventually it will all belong to another person after his death. And there will still be more new things and the new things will become old. There is nothing new, he wondered.

Excitement is a gift of life. A small child is excited about colours and shining objects. A small boy is excited about playing video games and watching cartoons. A young boy is excited about his new college and the girl who just smiled at him. An adult man is excited about

his marriage and holding the newborn baby in his hands. These are all stages in life. But as life moves on and as the aging process sets in, the initial excitement dies out. There is nothing one can explore in the old age. One generation comes and one goes. The sun rises and sets. The wind blows and vanishes. The streams flow and vaporize. These cycles of events were very vexing to Solomon as he was contemplating about the meaning of life.

The famed poet and dramatist William Shakespeare brings out this fact in a profound way in his poem, *"All the World's a Stage."* He writes that the world is the stage and people are actors. We all play our part and vanish. We put on a makeup and show off. We want people to applaud us. We crave for acceptance and recognition. And he goes on to talk about various stages in a person's life- Childhood, Boyhood, Adolescence, Soldier and finally, he writes, **THE SECOND CHILDHOOD!** He considered the old age to be second childhood. It was when the aged always needed someone to help them. The childhood comes back. Yes! Life returns to where it began. What a bored life! Solomon felt bored and could not stop but wonder, *"Is that all is life?"*



2) There Was No Net Gain

Solomon gained wisdom, riches, greatness and beautiful women. But he felt that nothing was permanent. He saw that everything was a chase after the wind. We can chase wind but it is out of our grasp - so, why chase? He laments that there is more sorrow in more knowledge. So why go for more knowledge? He wondered if anything was lasting in this world. 'Go

to the funeral service,' Solomon says to the living, 'and gain wisdom.' Don't go to the party and family functions. There you will find everything to be ok and lasting, but that is not the reality. But in the funeral service you will think of your own end. You will gain wisdom.

Solomon found that greatness will soon be forgotten. The glory of man will fade and even the noblest acts will be questioned by the next generations. So what is the use in becoming 'Great'. The wealth that a man gains will be handed over to someone else. We are born alone in this world and will go alone from this world. Nothing will be ours. People might cry over us and mourn over us for a few days and we will be forgotten. *All these realities annoyed King Solomon.*

As he contemplated about the greatness and influence, he felt that the achievement of man was mostly based on envy. One man succeeds at the cost of others. The success of one man is the failure of another. The joy of one person resulted in the sadness of another. The profit of one business leads to the loss of another. ***All the days of his life, man strives to become 'Somebody' and in the end he finds that, in becoming 'Somebody' he finally becomes a 'Nobody.'***

This truth will become more evident when we study about what the Psychologists call as, 'Post-Olympic Depression' a phenomenon for the gold winners in Olympic games. They had worked very hard to achieve this feat and once they reach that peak there are no more peaks to climb.

Shane Gould, who won gold in 1972 Olympic games tells us about her experience,

"It was like being taken up to the highest mountain peak to see the view, and then being brought down, never to be there again."

This was the experience of Alexander the Great. It was said of him that he cried over that there were no more worlds to conquer. So the wise king lamented, 'Meaningless! Meaningless! Everything is Meaningless!



But Solomon did not know the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, *"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?"* (Mar 8:36).

There is no net gain without the Lord Jesus Christ. Life is totally meaningless and absurd without a loving relationship with the Saviour who gave His everything for us. We can have all the world but if we don't have Christ it would be a waste; we can earn several Ph.Ds but if we do not know Christ, we would be an educated idiot. We might have a good reputation in the society, but if we do not believe in Christ as the Saviour, then we are sinners, no matter how good we are. ***We may be a ruler in this world, but without Christ we will be paupers in eternity.***

You may belong to any caste, creed, religion or nationality but remember YOU NEED JESUS CHRIST. I am not writing about any religion, but a person, the God-person known as Jesus Christ.

3) There Was No Justice

Solomon had a great sense of justice. He very much wanted to judge the people of Israel with a clear conscience. But as he saw life, he could not understand certain aspects of life. Firstly, he could not understand why God allowed suffering in this world. His faith in God

was unshakeable. Yet, he wanted answers from God and found none. He knew that God was the God of Justice and Truth. But why does He permit evil to stay below the Sun. Why poor people are always put at jeopardy? Why bad things happen to good people? His sense of justice demanded that only good things should happen to good people and bad things should happen to bad people. But he was perplexed about the bad things happening to good people. These and many more questions raged through the mind of King Solomon.

He also wondered about wealth. A man works hard and earns money. But when the money increases, people who enjoy them increase as well. The hard earned money was not necessarily used for his enjoyment.

Man works hard to earn money. He comes late to home. He is stressed out. He develops diseases and finally dies before his time. And all the wealth that was stored will be given to someone. Solomon wondered about this reality.

Even today many people ask the same questions asked by the great and wise king Solomon. He did not know that one greater than him would come one day and redefine life. He did not know Jesus Christ and what happened to Him. ***The greatest injustice done on the face of the earth was the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.*** It was greatest injustice and it was allowed by God. What a great comfort we now have when we are faced with perplexing situations! Jesus Christ is our role model. He took up the path of the cross. He made the symbol of curse into a symbol of blessing. He endured injustice for a greater good - to save mankind from the penalty of sin. The Cross of Christ is sufficient to answer the questions pertaining to human suffering. ***There are no answers apart from Jesus Christ. It is to HIM we must turn. It***

is HIM, that we must seek. Only Christ Jesus. He may not give us all the answers for our questions, but HE IS THE ANSWER. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

4) There Was No Satisfaction In life

Solomon found that there was no satisfaction in the pleasures that he indulged in. He did not stop anything that his eyes desired. Yet he found that nothing could satisfy him. The more he indulged, the more he felt the need. ***He was going from one pleasure to another only to be left emptied more.*** This he found to be more miserable. He thought women would satisfy his deepest needs and therefore married several women. But found that the desire in him did not die out.

In order to meet the insurmountable and insatiable desires of men, the world today offers plenty of choices from low booze to high booze so that one can move from a lower dissatisfied level to higher dissatisfied level. This is a never ending phenomenon. Remember what Jesus told, *'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again(John 4:14).'*

Jesus uttered these words when he was conversing with the Samaritan woman. She had lived with five men and found life to be more wanting. This is the case with the entire world's offer of entertainment.

How was your feeling before going for a picnic and after; before going for a movie and after; before you sinned and after?

Were you satisfied?

We feel the excitement before the act and we are exhausted after. Entering with excitement and the exiting with enervation. Is this what you wanted? Think!

This is the world's gift to us - *More thirst and more hunger.*

The deep hunger in our hearts can be met only by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Look at what He tells, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

It is for this Divine relationship, God sent His one and only Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross so that we might call Him, Abba, Father! Nothing short of this relationship with the unseen God can give us the deepest satisfaction. ***Only in Jesus Christ our deepest longings can be fulfilled. We all have a God-shaped hole in our hearts that only He can fill. Our hearts are designed to have a loving relationship with Him.*** The earlier we know this, the lesser will be our dissatisfaction. He alone can give us the lasting peace and everlasting life.

In this fast paced life, people have no time to think of reality.

What is that really matters in life?

What is everlasting?

What would bring us satisfaction?

These are the questions pertaining to the Ultimate Reality of life. We need to face these questions one day anyway.

Solomon lived in the days of the Old Testament before the coming of Christ. His quest for meaning in life gave him a lot of questions. His many questions remained unanswered. His wisdom could not find answers for those questions. But inspite of that, note how clearly he ends his book,

Ecc 12:13,14 - *"The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil."*

Chapter 5

Jerusalem !Jerusalem!

The Cry For Jerusalem

*“When He (Jesus) drew near and saw the city,
he wept over it.”*

Luke 19:41

If ever in history, God chose a city, it was Jerusalem. It was the only city chosen by God. All through the Scriptures we read about God choosing people, but we find Jerusalem, had a Divine favour. It was called a Holy City (Ps 4:5) and was known as the City of the Lord (Isa 60:14).

Why God chose Jerusalem?

1 Kings 14:21 - *“Jerusalem, the city that the Lord had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there.”*

God chose Jerusalem to put His Name there. It was prophesied long back by Moses (Deu 12:11). But Jerusalem found its prominence when David made it the capital for his kingdom. Hence, it was called as the City of David (2 Sam 5:6,7). He also brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem which signified God's presence among Israel. The Man after God's own heart also wanted to build a temple for the Lord only to be told by the Him that it was Solomon who would build it. Though the temple was built during king Solomon's time, king David gave an elaborate guideline for worship in the

temple. Hence the Political Centre was transformed into a Religious Place for all Israel.

Sins of Jerusalem

Eze 16:15 - *“But you trusted in your beauty and played the whore because of your renown and lavished your whorings on any passerby; your beauty became his.”*

Jerusalem was like an unfaithful bride. God chose her. He bestowed beauty upon her and she became prominent. But alas! She trusted in her beauty and became proud. She left her first husband and lusted after strange lovers. Jerusalem rejected God and broke His covenant. In doing so, Jerusalem broke God's heart.

There was no truth found in the streets in Jerusalem (Jer 5:1). Everyone had become an opportunist. Lying was common. Bribery was the lifeline of the officials. The beautiful city became an abomination in the Lord's sight. Idolatry entered Jerusalem (Jer 11:13). Innocent blood started to spill on the holy land and defiled it.

God was much displeased.

How can He reject Jerusalem that he had chosen?

Or would He?

Prophets Sent To Jerusalem

Hos 11:8 - *“How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender.”*

God wanted to win Jerusalem back to Himself. His heart was filled with pain because of the sins of Jerusalem.

Jerusalem did not realize that her sins would hurt her more badly.

Something has to be done. Jerusalem should not be punished. God had compassion on Jerusalem.

And so, God sent His prophets.

The prophets came to Jerusalem with a message of repentance and warning. They demanded an unswerving obedience to God. They taught that God's holiness cannot be compromised. Their messages were like a fiery beam of light penetrating the darkness.

There must be a revival or there will be a burial.

Jerusalem's Reaction

Was there any revival? Was there any repentance? Was there any remorse?

No! Do you know what Jerusalem did to the prophets sent by God?

Luk 13:33-34 - "Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem." O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

A prophet cannot perish outside Jerusalem. What a strange message! The city of God; the city chosen by God now rejected His messengers. Not only did Jerusalem reject God's messengers but stoned them and killed them.

Did God Have A Choice?

No! He rejected Jerusalem. He could no longer bear the sins of Jerusalem.

God pronounced Judgement on Jerusalem.

Eze 16:39-42 - *“And I will give you into their hands, and they shall throw down your vaulted chamber and break down your lofty places. They shall strip you of your clothes and take your beautiful jewels and leave you naked and bare. They shall bring up a crowd against you, and they shall stone you and cut you to pieces with their swords. And they shall burn your houses and execute judgments upon you in the sight of many women. I will make you stop playing the whore, and you shall also give payment no more. So will I satisfy my wrath on you, and my jealousy shall depart from you. I will be calm and will no more be angry.”*

God rejected Jerusalem and all the inhabitants who were living in it. The city was destroyed. The temple was burnt down. False religions came crumbling down. Jerusalem was no more God's city, but was taken over by another wicked city called Babylon.

There was a man called Jeremiah. He was close to God's heart and heard His cry. God's cries became his cries. God's burden became his burden. He lamented, *“What can I say for you, to what compare you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What can I liken to you, that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your ruin is vast as the sea; who can heal you?”* (Lam 2:13).

There was another prophet who foresaw all these things:

Isa 64:9-12 - *“Be not so terribly angry, O Lord, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people. Your holy cities have become a wilderness; Zion has become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised you, has been burned by fire, and all our pleasant places have become ruins. Will you restrain yourself at these things, O Lord? Will you keep silent, and afflict us so terribly?”*

Will The Lord Reject Jerusalem Forever?

Zec 2:12 - "And the Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem."

No! The Lord will not reject Jerusalem forever. He will again choose it. But will Jerusalem abide by God's law. There were notable restorers like Nehemiah and Ezra. But all those revivals did not last long. Again and again Jerusalem took to the old road.

God did not reject Jerusalem but Jerusalem rejected the Lord. The meaning of the word Jerusalem, is, 'The abode of Peace.' But the city rejected the Prince of Peace, Lord Jesus Christ. This was the worst thing that Jerusalem did. It crucified the Lord Jesus Christ. What more can a city do?

What worser crime could she commit? Is there still a hope for Jerusalem? The blood thirsty crowd yelled, *"His blood be on us and on our children!"* (Mat 27:25). To have the blood of the Son of God upon one generation is not an ordinary thing.

Did not Jesus tell the Israelite women not to cry from Him, but rather cry for their own children (Luk 23:28).

Jerusalem Again

Rev 21:2 - "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

In spite of all that Jerusalem did to the Lord, still God would not reject her. There will be a New Jerusalem. God will again forgive her and restore her. The Church was formed in Jerusalem. He longs for them to know Him. God will once again visit His people.

His love never fails! He still cries!

Kadamba



Jopapodar



Tumapodar



Chapter 6

A Seed Calls Out

The Cry Of A Seed

“Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.” John 12:25



Life and Ministry of a native missionary worker of Blessing Youth Mission who laboured in Southern Odisha, India.

Jhituku Santa was born in the year 1973 in an interior village, Bendrachapar in Southern Odisha. Villages in Southern Odisha are generally found as hamlets in the forest areas. When our missionaries from the Umerkote Mission visited Bendrachapar in 1993, he was eager to listen to God’s word. He showed a tremendous interest in the message of the Gospel. Though he did not have a formal schooling, he wanted to learn Oriya through the ‘Night School’ started by our missionaries. He got himself enrolled and later that year he was saved and baptized.

After experiencing the joy of Salvation, he was unstoppable. He immediately witnessed to his friends and relatives and brought them to Christ. Even before he became our Native Worker, he accompanied our

missionaries to his relatives' houses far and wide. Seeing his enthusiasm in ministry, missionaries took him as a 'Native Worker' in the year 1995. He worked for another 3 years in the nearby villages and brought many to Christ and strengthened the existing congregation by his testimony.

In the year 1998, he was shifted to a village called Kothalipodar which is near the Ramagiri Mission Station in Odisha. Kothalipodar is a small tribal village and he ministered faithfully in that congregation. It was during his stay at Kothalipodar, he was visiting a village called Kadamba, which is deep inside the jungles. After a consistent labour for 3 years, a congregation was established in Kadamba. The infant church at Kadamba struggled through a wave of persecution by the locals and Jhituku stood by the believers and did all that was possible for him to help them. He had an unusual zeal for God's people.

When the Kadamba believers matured and were strengthened in the Word and Spirit, they witnessed to more interior villages, and two more villages came to the Lord – Rajamunda and Ganjiaguda. It was during the year 2004, Jhituku and myself visited a new interior place. When we first went to that tribal pocket, Jhituku was very much encouraged by the response and found that the tribes were his own relatives. He immediately wanted to minister in that new area. There were no roads, no communication and literally nothing inside that deep jungle. But he wanted to go there. His love for his own people was so amazing.

And so he went to that new area, Jopapodar, building a small shelter for himself and started to minister to the seekers. Very soon people came to the Lord and a Church was established at Jopapodar. It was

during the construction of this Church that a severe persecution broke out. It spread to Jopapodar region as well. There were reports of violence and rioting. Even the partially built Church at Jopapodar was demolished. ***All the missionaries were sent to their native places. Jhituku also was told to go. But he refused.*** He stayed with the believers for several weeks in the jungles. There was a commitment of death in Jhituku's life. For him, 'to minister' meant 'to minister unto death.' ***He was a simple man with a sincere heart.*** To leave the believers and to run for his safety was blasphemous for him. Though he was not qualified according to worldly standards, he was well qualified in God's school of training. He had a special gift of teaching the new believers with clarity and simplicity. He used to teach them to dress, dry the clothes, wash the dishes and help even in agricultural works.

After he ministered in Jopapodar, he started to work in another village called Tumapodar. People came to the Lord in large numbers. Tumopodar lies near the border of Chattisgarh (another State in India) and is an interior pocket. The river Kolab runs in these border areas separating the states of Odisha and Chattisgarh. The location is surrounded by majestic mountains and deep forests. It looks like '*the ends of the earth(Acts 1:8).*' But rivers could not stop Jhituku. He even crossed the borders and tried to plant churches among the other people groups like Dhurva (A remote tribal group which remains still unreached with the Good News of Christ). He very much wanted to build a church at Tumapodar in his life time. But sadly it could not be done during his lifetime. Only on the next day of his funeral, the construction work at Tumapodar started.

All these exploits were to end soon. The fiery soldier has to be summoned by the High Command. He

was going to finish the race. After Tumapodar, he won many souls in another village called Topajodi. This was to be his last Mission Field and the final battle ground. He was diagnosed with Blood Cancer and was admitted in the Christian Medical College, Vellore in Tamil Nadu. The Blood Cancer was in its final stages. The chances of recovery remained grim. When this fact was shared with Jhituku, he decided not to undergo any treatment but requested the Mission leaders to take care of his children and build a small home for them. He was alive only 15 days after he left CMC. He was very bold to face death and did not show any kind of hopelessness or self-pity.



He used to be very proud of his daughters – Mariam, Sarah and Esther. (At that time they were in boarding schools). He was grateful to the Lord because of the good education the children were receiving. He was thankful to the Mission and the mission leaders. (Presently,i.e 2016, they are in college).

Notable was the contribution of his wife, Indira Santa who was always seen alongside of him.

He was our first fruit. He came to the Lord through our ministry and became our Native Worker. For him ministering was a passion and winning souls was the only purpose of his existence. And Blessing Youth Mission was the only family he knew.

As soon as I heard that his condition became critical, I wanted to meet him in Odisha. I immediately left for Odisha from Chennai . But before I could reach

Odisha, *Jhituku Santa*, the Native Worker who planted many Churches in interior pockets of Odisha went to be with the Lord. I could attend only his funeral. All the missionaries of Odisha carried him and laid him to rest in his own village near his home.

But that was not the end.

As I thought about his work, and visited the believers he had won, I came to an increasing conviction that **the work has just began**. I could see hundreds of Jhitukus all over, who are ready to risk life and win souls. His legacy will definitely live on.

As we have meditated his life and ministry, let us also renew our commitment to serve Him faithfully, work for Him tirelessly, labour for Him unpaid, unloved and unknown.

Bro. Jhituku Santa's Cemetery



“Missionaries are not buried but sown”

Help Me Understand!

The world is full of pain and suffering;

Lord! Help me to be a comforter.

The world is full of hopelessness and despair;

Lord! Help me to be a hope-giver.

The world is full of hatred and enmity;

Lord! Help me to manifest true love.

The world is full of bitterness and envy;

Lord! Help me to show them piety.

The world is full of betrayal and treachery;

Lord! Help me exhibit true loyalty.

The world is full of groans and tears;

Lord! Help me to understand its' cries.

- D.J

Chapter 7

Voices!

The Cries of The Needy

And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, “Do not weep.”

Luke 7:13

Everywhere we find people with pain. The increase in technology and the emphasis on individual freedom has brought in lot of heartaches. New-born babies are thrown in the dust-bins. Children are abused. Young people grow in families where there is constant fighting. Couples do not have time for themselves. Old people are left alone by their children. In our developing society, almost everyone is suffering. Everyone is crying.

On the other hand, we find people becoming insensitive to the needs of the others. The value of land has increased whereas the value of humans has decreased. We have compulsory insurance for all the automobiles in the country whereas for humans we do not have one. What a pathetic situation we are in!

We have targets to achieve; deadlines to meet; promises to fulfill; dreams to pursue and a life to live. Though we cannot meet all the needs of all the people around us, let us take time to listen to the wounded soul. Let us take a break for a while. And let us open our ears and we will hear voices- voices of people around us.

Voice of an Unborn Baby

"I was waiting for my birthday, but it would never come. I was expecting to see the light, but my life was about to be terminated in darkness. I would never see the world. I would never play like the other children. I would never go to school. I would never wear an uniform. I would never grow up. I would never graduate. I would never marry. I would never have children. I would never have a future. I would never have a dream. Alas! I would have nothing! All I knew was my mother's womb. She fed me till the day they decided that I should be no more. They said that I was a mistake. I do not know whose mistake. I never saw the face of my mother or my father. They said that I would become a shame. I was not wanted in the world. Hence, I was killed."

Voice of an Orphan Child

"My mother left me dying on the streets. Some good people took me and put me in a Government home. I am now in an orphanage. I do not know about the love of the mother, nor of the father. At least my parents did not kill me. They gifted me with this one thing, life. I am thankful for them for this gift. But I do not know how I can come up in life. I eat. I sleep. I wash clothes. Life is very lonely. I need to study and work hard. I need a lot of self-motivation. I also need a lot of help and support. People say that our studies are sponsored by some good people. Only time will tell what I will become in the future."

Voice of a Teen-aged Girl

"My home was a hell. My father and mother fought frequently. They did not understand me. I was not good at studies. A boy proposed to me and I felt loved. He was better than my parents, I thought. Though he was not well-qualified, still I felt I could trust him. May be life would be better with him. I know my parents would not

approve of this relationship. I did not have other options. I decided to elope. Some of my friends were worried about this idea. But I thought it would be better to stay in an open highway than in a hell called home. So I ran away and started a new life. For a while their new life seemed like heaven. But it all started to change. To my horror I found that the boy I loved was losing interest in me. He had affairs as well. Where would I go now? Whom to turn and whom to trust? Will my parents take me back? I think death would be more comfortable than life."

Voice of an Elderly Uncle

"I was a Government servant. I worked hard and gave good education to my son and daughter. Now they are well settled. My son went abroad. My daughter is 200kms away. Both of them have their own families and future. But their circumstances does not permit me to stay in their homes. My son suggested an old age home. This happened after the death of my wife with whom I had a wonderful life. And now I am here. I feel lonely. I just want someone to talk to. Sometimes, old memories flash like a flood. And other times, I long for death to come. I need regular medication to keep my life going. After all these years, I wonder whether the life that I lived had any worth."

Voice of a Depressed Man

"I was doing a good business. But suddenly fate turned against me. I encountered a heavy loss. I had to borrow and so did I. Still the business did not pick up. We could not even pay the house rent. My children's education was affected. My debtor said that he would come tomorrow to throw the things out of our home. It was then I decided to end my life. My wife too felt the same. Death would be better than losing our dignity. And so we decided to end our lives. We did not want to leave our children as orphans. So we planned to end our family."

Voice of a Prostitute

"They promised a good job to my father. The man, who came to our village, gave a good amount of money to my family. I was then taken by a train to a big city and was handed over to a woman. She told me that I need to do household chores. Little did I realize what that 'house hold chores' meant. In the beginning I was hesitant. My friends, who were at the brothel, said that I had no other option. Men came and went. They liked my body but did not show me love. I have now forgotten the true meaning of love. I have children. Once my child enquired about his father? I did not have an answer. No wonder I did not know the answer as I don't have anyone in life."

Voice of a Terminal Cancer Patient

"After they found that I had cancer, I was left in this hospice. My son did not visit me after he left me here. The pain of loneliness is more than the pain of medication. Every day I expect someone to visit me and someone to talk to me. I did not do any harm to anyone. Why God allowed such a thing to me? I have become a burden to the world. My wound smells. I cannot sleep. I cannot eat. I cannot take bath. I am a waste. All I want is to die."

Interlude

Am I A Missionary?

A missionary is one who is called and sent by God.

I am also called and sent by God.

I am a Missionary.

*But looking at Paul and Peter,
the New Testament missionaries,*

I started to have fresh doubts.

*And looking at the life of early missionaries like
William Carey and David Brainard,*

My doubts were confirmed.

I am not a Missionary.

*If William Carey was a missionary,
then I am not a missionary.*

*William Carey came to India and never went back but
I go to my native places frequently. He lost his son and
he managed with an uncooperative wife.*

*If David Brainard was a missionary
then I am not a missionary.*

*David Brainard had a commitment to die and he did
die for his wonderful Saviour in a very young age,
winning a tribe for Christ.*

*If Hudson Taylor was a missionary
then I am not a missionary.*

*He had a great passion for China and he sent
missionaries to every province in China. He lost his
beloved children and wife and was buried there.*

*If Adoniram Judson was a missionary
then I am not a missionary.*

*Adoniram Judson lost all his children in the mission
field and was imprisoned numerous times.*

I live a life of ease and comfort.

I go back to home whenever I like.

I have a regular pay.

I have not been imprisoned.

I have not been beaten.

I am careful about my health.

I plan for my future

I want to live long.

I asked the Lord,

“Am I a Missionary?”

*“Lord I am not like those spiritual giants but indeed
I want to be one. Will you use me in spite of my
weaknesses and lack of commitments?”*

*I heard Him say in a still small voice, “Son, I don’t ask
you to do things which you cannot do. I ask you do the
things that you can do. So obey and follow me.”*

So inspite of all my weaknesses and shortcomings,

I am still a Missionary, called by Him.

“To obey is better than sacrifice.” 1 Sam 15:22

Chapter 8

The Enemies of Evangelism

The Cry For Watchfulness

*“Watch out; beware of the leaven of the Pharisees
and the leaven of Herod.”*

Mark 8:15

There are two kinds of people among the Christians. I said Andrew Murray, one is the ‘Soulwinners’ and the other, ‘Backsliders.’ A Christian who does not involve in evangelism is either backslidden or is still an unbeliever. Yet, I have come across people who wanted to involve in some kind of evangelistic work but still don’t do it.

As I pondered over this fact, I came across several factors which were hindering good-willed Christians to involve themselves in evangelism. These I consider as the ‘Enemies of Evangelism.’ They are not only the enemies of evangelism but enemies of God’s Kingdom. Let us meditate on some of them:

Enemy Number 1: Materialism

Materialism can be defined as an unsatisfied urge to accumulate and store wealth. The Word of God calls this as the love of money (1 Tim 6:10). The Bible considers materialism equivalent to idolatry (Col 3:5). Jesus came down heavily on the rich who lived in His days.

Note some of the sayings of Jesus regarding the rich,

Mat 5:3 - *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

Mat 19:23 - *And Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, only with difficulty will a rich person enter the kingdom of heaven."*

Luk 6:24 - *"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation."*

Though material blessing is considered as a part of God's blessings, money in itself can become a god drawing more people towards itself. It can also create a craving for more.

The Bible warns us of the lust of eyes (1John 2:16) which is synonymous with the materialistic cravings of mankind. Never in any era, people decided mostly by what they saw. We live in an era of consumerism. False demands are created by false standards of life that is why people want to buy things that they do not need.

In a materialistic world, people live for what they perceive to have a value. For example, having a high profile car can be considered as a status symbol than a low profile car. Hence, new models are introduced to create more craving for the materialistic man. People think that buying the latest is the trendiest.

But as a Christian what is our response to this never ending demand? How can a good-willed Christian escape this tide of materialistic craze so that he can involve himself in evangelism?

Robertson Mcquilkin in his book, Biblical Ethics, elucidates that there are five different kinds of life situations:

1. Absolute Poverty – Lack of food and housing.

2. Poverty – Food and place to stay available but no means of immediate future(sustenance)
3. Simple Lifestyle – Having the basic needs as given by the Society
4. Wealth – Possessions beyond necessities.
5. Riches – Abundant Wealth, hoarded for protection or used for extravagant living.

Apostle Paul in his letter to Timothy speaks about the basic needs of a Christian:

1Ti 6:8 - *"But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content."*

I seriously doubt any normal Christian would agree on that verse. How many of us can boldly say that we do not need anything except food and clothing? Apostle Paul being a tent maker did not include house as the basic requirement for a decent life in this world. This is the teaching of the Bible - to have minimum requirements so that we can devote more of our energies towards evangelism.

If our basic minimum requirements are mammoth, then our demand for money would be more. Eventually we would have no time for God. We would also be missing out our families and the things that we enjoy doing the most. In the long run, we would be living a bored and tired life.

How is our lifestyle? Is it based on the evangelistic needs of the society in which we are living? Do we have an upper limit for our spending?

It is said of John Wesley that he decided to have 800 pounds for himself for living. He also decided that whatever money he would receive more than that would be spent on evangelism. He maintained the same discipline until his death.

Though the need might be different for different families, I urge the reader to decide upon the upper threshold amount that would meet the basic requirements of his family. We can revise it once in 3 or 5 years depending upon the inflation.

If God is our first priority, then we would choose a job which would meet the basic minimum requirements of the family and give more time for God. Today, the devil has robbed the time of good Christians. Many have opted for a high paying job and have lost the time that they can give to the Lord. If you think that your job has robbed you of your time with God and what you do for Christ, then consider changing your job, even it is a less paying one. This is Biblical Christianity.

The all-wise King Solomon writes about the problem of wealth in Ecclesiastes chapter 5:

1.Wealth Does Not Satisfy

Ecc 5:10 - *"He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity."*

2.Wealth Increases the People who Consume It

Ecc 5:11 - *"When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes?"*

3.Wealth Reduces the Sleeping Time

Ecc 5:12 - *"Sweet is the sleep of a labourer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep."*

4.Wealth Is Lost in Bad Venture

Ecc 5:13,14 - *"Riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, and those riches were lost in a bad venture."*

5. Wealth Brings Sickness Because of Overwork

Ecc 5:17 *“Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.”*

To conclude let us pray along with Agur,

“Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me” (Pro 30:8).

Enemy Number 2: Lust of Flesh

Pro 31:3 - *“Do not give your strength to women, your ways to those who destroy kings.”*

Lust is another enemy of evangelism. Nothing quenches the fire of a soul like that of a lust. We must guard our heart with all vigilance lest we give ourselves into lust. The Word of God tells that a king should not give his strength to a women. The spirit of lust is always antagonistic towards the spirit of the prophets. We can read it from the Old Testament Scripture in the book of 1 Kings 18th chapter 4th verse:

“Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord.”

Jezebel was not acting against the people of Israel, rather she was acting against the prophets of the Lord. She well understood that if the prophets who brought God's Word would be killed, then there would be no Word of God and the people would definitely go astray. This was why when Jezebel realized that Elijah was a threat to her plans, she went against him.

Elijah became the prime enemy of Jezebel. How I wish we could be filled with the spirit of Elijah! He treated Jezebel as an enemy! Too often we play around with sin and become a laughing stock for the devil! The devil doesn't worry about ministers who are careless in

their personal spiritual life and who are living in secret sins.

Indulging in any questionable habit for the sake of release of pressure, stress is like mocking God. Only God can satisfy our deepest needs. Developing sinful habits for the sake of entertainment is a costly foolishness! The devil has deceived Christian brothers to substitute fake joy for the real one.

Not only did Jezebel acted against Elijah and killed the prophets of the Lord, but also note how she behaved when she faced her final enemy Jehu;

2 Ki 9:30 - *"When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. And she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out of the window."*

Jezebel wanted to be attractive to her enemy. May be she hoped for the one last time that Jehu would fall for her beauty. But Jehu didn't fall for her. This is what the spirit of lust does. It dims our understanding. It reduces our foresight. It vanquishes the bubbling joy. It destroys the burden for souls. Once yielded, it takes us down in a big spiral.

We see the same spirit of lust in operation in the New Testament times,

Mar 6:22 *"For when Herodias' daughter came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his guests."*

Mar 6:25 *"I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter."*

Notice how a king falls for a girl who danced. Herod was ready to give upto half of his kingdom for a single dance. Note how the hearts of men are swayed by lustful passions.

The cost of a dance was a mighty prophet's head!

What a sad truth! Today we find this spirit of lust in operation in the Television programmes, Newspapers, Magazines, Internet and in almost every form of media.

Beware! We should be on our guard. On who's side are we? Herodias or John the Baptist? Though it looked like an entertainment, it cost a prophet's head.

Let us be filled with the fiery spirit that Elijah had. A strong inner spirit that refuses to admire the beauty of Jezebel; a fortified soul that is antagonistic towards all the external beauty. As God's prophets, we need God's eyes. As His representatives, we should live with eternal principles and as God's ambassadors, we are to reflect the values of the Heavenly Kingdom! Stay away from lust and you will be filled with the spirit of burden and prayer. God will use you to bless millions!

Enemy Number:3 Worldly Worries

Everyone has got problems, be it a believer or an unbeliever. We face problems of different kinds and various dimensions. But when it comes to evangelism, worldly worries render a committed Christian fruitless.

Mat 13:22 - *"As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the **cares of the world** and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful."*

The Bible says that the cares of the world chokes the Word making it unfruitful. When we give in to much of worrying, then our Christian life becomes fruitless. Sometimes we worry about our present problems, an uncomfortable situation in our work place, a difficult husband, an unsettled married life, divided family, diseases and so on. But if we are occupied with our own problems then we would fail to see the big picture. Too

much of self-orientation will lead to a cynical attitude towards life. We need to get away from our problems.

We read about Korah's rebellion against the leadership of Moses. God punished Korah and all his belongings (Num 16:32). But Numbers chapter 26, verses eleven says that the sons of Korah did not die. May be they separated themselves from their father. They decided to walk differently. They chose the Heavenly father over their earthly father. How beautiful are the Psalms written by the sons of Korah – 42,44,45,46,47,48,49,84,85,87 and 88. We can find the frequent mention of Korah, the rebellious leader in the Psalms. What a wonderful transformation! This is a beautiful illustration of what can happen if we turn our sorrows towards God instead of us.

Jesus has asked us to take up the cross and carry His light yoke.

Mat 11:29,30 *“Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”*

The worldly worry will diminish us but the yoke which Jesus gives will give us a new sense of purpose and direction. Carry your burden to Him and He will give His burden to you. Even in ministry, the burden can be too cumbersome at times. Therefore we need to carry all those ministerial burdens to Jesus. Look how God responded to prophet Samuel when he faced a crisis in his personal ministerial life:

1Sa 8:6,7 - *“And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.”*

When we take upon the Master's yoke, which is light, then God takes care of us and our worries. When we are obsessed with the building of God's Kingdom, God will take care to build our children and our family. So let us not worry wasting time, energy and resources. There is only a little time left. There is no second chance in life. Only one chance! Why can't we live that life for Jesus? Perhaps many of you think that your work is over. No, continue to minister till the last breath. In the Heavenly Kingdom, age does not matter. Stop worrying and start ministering.

Enemy Number 4 : False Doctrines

1Ti 4:1 - *"Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons."*

The Bible clearly states that there will be teaching of demons in the last days. I once wondered how the devil can handle the Bible. But I came to realize that the devil knows a lot about God and Bible than an average Christian does. Remember how the devil quoted the Bible verses when he tempted Jesus. Today we find many doctrines which are against evangelism. Let me name some:

A.The Doctrine of Predestination

The proponents of this doctrine believe that all those who need to be saved, will be saved eventually. There is no need for evangelistic effort. There is no need for Gospel programmes. Since we are chosen even before the foundation of the world(they quote Rev 13:8, 17:8), there is no need for outreach programmes. But they forget what Jesus told in Mathew 28:18,19,20, John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:4. They also forget about Paul's missionary journeys and the Book of Acts on the whole. If we take this doctrine to an extreme, then no human being can

take responsibility for his actions. One can kill somebody and comfortably say, *'It is in my predestination that I should kill,'* or still worse, *"It is God's will that I should kill."*

B.The Doctrine of Perfection

People who believe and teach this doctrine propagate that our own soul is more important than others. 'Life first' they say. Let your life speak. Let the life of Jesus manifest through you. No need to speak a single word. They misquote what Francis of Assisi said, *"Preach the Gospel and use words if necessary."*

Though it sounds spiritual it is not scriptural. They put so much emphasis on life transformation and ultimately forget the call to go and be a witness. We are called to witness (Acts 1:8). An active witness testifies of what God did and what He can do. That is what the Bible teaches. Some moderates in this group teach that we better set ourselves right, before preaching to others. But again they fail to realize that we can never be perfect. It will be an ongoing process till our death.

C. The Doctrine of Priesthood

The preachers of this doctrine believe that only priests can preach the Word of God. So most of the believers in Christ think that it is our duty to attend Church and pray and if possible give some money. My friend once commented - *'You preach because it is your job. You have no other work.'* But the truth that all believers are priests in the New Testament era is almost forgotten(1 Peter 2:9).

It is good to pursue theological education but that is not a pre-requisite to tell about God's love to our friends. It is the duty of every Christian to tell the Gospel. The classic example is Apostle Paul. He was not

one among the twelve apostles. He was by profession a tent-maker. But note what he says, “*Woe unto me if I do not preach the Gospel(1 Cor 9:16).*”

D.The Doctrine of Prosperity

This teaching gives more emphasis on the material prosperity over spiritual blessings. Though the Bible teaches that the righteous will be blessed, the cost we need to pay in carrying the cross should not be undermined. Our God delights in blessing us but He is also more concerned about our soul. The doctrine of prosperity tends to lay more emphasis on the temporal than the eternal. Though we should not preach the doctrine of poverty as did the saints of middle ages like St. Francis of Assisi, we should nevertheless focus on Jesus Christ and His glorious Gospel. Godliness with contentment is a great gain said apostle Paul(1 Tim 6:6).

We need to be on guard in these last days. We need to meditate the Word of God, day and night. Let God give you grace so that you may be able to see things clearly. Involve in evangelism in one way or the other. ***It is time to go all out for God.*** Dedicate one day in a week for village outreach. Always carry tracts with you while you travel. Share the gospel wherever you can. If every believing Christian would turn out to be an active soul-winner, then our generation can be blessed with the Good News of Christ.

A Prayer For India

*Bless My Country, O' Lord!
Thank you for India and its beauty;
Its mountains and valleys;
Its rivers and forests;
Bless its people, so varied and wide.*

*Bless My Country, Lord!
Protect her from evils;
From dangers, internal and external.
Let the people enjoy peace and prosperity.*

*Bless My Country, Lord!
Bless its Leaders;
Give them Grace and Strength,
To guide the Nation in the right path.*

*Bless My Country, Lord!
Let it know You;
Let Your light shine upon the land,
And let Eternal Blessings Overflow.*

Amen!

- D.J

Chapter 9

Do You Love India?

The Cry for India

“If My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:14.

India is a land of rich cultural heritage and varied languages. It is a land of spirituality. Three major religions – Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism were born here. The people are religious and Indian culture requires mutual respect for each other. It is for this reason, the ancient Rajas showed hospitality to the foreigners who came to India. It was ruled by small kings during much of its existence. The Moghuls who conquered most of India understood the cultural complexity and allowed it to thrive. The European invasion on India made drastic changes in the social, cultural and economical arenas. The British were successful in eliminating all other European powers from Indian soil. They wanted an unified India under the British rule so that doing business would be easier. But some of their aggressive measures resulted in the Indian National Movement and Modern India was born on August 15, 1947. Thank God for Mahathma Gandhiji who led most of the freedom struggle against the British and for Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar who gave India one of the best constitutions of the world.

India – It's Current Struggles



Ever since India was born in the year 1947, the nation has come a long way. The literacy rate has increased. We have made progress in the fields of science and technology. India today boasts of having an indigenous

space programme. India's GDP(Gross Domestic Product) is growing making it as one of the fastest growing economies of the world. But all these developments is producing an one-sided effect. Although Modern India is developing in terms of education and economy, the need for spirituality lies in her very fabric. The need to attain Mukti (salvation) and the need to be transformed into Paramatma (Supreme Soul) is the cry of every traditional Indian. It is for this reason, the rivers overflow with people and pilgrimage sites witness crushing crowds. People are in search of something greater apart from the normal aspects of life. Only Jesus can fullfill all these longings of spirituality.

When people do not find meaning in life, they often kill themselves. India has one of the highest suicide rates in the world. Not only that, Indian roads kill more than 1 lakh people every year. The rich-poor divide is increasing in an alarming pace and the crime rate is surging. Though we have improved in literacy, the unemployment rate is very very high. Morality is redefined by the upcoming new generation. They have rejected the traditional Indian family culture and they have chosen a 'Relative

Morality.' Moral education in India is very lacking. The Naxal problem(insurgent groups which do not believe in democracy) in the Central-East India poses a threat to national integrity. National disasters kill more people in India.

India is suffering. She is wounded and bleeding. And she is crying.

Can India Be Blessed In Our Generation?

After serving in the Northern parts of India for a period of 11 years, God led my wife and me to South India. It was a time of serious heart-searching and introspection. Finally, we made a decision to move to the South and came to Chennai. During one of those days, I received a phone call from the present (2016) Chairman Mr. Dickson Daniel regarding a programme called as PROJECT INDIA which was initiated by Blessing Youth Mission (BYM) in the year 1974. I was very curious to know about this 'Project.' And I learnt that it was an effort by the founding leaders of BYM to bless India at any cost. This project was planned to be re-introduced in 2014 after forty years. I had been invited for a planning meeting regarding this. I was simply excited. The thought of blessing India in our generation was simply too fantastic. But doubts assailed me. Can a country so diverse like India be reached? We have too many languages and cultures (29 major languages and 880 dialects). "Is it possible, Lord?", was my question. Not only are we diverse in our cultures and religions but also we have so many denominations ranging from Mar Thoma who trace their lineage to Saint Thomas to the most recent modern Pentecostal denominations.

A ministerial strategy which works in one State fails terribly in the nearby State simply because of cultural issues and local ethics. Sometimes I wonder

what the turban-clad Sikh in Northern India has to do with the dothi-clad Tamilian in Southern India. Or do the Gujjars of Western India have any resemblance with the short and fair North Easterner? India is simply a country of many countries. No wonder she is called a sub-continent. The sheer size of the population of India – a staggering 1.3 billion which is about 1/6th of world's population leaves us speechless.

“Can India be reached, Lord?” was my cry.

As I was travelling to the planning meet, the Lord encouraged me with the following verse:

“Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit” says the Lord – Zech 4:6

We gave shape to this project and named it ‘Bless Bharat.’ I want to share the thoughts which became our guiding principles for this programme. (For more information on ‘Bless Bharat’ project, refer page 137).

1) When the Church in India is Revived, Reaching India Is Going to be Easy

We need a mighty Revival in India. We need the move of the Spirit in every Church, Organisation and Fellowship. Praise God for the numerous indigenous Missions that came into being during the last 60 years. But we need to keep the fire burning. The flames should blaze brightly. The Church in India is having a very strong foundation. St. Thomas came to India and gave his life. Later many Catholic and Protestant missionaries sacrificed their entire life for this great land. India is filled with the cemeteries of missionaries.

The Church in India is built on the sweat, tears and blood of missionaries. Their legacy has to be carried on. Sacrifice and hard work should be the watch-word of the Indian Church. Sadly, that is not the case. The early

missionaries' commitment and passion is slowly being forgotten by today's Indian Christians. The Mission properties are being sold at throw away prices. There is rampant corruption in the Church-run institutions. There is no integrity on the part of Christian leaders. Also, self-styled ministers have increased their assets to a scale that for a normal Christian there is no Christ-like example to follow. Hence we need a revival in the Indian Church.

2) The State of Tamil Nadu Should Play A Vital Role In Blessing Our Nation

For reasons very strange, we find a missionary fervour in the State of Tamil Nadu. For many of the missionary organisations, the Churches in South serve as the sending agencies. This might be due to the missionary thrust given by the protestant missionaries of the West in the past century. God has blessed the State of Tamil Nadu to a great extent. In Bless Bharat Project, we have a programme called as the '*Adopt-A-State*,' through which the Christians in each district in Tamil Nadu are encouraged to pray for one State of India. For example, the Christians of Coimbatore district will be praying for the State of Madhya Pradesh. They will visit that State. And they will encourage the other Christians in the district to bless that State. We plan to have this programme in an Inter-Denominational and Inter-Mission platform so that every Mission agency and every Church might be blessed in the due process.

3) Every Christian Church Should Act Like A Mission Agency

In order that India should be blessed in our generation, every Church and Fellowship should act like a Mission Agency. All the church leaders should be trained with regard to this. Every Church, whether

it is mainline Protestant or Charismatic, should have a Mission Board or a Mission Committee. This team of lay leaders should aim for infusing missionary fervour in their Church. They should organise Mission conferences and invite missionaries from the fields. They should also move to start their own Mission Fields in coordination with the Missionary organizations that are already working. They should also organize Mission Trips for 3 or 7 or 10 days and challenge the first time visitors for Missions. Traveling in India is no more a herculean task. We have flight connectivity to every major town in India and Indian Railways have bridged the unreachable places. Praise God!

4)Every Christian Should Become A Soulwinner

Every soul is valuable to Christ. The value of one soul is equivalent to the value of the life of Jesus Christ. He died for each and every soul in the world. As Christians we should all involve in soulwinning. In India, there are around 2 Crore registered Christians. Assuming that there are 1 Crore believers, let us imagine what would happen when they start to share the Gospel to one unbeliever in a month.

1 Month = 1 crore People Blessed With The Gospel

12 Months = 12 crore People Blessed With The Gospel

12 Years = 144 crore People Blessed With The Gospel

India can be blessed with the Gospel of Christ if every christian throws himself to personal Gospel sharing at the rate of one person in one month. If all the churches and church leaders in India would give emphasis to witnessing and soul-winning, then the dream of Bharat being blessed in our generation will come true.

5) Servants Of The Master Should Be Cared For

In our zeal and passion to bless the nation, we should never forget that as a Church we need to care for the servants of the Master. They should be well taken care of. Their children should have the best possible education. Their health concerns need to be attended for. They should be taken care of after retirement as well. Thanks to organisations like the Missionaries Upholders Trust(MUT) which God has risen to meet such needs. But we should not forget that it is the responsibility of every Church and every Christian Mission to take care of their workers. ***The organisations should not boast of the number of workers they have. Rather they should boast of how well they take care of their staff.*** If Every Christian Family starts supporting A Missionary, then the servants of the Master would be well taken care of. In order to meet this end, we introduced a programme called as EFAM- Every Family A Missionary. We believe this will become a source of blessing not only to the missionaries of Blessing Youth Mission but also to all the servants of God.

God cannot bless our nation if His servants are not treated with due care and respect.

6) An Ecumenical Prayer Spirit Should Descend Upon The Indian Church

It is a spiritual battle. We cannot wage this war without preparing ourselves in prayer. We need individual prayers and corporate prayers. We need to organize small groups in our work places, in our institutions and set aside at least an hour a week to pray for India. In the Bless Bharat Project, we have named this as ESAP- Every Street A Prayer Cell. God moves mightily when we pray. All of us need a spirit of prayer. The needs of India should

bring us to our knees. Let us turn to the Lord everywhere and plead for His mercy. Let us cry to the Lord to bless our nation.

2 Chronicles 7:14 - *"If My people who are called by My name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

Chapter 10

What You Can Do?

A Call for Action

I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?'

Acts 22:10

God has a purpose for each and every one of us. We should ask the Lord to reveal His purpose in our life. This was the prayer of Paul when the Lord intervened in his life. He immediately asked the Lord as what he must do. Many of us do not ask this question, 'Lord, what shall I do?' As you have read this book thus far, I encourage you to pray and commit for the Lord's leading before you read further. You have been hearing the heart cries of God and now it is time to make a commitment.

Commitment Prayer

"Lord, help me to understand my calling. Show me what I need to do and lead me according to Your will. Amen."

The Bible says that we should make sure of our calling.

2 Pet 1:10 - *"Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election."*

Note how Jesus warned against a shallow Christianity:

Mat 7:21 - *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."*

In order to understand God's purpose in our lives, we need to proceed from general ministerial activities (General Calling) towards more specific ministerial activities (Specific Calling).

Immediately after his Salvation experience, Paul started to do things for the Lord. He started to testify and preach the Gospel. But as he was growing in the Lord, the Holy Spirit led him and used him according to the specific calling of becoming an apostle to the gentiles (Acts 13:2).

As Christian believers, we can be involved in various ministerial activities. When we are faithful in these ministries, God will lead us to our specific calling in our lives. It might take several years but we need to be faithful in what we do.

I want to give a short list of various ministerial activities that you can do for the Lord *immediately*.

1. Children Bible Class

If you like interacting with children, this is a great ministry. You might need to develop story telling capacities and communication skills. There are aspects of story telling that you might need to develop. Also you need a basic psychological knowledge of the children you might be dealing with.

2. Ministry of Helps

Your church or fellowship might need small helps like cleaning or physical arrangement before the actual gathering. In order to be effective in this kind of ministry you need to go to the meeting place well ahead of time. This ministry will help ease the burden on the minister.

3. Singing and Leading Worship

You can sing for the Lord! Singing also includes composing. If God has gifted you with such talents, then

invest time in developing these gifts. Use your gifts in small prayer groups and fellowships. Do not always expect to perform in big gatherings.

4. Music

Music is a wonderful gift when used for God's glory. If you have the gift of music like playing guitar, keyboard or rhythms, start using it for the Lord. Start in the small prayer meetings.

5. Teens Outreach (Age group 13-19)

If you feel burdened about the teenage group in your Church or locality, you can pray and proceed in this direction. Or if you have learnt a lot from raising a teenager in your family, then you are best suited for this ministry. If in your Church, there is no teens fellowship, you can take an initiative. There are several groups like the SU (Scripture Union) who are ministering among them. You can get trained from them and start ministering.

6. Counselling

Counselling is a wonderful ministry for people who think that the on-stage ministry is very far from them. Also if you are gifted with a sensitive heart or if your life's experiences have made your heart sensitive, then you are the right person for counselling ministry. There are people with painful wounds. They need healing. Spiritual counselling brings inner healing and restoration. There are organisations like 'Person To Person' who give training in this regard.

7. Visitation

If there is an old age home nearby, then don't hesitate to visit them. You can plan your visits weekly. Spending time with such people will bring you great dividends in Heaven. You can also visit Cancer Hospices,

HIV patients and terminally ill people. You can visit hospitals too. All you need to do is meet the person in-charge of the institution and convey your willingness to spend time with them. You can take one more like-minded believer with you.

8. Youth Prayer Cells

If you are burdened about the young people in your Church or locality, plan to start a youth prayer group. You just need two or three people to start with. Spend time with them and start the Bible classes in a informal friendly way. Being formal might make them bored. In fact, they would definitely not want to hear another sermon. You might need training and awareness as how effectively you can minister to youth. You can also contact us for help.

9. Developmental Works

If you are a professional in your field and if you come across any avenues where in your professional knowledge would be of help to the Kingdom, then volunteer for help. If you are a software engineer, you can develop programmes that can be of use to Christian organisations.

10. Writing

If you are gifted in writing, then start writing. You can have your own blog in the website. Post your articles to magazines and develop your skills. There are a lot of online resources that will help sharpen your writing skills.

11. Designing

If you are interested in design, then contribute to the Kingdom of God by designing wall papers, hand-bills,

and encouraging quotes and verses from the Bible. You can post them in social media. You can also learn new software like Photoshop, Illustrator and Coral-draw.

12. Mission Mobilizer

If you have a missionary-burden and want to help missionaries, then become a Mission-Mobilizer. Visit Mission fields and get to know about the field realities. Interact with the field missionaries. Take your friends to the Mission field and spread the passion. Raise funds for the Mission work and work strategically.

13. Prayer Warrior

If your age or work confines you to one particular place, then please do consider this ministry. Start praying for our country - State-wise/District-wise. You can also pray for countries all around the world. The Operation Mobilization book on prayer will be a great guide for you.

14. Bible Study

If you are a student of the Bible, and if you enjoy analytical study of the Word of God, then you may have a calling for teaching the Bible. Start with a small group and teach them. Equip yourself with Bible Commentaries, Dictionaries and Concordances.

15. Women Specific Ministries

If you come across believing women in your locality, you can organize them into a small prayer group. You can gather on a weekly basis and start learning the Bible. You can also involve in visitation ministry as a team.

16. Missionary Prayer Group

You can form a missionary prayer group in your locality. You can gather information on the missionary

work done by various organisation in India and start praying for them.

17. One to One Evangelism

You can also go for one to one evangelism. This can be planned once in a week or once in a month. You can carry tracts and new testament packs. If you are outspoken and can easily make friends, then this is the ministry for you.

18. Events Evangelism

Never miss any special days like Christmas, Valentine's Day, Friendship Day etc. All these days are suitable occasion to preach the Gospel. You can organize a Christmas party for your friends and share the Good News to them. You can also think of various different ways.

19. Organising

If you are gifted in organising, then you can volunteer when small events take place in your Church or Organisation. Your skills may not be known in the spiritual circles. Hence I urge you to volunteer in your Church or Organisation.

20. Hospitality

If you have the gift of hospitality, host missionaries in your houses and refresh them. They may be in need of medical treatment and you can plan the treatment in your house. Or you can request a missionary family to spend their vacation with you.

21. Village Ministry

If you are concerned with the unreached villages near you, you can organize an outreach team and visit

villages. In the beginning, if there is no Christian witness in the village, you can plan for film ministry and tract distribution ministry. If you happen to get contacts in villages, then you can visit the contacts on a weekly basis.

22. Tent-Making Ministry

If God calls you to move from your native place and go as a tent-making missionary like apostle Paul, you can move ahead. Pray for leading so that you can go the needy place where God wants to send you. You can apply for jobs in that area and be an effective witness for Christ.

23. Full-Time Ministry

If God calls you for full-time work, then obey Him. Pray for the organisation that God wants you to work along with. And God will lead you.

The above list is not a comprehensive one. But it will nevertheless help you to get started to be an useful vessel in the Kingdom of God. May God help you to identify your gifts and talents and use them for His Glory.

An Army!

*For God and His Glory,
To Witness and To Show; To Labour and To Strive;
To Preach and To Practice; To Pray and To Cry;
To Go and To Send; To Rise and To Fall;
To Plan and To Prepare;
To Fight and To Battle;
To Live and To Die.
For God and His Glory.*

- D. J

Chapter 11

Can't We Be One?

A Call for Coordination

“If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.”

1 Corinthians 12:26

A symphony is one in which several musical artists come together and play a wonderful synchronising music. It follows a pattern and every musician plays his part with beautiful coordination. In a symphony rarely do we hear a single sound of a musical instrument. This is what Apostle Paul writes in the book of Corinthians. Note the following verses:

1 Corinthians 14:33 - *“For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.”*

1 Corinthians 14:40 - *“But all things should be done decently and in order.”*

This should be true of today's Christian Church. But sadly we do not hear any synchronising music coming out of it. The Church is the institution that is highly divided within herself. The Church was mostly unorganized in the first two centuries. There were various teachings and differences among the Church leaders in the second and third centuries. It was the Emperor Constantine the Great who unified the Church. Again in 1054 A.D, the unified Church experienced the first schism as the

Western Church (i.e. The Roman Catholic Church) and the Eastern Church (i.e. The Orthodox Church). This split was basically due to the theological differences that they had. And again in the year 1517, Protestant Reformation was initiated when Martin Luther nailed 'The Ninety-Five Thesis ' on the doors of the Chapel in Germany. Luther did not agree with the Roman Catholic Church's doctrines on these 95 points.

Ever since, the number of denominations and the Churches is on the rise. According to the World Christian Encyclopedia, there are around 33,000 denominations (Barrett, Kurian, Johnson; Oxford Press, 2nd edition, 2001). The Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary estimated 34,000 denominations in 2000, rising to an estimated 43,000 in 2012.

The number seems to be very high because of the fact that several new Church groups have been formed based on geographical locality or the people groups in which they are planted. So today, we have many denominations, groups and organisations who are working for God.

As Christians of the 21st century, I believe we need to be aware of certain things so that there would be synchronisation and coordination in the Body of Christ.

The Body of Christ

In order to understand how different ministries are organized, we need to understand first the truth regarding the Body of Christ.

Note the following verses:

1Co 11:3- *"I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."*

Eph 4:15 -16 - *“Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”*

Eph 5:23-24 - *“The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.”*

1Co 3:11 - *“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”*

In all these verses, we find the supremacy of Jesus Christ over the Church. In fact it is His Church. Jesus Christ is the head of the Church and the Church should submit to Him. We are all members in this Body of Christ. No one can be a member if he doesn't accept Christ to be the head of his own life.

We learn a very important lesson here. A Church cannot be called a Church if it does not submit to the authority of Jesus Christ. Our usage of words like – Lord, God is fine. But the name of Jesus Christ is to be held in high honour. Aiming for unity when a person or group does not acknowledge the supremacy of Christ is blasphemy. It may be termed as humanism or human unity. But the Bible does not teach that. ***Our foundation is in Jesus Christ and our cornerstone is Jesus Christ Himself.***

Christian Coordination

Having established the foundation for Christian unity, we need to move on as to why we need coordination in ministry.

1Co 12:11-12 - *"All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."*

The Church exists for a purpose. Every member of the Church has a part to play in the Kingdom of God. Apostle Paul here uses the analogy of the parts of the body - legs, hands, eyes and ears. If any useful work should be done, all should work together. He beautifully brings out powerful truths regarding coordination in Christian ministry. Let us meditate four such truths:

1) The Principle of Independent Identity

1 Co 12:15 -16 - *"If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?"*

1Co 12:17 - *"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?"*

Comparing one Christian ministry with another is not a healthy practise. Every organisation is special. It is special because it serves God's purpose. They are all different from each other. The hand's purpose is very different from that of a leg. Eye's purpose is very different from that of an ear. Hence, unity does not mean that we lose our identity.

Infact, we need to maintain our identity and uniqueness. That would be our core-competence. And that benefits the Body of Christ. We should avoid becoming a photo copy of another organisation. That will result in duplication of God's work. We need to appreciate our differences and try to figure out how our ministry fits beautifully in the Divine Sovereign plan of God.

2) The Principle of Mutual Dependence

1Cor 12:21 - *The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."*

Even though we have a separate identity and purpose, we cannot operate independently. Though it might look like we can move ahead without anybody's help, wisdom teaches us that we need the other members of the Body. I have come across ministries and organisations who are highly critical of others. On a deeper analysis, we will find that a ministry or church cannot stay healthy without mutual dependence on other ministers and ministries. For example, a Church may be in need of a sound Biblical teacher, when it is threatened by wrong doctrines. Similarly, a Mission agency may need the pastoral care of a Church for the missionaries' parents who had been left behind.

3) The Principle of Mutual Respect

1Co 12:22-23 - *"On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honourable we bestow the greater honour, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty."*

We need to respect each member of the Body. Some members of the body may have more honour than the other. But we should not despise anyone. For example, the eyes are more honourable than the legs. People only look into the eyes while speaking to each other. Eyes are in a prominent place. But we don't put big weights on eyes. They are highly sensitive. We do not ask eyes to run and bear heavy burdens. But the legs do. Because of its job, the feet may get dirty. The eyes should not disrespect the legs because they are dirty. On the

contrary, the leg should not feel jealous of the eyes. God will reward everyone according to their deeds. So let us do what God wants us to do. And be content in the will and plan of God.

4) The Principle of Mutual Help

1Co 12:26 - *"If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together."*

If one member of the body suffers, then it is the duty of all others to come together and help. For example, if the feet are wounded, then the mouth shouts and the eyes looks. And the hands go to the legs to ease the pain. On the contrary, if the mouth says, 'It is the problem of the leg,' then he might get hurt in the long run (It may not get food without the help of the legs). And the whole Body might suffer. Similarly in the Kingdom of God, we should never become indifferent towards the other organisations. Let us care for one another and love one another.

Son of Promise and the Son of Flesh

Isaac was the son of promise where as Ishmail was the son of the flesh, born out of the decision by Sarai and Abraham (Gal 4:23). Too many times, we come across people, who decide to start their own organisations out of flesh – without any promise of God guiding them. They will be a cause of division and divisiveness in the Body of Christ.

Isaac and Ishmael can never co-exist. Both have to be separated. So, though unity might not be possible with such organisations and churches, nevertheless they should be allowed to thrive separately. Note that Ishmail was sent away from Isaac and God blessed Ishmail as well. A spiritual man will discern all these things. Sometimes

it is better to let some ministers thrive on its own while God's purposes are fulfilled by His chosen vessels.

A Word of Caution – False Doctrines and Imbalanced Teachings

Not only we will face divisions because of the sons of flesh, we will also come across false brothers, false apostles and false prophets (Gal 2:4, 2 Pet 2:1, 1 Jn 4:1). Unity with them is not possible but we should be very careful before jumping to any conclusions. We need to find whether they accept the supremacy of Christ (1 Jn 4:3) or whether they preach another Christ (2 Cor 11:4). Or they may simply follow a Christian leader (1 Cor 1:12). Difference should be made between these.

People who preach perverted things normally do not magnify Christ in their sermons. There are some cult groups who magnify themselves above Christ. They consider their teachings alone to be true. Their sermons and the ministries would be directed towards them. This is a dangerous trend and we need to stay away from such organisations and Churches.

Imbalanced teachings cannot be termed as a wrong doctrine. It is when a preacher preaches from his own personal experiences rather than relying on God's word. For example, a preacher may be more concerned about Holy Living than Missionary Evangelism; so the regular hearers of this preacher are less likely to get involved in evangelism.

On the other hand, emphasizing ministering at the cost of personal testimony will lead to another imbalanced approach. Though these imbalanced teachings are not wrong doctrines per se, they can lead to one if not balanced in time. It is for this reason apostle Paul urged to watch on his teachings closely (1 Tim 4:16).

Purpose of Coordination

All through the centuries, servants of God have tried to find some common ground so that we might not be divided because of minor differences. One such a thing is the Apostle's Creed which I want to mention here.

The Apostle's Creed is a set of of basic doctrines of the Church:

- 1) I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
- 2) I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and He will come to judge the living and the dead.
- 3) I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Although the beliefs regarding the gifts and eed, it nevertheless forms a foundational belief system of the Christian world.

Hence for the sake of Christian work and Evangelism, Jesus Christ being our Chief Cornerstone, we need to work in a synchronising manner.

Evangelism – An Unifying Factor

Mar 16:15 - *“Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”*

Most of the Bible-believing Christians agree that Jesus called His disciples to preach the Gospel. That mandate has been passed on to us. Why can't we come together and serve Him for better?

In India, we find organisations and churches working in an independent way. I believe that there must be a coordinated effort to bless our country. Too many people and resources are being wasted in one way or the other. But the task ahead of us is large and challenging. We need to distribute our resources evenly all over the nation. And for this we need to proceed in a coordinated manner.

I believe the hour of reckoning has finally come to our nation. The love of Christ binds us together - Churches, Mission Organisations, Mission Schools, Mission Hospitals, Christian Advocacy Groups and Christian Legal Forums. Let us put a coordinated effort so that the Church in India becomes a mighty force. For too long have we been divided by the traditions of the past. Let us come together and pray. Let there be Inter-Organisational Fellowships in each town, district and State. Let there be Inter-Church Pastors meeting everywhere.

Let Evangelism unite us.

Let God's Love bind us.

May His Kingdom Come. Amen !

The Charge

A hundred thousand souls a day

Are passing one by one away,

In Chirstless guilt and gloom.

O Church of Christ, what will you say

When in that awful judgement day

They charge thee with their doom?

- Dr. A.B. Simpson

Chapter 12

A Letter

The Cry From a Trouble-Maker

“Paul, Paul, why are you persecuting me?”

Acts 9:4

To

The Missionary,

I hate you because you love the Western Nations more than India. If you love the West than our Nation, then why don't you go there and settle down. Your religion came from there. Leave us alone.

I hate you because you receive funding from the west and convert our people. Our people are innocent. See how they are poor even after becoming Christians. But you have become rich. You did not even give the money that you received for the poor and the needy.

I hate you because you do not pay any money for the village functions. When you invited us for your Christmas function, we came to you and ate the cake that you gave us. But when we invited, you told that you would eat with us. You did not even donate for the function. You are a betrayer and opportunist.

I hate you because you visit the innocent people and 'canvass' them, and make them followers of your

religion. Why don't you come and preach to us, the rich and influential? Why go to the tribal and the poor people only?

I hate you because you have created division among our people. Previously in our villages, they were like one family. But see, what you have done. One group has accepted Christ and another hasn't, and they are fighting with each other.

I hate you because, you give them education and develop them. You build for them schools and colleges, and establish dioceses for them. And finally on the day of electing the Bishop, you seek police protection. You have totally ruined our village atmosphere.

I hate you because you have brought in new and strange cultures and our young people are attracted by them. See how scanty clothes they wear now. You have replaced, 'Namaste' with a hand shake. Even you shake hands with our women. What a shame!

To me my country is more important than anything else. I will live and die for my country. And I want to preserve its culture. You have converted our people forcefully and fraudulently. I cannot accept this. Hence I have retorted to violence. I burn Churches and give problems to the believers. I know what I am doing is wrong but I will continue to do it for a greater cause.

With hate,

Trouble-Maker

Reply To The Trouble-maker From The Missionary

Dear friend,

Thank you for your open letter. First of all, I want to appreciate your frankness. But I want to clarify certain important things with you. Please do patiently read this letter.

Friend, I want you to understand the fact that Christianity is not a Western Religion. Christianity came to India much before it spread to the West. Saint Thomas, one of the disciples of Jesus Christ came to India in the first century itself. According to tradition he died in Chennai, South India.

Also I find that you are very patriotic towards our country. But I want you know that there are a lot of missionaries who are equally passionate about the welfare of the India. You should not forget about the contribution of missionary Andrews who played a vital role in Mahatma Gandhiji's decision to come to India and get involved in the freedom struggle. The missionaries brought the first printing machine to India. They built schools and hospitals in order to serve the people, not to convert them. If conversion would have been the only aim of the missionaries, the story would have been entirely different by now. The missionaries pioneered the education to the blind and the differently-abled as well.

And in your letter, you have mentioned that these conversions are taking place because of money. You need to understand that it is not the 'conversion to a religion', but a 'change of heart', that Jesus taught. It is a transformation from the old ways of life to a new way of life. Jesus laid emphasis on the change of heart. He taught about sin and that every man born in this world is a

sinner, whatever his religion be. This includes Christians as well. A person can call himself a Christian because his parents were Christians. But the Bible says, that he is a sinner and he needs to believe in Jesus for his salvation. With regard to your complaint of, 'canvassing people', I want to clarify that, we preach the Good news about Jesus Christ. We do not convert nor urge for conversion. Jesus told us to 'preach' and not to 'convert.'

Another accusation of yours is that we receive funding from the Western countries. What you say might be a little true. But most of the present day Indian missionaries have left lucrative careers and have ventured into deep jungles. It is the love of Christ that propels them. Please get their salary certificates. See their bank balances and you will know.

Regarding the non-payment of donation to village functions that you said about, we would gladly donate chocolates and eatables for the children who attend the village functions. But you should also understand that most village functions are religious functions which we may not be able to attend. We have no problem in attending the social functions.

And about 'creating divisions' in villages, you need to understand that in many cases when one family or one person experiences this 'change of heart', he may express his willingness to accept the Lord in Baptism. What I seen is that once this person has left his old bad habits of drinking and beating his wife, some of your friends incite violence against him and his family.

On the subject of education and development, you have been grossly misled by a wrong propaganda. Education has given light to our society and to our children. There were a lot of social evils that the missionaries

fought against. Social evils like sati, child marriage, human-sacrifice, untouchability, temple-prostitution were all abolished because of the enlightenment brought about by the educational institutions. The Bible teaches that all human beings are created in the image of God and should be treated with dignity and respect.

I understand your heart-ache regarding the loss of culture. But you should be able to perceive that cultures are dynamic and keep on changing. Anthropological insights reveal that the 'Perceived Developed- Cultures' influence the 'Perceived Developing-Cultures.' This generation of Indians think that the West has a better culture than ours (according to me, in some cases this might be true but not in all aspects). And incidentally we opt for Pepsi and Cola, and KFCs and Levis.

You seem to be very much offended by some of our brothers' action towards women, who did not show cultural sensitivity. I apologise for the same. But you should not forget that the Church has elevated the status of women in today's Indian society. Missionaries fought against many of the social evils which were demeaning to women.

Finally, regarding your question for why we go to the tribal and poor people, you should know that the Lord Jesus Christ always went to the poor and the needy first. Shall we not follow our Master's footsteps? Yes, sometimes, the rich and the influential people might come to the Lord but it would be much more difficult than poor people. Any way if you would want us to come to your house, I would be the first person to come and share the Good News with you.

I feel sad that you have resorted to violence. Jesus taught us to overcome evil by doing good. He also

commanded us to pray for you and bless you. I hope this letter would have cleared some of your doubts.

Always remember that God loves you and He wants you to know Him. Don't forget that He died for your sins and will give a new life if you believe. You will be always in our prayers.

With love,

A Missionary

Chapter 13

Groans

The Cry of Missionaries

“I Myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I Myself will make them lie down.”

Ezekiel 34:15

We have entered the second decade of the 21st century. The boundaries are shrinking and distances are reducing. Communication technology is growing by leaps and bounds. These changes have started to impact the mission work on a larger scale. The once interior villages are becoming accessible. The once disconnected parts of the country are being connected by mobile phones. Owing to good Government schemes, the poor people are being benefited. Anything happening in the remote parts of our country is being telecast by the hyper-active Indian media. The traditional Indian Christians have grown wealthier and are in a commanding position to support missionary work. Being relevant and adopting to changes is the need of the hour.

The missionary work in the past, had seldom followed a particular pattern for a long period. Leaders who fail to see this reality will ultimately be left behind the tide of changes that is sweeping all over the world. Necessary changes have to be made in order to keep up with the changes in the cultural and socio-economic sphere of life.

The 20th Century was very crucial for Indian Missions. India was declared an independent country in the year 1947. Following that, most of the foreign missions left for their native countries leaving behind the missions and the ministries in the hands of Indian men whom they found fit to lead. After Independence there was a steady rise of indigenous Indian Missions beginning from the 1950s. All these were not just random happenings in Indian mission history. It was God who was turning the pages of history and was leading the Indian Church for a glorious new beginning.

Towards the end of the previous century and at the beginning of this present century, we saw the beginnings of small missions with a focus on one particular people group or a particular area of work.

Praise God that Indian Mission has come a long way.

But, in spite of all these developments, Indian Mission have a lot to do. The Gospel is yet to be preached to many unreached people groups and there are still millions who have not heard the good news about Jesus Christ.

As we march on as an army to bring down the strongholds of Satan and reach the people, we also need to be careful about the methods and strategies that we employ in our mission administration. Although the missionary work is a spiritual battle which might be risky and at times dangerous, still as leaders we need to do our best to minimize the casualties.

I want to bring into focus certain things which have been plaguing my mind pertaining to missionaries. The opinion that I share with you here are purely personal and not aimed at any particular organization. They are learnt from my personal encounters with missionaries

of various missionary organizations, both big and small, over the past two decades.

Shepherding Vs Managing

I have often wondered how a 'Movement of the Holy Spirit' can be managed. A school can be managed; an office can be managed; an institution can be managed, but when God works among a few people and a movement begins, how can it be managed? I think this is where the problem starts. In the Bible, we find the best analogy for Christian leadership in the form of a Shepherd. Jesus Himself said that He was a good Shepherd(John 10:11).

God found David, a man after His own heart basically because he was willing to give (risk) his precious life for those (insignificant) lambs. This is the need of the hour - Men of God's calibre; men with a shepherd's heart, a loving heart, a risking heart at the helm of Christian missionary leadership. They are a rare commodity in Missions today. Even if they are found, they are a small minority like an endangered species. People are elevated to leadership positions because of some talents, some social standing or some high qualification.

Where are the leaders who would risk their own lives for their staff?

I can tell you with a little bit of exaggeration that highly committed missionaries seldom need any scrutiny or management. What they need is only encouragement when the expected fruits are not found in the ministry. Or a word of encouragement when they are being plagued by various kinds of illnesses.

Administrative Helps

1Cor 12:28 - *" God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues."*

On the other hand, we should not forget that 'Administration' is a ministry. This is an important office for any ministerial body. This involves the faithful management of personnel, time and resources (Mat 24:45 Tit 1:7). The works of administration involves gathering information(reports) from the mission fields and distributing resources to the needy missionaries. This is the chief end of administration. But this office can be misused by self-serving people. Just because the resources are at their end, they like to boss over people and practise non-biblical method of distribution. When this office is misused, then the missionaries suffer. We find in the 6th chapter of the book of Acts, a classic example of administrative ministry which benefitted the widows.

We Pay, and You Work

Part of this mess is because of the imported idea of western leadership models and follow-up work which is purely based on capitalistic roots. The capitalistic-managerial system works based on reports and results. But Jesus neither focused on reports nor on the results. It was about the will of God and the glory of God. Often, the reports, the expectations of the sponsors, the scrutiny of the immediate leaders takes the toll on missionaries' mental health. On the other hand, as we had seen already, reports are sometimes very much necessary because the partnering group may be very far away from the actual place of work. They would need constant updation. Hence, the reporting system of the missionaries should be voluntary and it should not be equated with the financial help that they might receive.

The missionary is also a weak vessel. He needs constant guidance and nourishment from the Word of God. We cannot make anyone to minister through the lure of money. When a committed missionary discerns such a kind of attitude among the Christian leaders, he

might be discouraged to the core, because it was the money and the world that he has put aside and has come as a missionary.

On the other hand, spiritual stagnation, not accepting changes and not developing the next generation of leaders can be the common errors the senior ministers of God might make. But all these kinds of mistakes can only be dealt with a rod and not with the sword.

A Sensitive Steward

Sometimes the practical situation of the field and reading the missionary mind becomes a distant reality. Even the leaders who had risen from the grass root level fail to address the needs of their fellow brothers. When the distance between the field missionaries and the administrative leaders increase, then there is need of more rules and regulations. Also it is wisdom to keep the organisation small. When the organisation becomes big then the family fellowship is lost and the rules and regulations replace personal interactions. This becomes a source for many heartburns.

Isaiah 10:1 - *“Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees, and the writers who keep writing oppression.”*

We need rules but we should understand that rules alone cannot solve all problems. If we only rely on rules, then it could be misused by the managers to crush missionaries. Sometimes, it has resulted in abuse as well. Rules are good in themselves when they are implemented with a shepherd-heart. But with a bossy attitude, the future history will tell us of how many missionaries had suffered and died not because of hostile persecution but of internal administrative pressures. I strongly believe that the health problem of many present

day missionaries can be traced to some kind of mental abuse by some legalistic manager or a management.

Just try to realize this - Because of some decisions of ours in our Boards and Committees, people have died, or dying slowly. Can you grasp this fact? Beware! We might have blood on our hands - the blood of committed and sincere missionaries. The intention behind a decision might have been good. But that is not an excuse. As stewards of God's household we should have studied and researched the multi-dimensional effects of each and every decision that we take both as an individual and as a corporate body. We complain of the anti - Christian elements when they burn our churches. But I think, this is a bigger enemy that the Indian Mission has to tackle.

Servant of All

Mother Teresa once said that, 'We should not only know how to make rules, but also to break it.' ***The shepherd-leader will know when to break a rule. A servant-leader will know when to bend a rule.*** I know as you read this article you may feel uncomfortable. Some legalistic managers consider these things as a compromise and their arguments hold good because of their commanding position, educational qualifications and compelling arguments. Given a free hand, such a leader will definitely lead the organisation to a slow and steady death.

This bending and breaking are not for any personal favour as it happens sometimes. It should also not be a show of the power of position one holds. Rather it should proceed from the heart full of love and compassion. Jesus was filled with compassion when he touched the leper which was against the law. He touched the coffin of the young man (he knew that he would

become ceremonially unclean by that act). His heart went after the plight of the widow. ***Jesus' heart was a heart of a Good Shepherd.*** He would gladly die than to see anyone cry out of pain. And he expects us to lead like Him. It was for this reason, after His resurrection, He told Peter - *"Feed My sheep"* (John 21:17). When our staff are down with sickness, when they are blamed by everyone for some silly mistake, when they themselves are loaded with feelings of guilt, what is our action?

When a leader spends time with a missionary, visits him often, and owns his work personally, guides him gently and corrects him smoothly, he is a Shepherd after God's own heart. He will hear the groans of his sheep.

Money

*Dug from the mountain side
Or washed in the glen,
Servant am I or master of men.
Earn me, I bless you;
Steal me, I curse you;
Grasp me and hold me,
Like a friend I shall possess you.
Lie for me, die for me,
Covet me, take me -
Angel or devil,
I'm just what you make me.*

- Author Unknown

Chapter 14

When God Says No..

The Cry From the Altar

“Bring no more vain offerings.”

Isaiah1:13

Will God reject our offerings? Will He not accept us and our offering as we are? Is His love not unconditional?

Isa1:13 - *“Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and Sabbath and the calling of convocations— I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly.”*

Here we find God telling the people of Israel not to bring any more offerings to Him. Their offerings did not please Him. Their life was an abomination in His sight and hence God rejected their offerings.

In pagan cultures, people give to dieties in order to get blessed. They make an offering expecting that it will be paid back with greater dividends. This pagan practise has influenced Christian thinking. Born in a country where blind faiths are often intermingled with the genuine, it would be very hard to differentiate between the two.

Recently we were in need of a huge amount of money for a missionary programme. I prayed for few

people who can give lot of money, instead of many people giving small amounts of money. But God gently corrected me that it was not a Biblical principle.

In God's sight a small offering is of a great value when it is given with a sincere heart. The world will respect people who are big donors, but for us children of God, we always need to have His perspective.

Many a time, God accepts a small gift from us and makes it a great blessing to many people. Oh! How many times we have forfeited this blessing expecting some great things from Heaven. But God will bless us when we start with what we have.

In the Bible we come across God's men who rejected offerings from men. Let us meditate one after the other.

1)Abraham

Gen 14:22 -23 - *"But Abram said to the king of Sodom, 'I have lifted my hand to the Lord, God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that I would not take a thread or a sandal strap or anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich.' I will take nothing but what the young men have eaten...."*

Here we find Abraham rejecting the generous offer of the king of Sodom. Abraham was not attracted towards Sodom and its goods. Further, he was very careful not to attribute his financial blessing to a pagan king. This may be one of our strongest drives in life as long as we live in this earth. God alone should be glorified through our life. There should be no one in our life who can say - *'I have made you great.'* When we find such a kind of attitude in people, it is better to reject those offerings. May be we are in a dire need. May be we have a big programme ahead. May be our children need some

help. But it is better to say, 'No.' It is better to suffer than to fall into the hands of man.

We are living in such a consumeristic society that we are in constant need of something. In such a scenario, saying no to some lucrative business offers, lump-sum offerings would need spiritual stamina. ***It is either the Word or the world.***

2)Elisha

2 Ki 5:15,16 - *"Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and he came and stood before him." And he said, "Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant." But he said, "As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive none." And he urged him to take it, but he refused.*

2 Kings 5:26 - *"Was it a time to accept money and garments, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male servants and female servants?"*

Here we find prophet Elisha rejecting the offering from an influential Syrian Commander in spite of his repeated urges. We also find that the prophet is giving a reason for this strong refusal to his assistant Gehazi (2 Kings 5:26). Elisha lived during terrible times. The worship of Baal was established by the evil kings of Israel. The people of Israel had rejected the worship of Jehovah. ***This must have been the pain of God's heart.*** And it was felt by His prophet. In such a scenario, the concern of God's prophet was for the glory of God. He did not long for a settled life and material blessings. How often we slip into apathy like that of Elisha's servant Gehazi! He thought that Elisha missed a good opportunity. Perhaps they had bills to pay and tried hard to meet both ends. 'Elisha is not wise', thought Gehazi. Have we not heard of people say of such things?

Even today, we witness terrible things. Both the organized Church and the unorganized Church (Para-Church) have derailed. Idolatry and worship of leaders have entered Christendom. Committees and leaders are controlled by big donors. Casteism is encouraged. Corruption is normal. Individual offerings are being converted into private assets. There is no accountability. If we run an audit in many of our ministries, most of them would be behind bars.

If we could not even come up to the level of the righteousness of people who do not know God, how can we ever preach the Gospel? It is blasphemous to preach Bible from pulpits that are corrupted. Have we not defamed God's Name? Are we not the reason for millions of people who have refused to come to Christ? Our pathetic lifestyles drives people away from the precious Saviour. Is this the time to think of our own settlement and future? Oh! Dear God's child! Wail over the situation! Cry to Him! Do not worry about your financial and material needs. Fulfill the ministry God has given you. We have little time left. The situation is not good. Never let the offers of Naaman attract you.

3) Daniel

Dan 5:17 - *"Then Daniel answered and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another. Nevertheless, I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation."*

"Let your gifts be for yourself"

Is this a way to talk to a king? Was Daniel insane? Or was he arrogant?

Daniel who served the King of kings now stood before a king. He knew that he served a Higher Power. Therefore, he need not be afraid. Even if he faced death,

it would not make him afraid. That was the standard of the prophet Daniel who was highly esteemed before God (Dan 10:11).

The king would have been surprised by his blunt reply. Daniel knew well that giving gifts was quite normal to kings. It was how they pleased their guests. But here Daniel wanted to convey a message to the king. Daniel need not be appeased. He will not accept glory from men and will not accept the testimony of men. He served God alone. He cannot honour a king who does not honour the King of kings.

Oh! How we desperately need people like Daniel in our Churches, Organizations and Institutions! People who serve the King of kings; people who have no regard for riches; leaders who cannot be bought by money; ministers who preach with authority. These are the servants of the Most High God!

4) Peter

Act 8:20 - "But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!"

Act 5:1-3 - "But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet." But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?"

Simon thought that he could obtain the gift of God with money. He also thought that he could bribe God. He wanted to minister and he had money and so why wait? Too many have now plunged into ministry because they thought that they can start one. They have money and

they have an 'interest.' How foolish! How daring! Money cannot build ministry. It can only build buildings and structures.

Unless a man is given from above, he can get nothing, absolutely nothing (John 3:27).

People who think that they can buy a ministry will come to nothing. Whatever we do, it should be directed by God. We should be led by the Holy Spirit. We should wait on God.

Do not proceed into something new because you have problems with the present organization. Do not launch out on your own to prove yourself. I tell you, it is going to be a costly mistake. God will be gracious but you might have to reap the consequences of the fleshly decisions.

We all have needs. If you are a fulltime worker, you will have more needs. But, dear child of God, wait upon the Lord! Do not fret! God will guide you and provide for all your needs.

Chapter 15

The Coming Judgement

The Cry From The Throne

“For the day of the Lord is great and very awesome; who can endure it?”

Joel 2:11

We are in the last days, perhaps in the last moments of human history. All the prophecies which were foretold in the Bible are nearing their completion. The Gospel is being preached to all the ends of the world. The Son has come nearer the door. Are we prepared to meet Him? Have we prepared those whom God has given us?

We have seen and heard about the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and Truth were revealed through Him (John 1:17). He was an embodiment of love. Indeed, it was He who taught us to love our enemies, to pray for them and bless them. But to see Him as a Judge, we need a special revelation. Jesus' first coming was about compassion and love. He came as a lamb to be slaughtered. But He is going to come again. This time, with the sound of the trumpet and with all His Heavenly hosts. The prophets called that day as the 'Day of the Lord.'

Note the following verses:

Isaiah 2:12 - *“For the Lord of hosts **has a day** against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low.”*

Jeremiah 46:10 - *“That day is the **day of the Lord God** of hosts, a day of vengeance, to avenge Himself on His foes.”*

Joel 2:11 - *“The Lord utters His voice before His army, for His camp is exceedingly great; He who executes His Word is powerful. For the **day of the Lord** is great and very awesome; who can endure it?”*

In the all the above verses, the prophets predicted the coming of the ‘Great Day of the Lord.’

Even Jesus mentioned this day in one of His sermons:

Matt 24:36 - *“But concerning **that day** and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.”*

Apostles Paul and Peter mentioned about this day in their epistles:

1 Thessalonians 5:2 - *“For you yourselves are fully aware that the **day of the Lord** will come like a thief in the night.”*

2 Peter 3:10 - *“But the **day of the Lord** will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.”*

Since, the Bible clearly teaches us that we are going to face this day, it is wise to be prepared for this ‘Day of the Lord.’ I want to elucidate five important areas wherein we need to be careful in the last days.

1. Keeping Ourselves Clean

Rev 22:11- *“Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy.”*

Are we becoming more and more Christ-like? Are we growing in holiness? Have we learnt to speak less

to men and more to God? Have we weeded out all the bitterness from our hearts? Do we still harbour thoughts of hatred towards any brother? - These are the questions that require sincere introspection.

In the last days, there will be two groups of people and they will be found even inside the Church. One group will become more and more evil and another, more and more holy. The latter group may be a minority and may not even be visible. But the former group will be prominent in all the places. They will be the bosses, in-charges, managers, opinion-makers and will occupy all the important positions. We should not be bothered about their blatant opposition for the holiness of the Lord. Let their filthiness be not a concern to us. That should not disturb us. We need to look to the Lord and become more like Him. We should be aiming for holiness, and more holiness.

Note what the Bible says in Romans 1: 24,25

"Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen."

It was God who gave them up to their own lusts. It is for this reason in Revelation 22:11, we read about the evil doer becoming more vile. This is to make him ripe for the judgement. God has not lowered his standard of holiness as many think. We are in the 'New Covenant Era', they say. But what they fail to realize is the fact that we live in the era of the Holy Spirit whose ministry is to convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and of the judgment (John 16: 8-11). We also read about what happened to Ananias and Sapphira when they lied to God (Acts 5:1-10).

If we compromise on holiness, everything, we did for God would become vain. The Word of God warns of more times of difficulty.

2 Tim 3:1-5 - *"Understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people."*

It would take a lot of grace and strength to take a stand for holiness. Because of the prevalence of sin , it is easier and cheaper to commit sin. Sinful pleasures are available at a touch of a finger. But as God's children and His representatives in this corrupt world, we should stand against the tide of immorality.

2. Fulfilling God's Call

Mat 7:21 - *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."*

Are we fulfilling all that God wants us to do? Do we know our 'call'? Do we know our mission on earth? Are we proceeding in the race meant for us?

Apostle Paul was very particular that he should complete the ministry that he received from the Lord. ***Organizing our life in tune with God's call and will is of paramount importance.*** It is not about our wish and will, but of God's will.

But today we find many people and ministers operating according to their whims and fancies.

Note the following verse:

Mat 7:22 - "On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

Prophesying, casting out demons and doing mighty works are themselves not bad deeds. But these people were operating outside the realm of God's plan and purpose. In our initial days of Christian walk with God, we might be interested in doing many things for God. But as we learn to discern God's voice and His will, we need to obey and fulfill His purpose in our lives.

We should not copy or compete with others. Everyone is endowed with special graces and gifts. These people in the above verse chose these ministries because they were spectacular. Beware of 'Show' in Christian ministry. We are called to fulfill His Will and not to show off.

Luke 7:30 - "But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves."

The Pharisees and the teachers of the law were the religious figures during Jesus' time. But all they did was for the sake of the public. They were concerned more about receiving praises from men than from God. Jesus reserved some of the strongest statements for this kind of people. Judgement awaits for those who keep on rejecting God's will for their lives.

3. Having Clear Intentions

1 Corinthians 4:5 - "Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose

*the **purposes of the heart**. Then each one will receive his commendation from God."*

God will judge us according to the intentions of our heart. We may do certain things, but for God, our intentions matter the most.

Why we do what we do is a million dollar question.

Why do I go to Church?

Why do I tithe?

Why do I minister?

Why do I speak?

Why do I donate?

Why do I write this book?!!

Why do I get angry?

Why do I advise?

Why do I go for that meeting?

Why do I opt for that job?

Why do I seek transfer?

These are the questions we need to ask ourselves. God will reward each one according to the intentions of their heart.

1 Peter 5:2-4 - *"Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, **not under compulsion**, but willingly, as God would have you, **not for shameful gain**, but eagerly; **not domineering** over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."*

We may have the following motivations in our life and ministry:

1. We may work for the praise and acceptance of people.
2. We may work for monetary gains.
3. We may work out of compulsion.
4. We may work for God.

Since God honours only the fourth motivation in our life, it is always better to check our intentions.

People judge us by our actions but God judges us by our intentions.

4. Being Careful About Words

Mat 5:22 - *"Whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire."*

Mat 12:36 - *"I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak."*

Let our words towards men be few and careful. Every one of our careless words would be judged (Pro 10:11,32). Today many of us have a casual attitude towards words not knowing that we need to give account for all the careless words that we speak.

We need to think twice before we speak once. We should be careful in selecting the words. We should not say that, *"I have a good heart. I uttered those words without my knowledge."*

Unless we are careful in our words, we may be unfit to serve God. If we are able to control our tongue then we can control our whole body (James 3:2).

5.Overcoming Evil With Good

Romans 12:21 - *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."*

Let there be no dearth in brotherly love. Let us be filled with the abounding love for each and every one in our fellowships and teams. Do not harbour any evil thought towards anyone. If we do not love the brethren, then we are murderers, says the Apostle of love (1 Jn 3:15). How can I love an invisible God if I do not love a visible brother? (1 Jn 4:20). How do I expect God to forgive all my sins when I am not able to forgive the transgressions of my brother ?(Mat 18:35).

In the last days, we will not be able to see love (2 Tim 3:4). Hence, as God's children, we are to show the world the unfailing love of the Father which was manifest in the sacrifice of His only Son Jesus Christ.

Nobody is perfect in this world. Let not any root of bitterness sprout from us. But let us overcome evil with good. If somebody speaks against us, let us bless him through our prayer. Let us not harbour thoughts of vengeance in our mind. Let us try always to look at the positive side of every believer. God has chosen them, who are we to comment on their spirituality? God has justified them, who are we to condemn them? (Rom 8:33,34). So let us not judge before time.

Let us wait for the day of the Lord. Let us not be discouraged in doing good deeds.

Romans 14:10-12 *"Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, 'As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.'" So then each of us will give an account of himself to God."*

Chapter 16

The Sound Of Victory

The Cry of The First Martyr

“But he (Stephen), full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.” Act 7:55

Human souls are the devil's biggest assets. The devil doesn't worry about money and power. He worries more about the soul's of men. Every soul that we win for Christ is a loss for the devil. If we win a soul for Christ, the devil will do everything in his capacity to win the soul back. He will try to quench the fire that has been lit and nullify the commitments that have been made.

There is fierce battle for the souls of men in the heavenlies. We need to understand that the first tactic of the devil is to take us to our old sinful past. He will accuse and remind us of our past sins and will make us forget the position that we presently have in Christ. Not only that, the devil uses the world to fight against the believer. The devil is the present ruler of this world. He controls the world-systems. Jesus Himself called the devil as the ruler of the world (John 14:30).

The weapon that the devil uses is the weapon of hatred and rejection. All of us want to be accepted in our societies. It is one of the basic psychological needs of every person. We want to be accepted among our

families, colleagues and friends. But Jesus warned His disciples that people would hate them (John 15:18). Not only people hated the disciples but the whole world came against them. According to Church history, all the disciples of Jesus, except John were martyred. There is a price that we need to pay for following Christ.

If we are devoted to Christ, then it is impossible for the world to accept us.

If we would lower our testimonies and make little compromises, then the world would gladly accept us.

“Far be it for me to accept the crown of gold from the world which gave my savior the crown of thorns”, said Charles Spurgeon.

Look at what Jesus says,

“In this world you shall have troubles, but take heart, I have overcome the world said Jesus (John 16:33).”

The world may come against the Believer.

The devil may scheme against the Believer.

The flesh may fight against the Believer.

But Jesus has overcome the world.

He has shamed and defeated the devil (Col 2:15).

Stephen -The First Martyr

We read about Stephen in the book of Acts. He was one of the seven, appointed to serve at the tables and later he became an evangelist. ***He was full of Faith, Holy Spirit, Grace and Wisdom.*** He had a deeper commitment and a stronger spirit. The world hated him very much. He faced the world with fullness. But it could not bear with such a person even for a single moment. All the hell came against him and he became the first martyr of the New Testament Church.

Let us meditate the life of Stephen so that we too will lead a full life, not worrying about the hatred of the world.

1)Stephen - Full of Faith

Acts 6: 5 - *"And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith."*

Having faith is one thing, but being filled with faith is another thing. Not only Stephen had faith in the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, but he was also filled with faith.

Let us all be filled with faith.

We need to have faith in the power of Jesus' Name.

We need to have faith in the power of Jesus' Blood.

There is no sin that Jesus cannot deliver from. The name of the Lord Jesus is above every other name. We have deliverance in Jesus' name. The devil trembles when he hears the name of Jesus. There is healing in Jesus' name. There is power in the name of Jesus. Oh! What a wonderful name!

We have the following blessings through the name of Jesus:

The Promise of His Presence

Mat 18:20 - *"For where two or three are gathered in **My name**, there am I among them."*

The Promise of His Provision

John 14:14 - *"If you ask Me anything in **My name**, I will do it."*

The Promise of His Power

John 14:26 - *"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in **My name**, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."*

Phi 2:9,10 *"Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth."*

We may have ups and downs in our spiritual life, but remember. WE ARE ALWAYS ON THE WINNING SIDE.

Be constantly cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Let not failures discourage you. Every failure has a lesson of faith! ***Every failure can be turned into God's opportunity of blessing! It is the faith that turns failure into feat; trial into triumph and defeat into victory.***

It is faith that overcomes the world (1 Jn 5:4) and it is the faith that is our shield against the enemy's onslaught (Eph 6:16).

Let our words be filled with faith – full of optimism and hope. Do not use hope less words and sentences. Let us speak words which are filled with faith (Pro 18:21).

2) Stephen - Full of The Holy Spirit

Acts 6:5 - *"And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit."*

We need to always be filled with the Holy Spirit. It will be impossible to lead a full life without the Holy Spirit's help. We need to depend upon Him all the time. And we need to learn to hear His still small voice.

Isa 30:21- *"And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left."*

We find that the presence of sin has increased a 1000 fold and so we need the anointing and the presence of God the Holy Spirit all the more. We need to thirst. We need to pray in tongues every day for at least half an hour.

Make your travel, a time of fellowship with God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not a power, but He is a person. Have fellowship with Him. Let Him be your friend. Focus your attention on Him. It is not a one time experience. It is an everyday experience, every moment experience. Let our cry be - "Lord! Fill me more! Fill me more!"

Note how Elisha prayed to Elijah,

2 Kings 2:9 - *"Please let there be a double portion of your spirit on me."*

Elisha knew that he lived in harder times than Elijah. Even with the anointed ministry of Elijah, Jezebel was still on the throne. But Elisha did not want to take chances. Hence, he desired the double portion of the Spirit.

OH! HOW I WISH THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THIS GENERATION WOULD DESIRE A 10 FOLD ANOINTING!

Addictions are on the rise! Suicides are on the increase! The devil's kingdom seems to be on the winning side. Our methods, strategies, plans and programmes may fail. But the Spirit's work can never fail. *"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts (Zec 4:6)."*

Where are the Elishas who would desire more anointing to stand against the devil?

Where are God's Stephens of the 21st Century?

3)Stephen - Full of Grace and Power

Acts 6:8 - "And Stephen, full of grace and power"

Stephen was not only filled with faith and Holy Spirit, but He was filled with grace.

He was full of grace. What does it mean?

He was leading a life powered by the grace of God.

It is through the grace of God, that we can lead a victorious life.

Grace is not a license to sin, but a keen awareness of one's own weakness. It is about total dependence on Him.

Too many times, we take decisions and try to live by that decision. Decisions are good and important. But we cannot trust our flesh to keep that decision. We will fail. And when we fail, we get discouraged. On the other hand, if we would live by our determination, we may end-up being a self-righteous person.

It is the GRACE OF OUR LORD THAT KEEPS US HUMBLE. A humble person will receive more grace and for him leading a victorious life would be easy because his dependence is on the Lord.

James 4:6 - *"God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."*

Grace is a vehicle through which God's power is manifested in our life and ministries.

It is never about our efforts. It is all about Him.
Our efforts do matter, but it is only through Him we accomplish things. It is He who enables us. It is He who helps us keep our commitments.

Many of us are living a defeated Christian life merely because of our spiritual pride.

Note how Paul, the great apostle says:

2Cor 12:9 - *But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me."*

Let us join apostle Paul and sing, 'I am weak. But it is the Lord who strengthens me. It is the Lord who enables me to do all the things that He wants me to do. I will not worry. I will be proud of my weaknesses.'

Phil 4:13 - *"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."*

4) Stephen - Full of Wisdom

Acts 6:10 *"But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking."*

Stephen was full of wisdom. He was a man of the Bible. He meditated on the exploits of God's men. He meditated on the life of Abraham, Moses and David. His speech in front of the Sanhedrin attests to this fact (Acts 7). He was thorough with the history of Israel. His opposers could not stand against the wisdom with which Stephen spoke.

We should not forget that he was appointed to serve at the tables. He did that small job with Divine wisdom. He did the work faithfully.

We also need to fulfill all our duties faithfully. We should be faithful in small things. Only then God will use us in His own time. Let us do small things with great wisdom. A day came when God started using Stephen mightily. No one can thwart God's plan in our lives. We may be working in an organisation. We may be under a tough task-master. But never forget that God has put you there. We need to meditate the Word of God day and night. It is only through the Word we are endowed with Divine wisdom.

Read the Word of God with all diligence. Do not read it at random. Read it regularly. Let it delight you. Memorize the Scriptures.

Note what God said to Joshua,

Josh 1:7 - *“Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go.”*

You shall have success wherever you go if you live by the Word of God!

It may be your career! It may be your marriage! It may be your exam! It may be your interview!

Honour the Word of God and God will Honour you (1 Sam 2:30).

Stephen was full of FAITH, HOLY SPIRIT, GRACE AND WISDOM.

But the world gave him death. Stephen was victorious in death! He died a soldier's death and became the first martyr of the Church. We need the same spirit and the anointing of Stephen. Let us not worry about what people might say. Let us not worry about public opinion. Let us not worry about what the world would think. Let us focus our attention on Jesus and complete our race.

Hebrews 12:1- 2 - *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

Epilogue

The Fire Still Burns

*Year - 1999,
Place - Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India.*

I was doing my Civil Engineering course in Coimbatore Institute of Technology (CIT) when I faced the crisis of my life. I was in my third year and my friends were confining themselves to prepare for GRE, TOEFL, GATE (These are competitive exams for higher studies) and some others were preparing for the campus recruitments. I was at loss. I did not know what to do. What decision should I make? Shall I start a construction firm? Shall I opt for employment in a company or shall I go for higher studies? - these questions were haunting me. My mother who was school teacher then used to tell me pointing her fingers towards me – “You will be a missionary one day. I have dedicated you to God even before you were born.” This complicated the matter further.

Although in my school days I did entertain the thoughts of becoming a missionary, they almost vanished once I entered college. By then my sister had gone as a missionary to Odisha and I understood their tight-rope financial situation. I thought that I better do a good business and support hundreds of missionaries. The thought of becoming a missionary did not sound as a good idea.

Nevertheless, this confusion reached a boiling point during my third year in college.

I decided to seek the Lord's counsel.

I told him, "Lord! I will go as a missionary only if it is Your Will. But I do not want to go because my mother has committed. But I will give money for the missionary work."

But the Lord replied,

"Son! I don't need your money.

I NEED YOU!"

Then I relented and committed myself to the Sovereign will of God, "Lord, do whatever you like to do in my life. I am available."

Then arose another question, "Lord! Where should I go?"

Not long after I posed the question to the Lord, I attended a youth gathering in Coimbatore, a city in South India. I was seated in the last row. It was the occasion when the Australian missionary Graham Staines along with his two sons, Philip and Timothy were burnt to death in Odisha. The preacher was challenging the young people – ***"The people who burnt the Australian missionaries and his children thought that the fire that they lit would kill the missionaries and will die down; but they made a big mistake of their lives. The fire that they lit is not going to die. It will burn continuously. It has already started to burn. It is burning here. Many young people here will catch that fire. They will go to Odisha!"***

That's all! The fire was lit!

I made up my mind. The commitment was made. I needed to go to Odisha, somehow. People from other countries are dying for our country. I need to die at any cost.

It is with the same fire I am penning these words. It is this fire of revival that we need! It is this fire of evangelism that we so desperately need! Away with slothfulness and sluggishness! Away with coldness and dullness! Away with entertainments and enticements! Away with the world and its toys!

It is the fire of cleansing that we need. The selfish passions should be burnt! The lust should be burnt! The anger, jealousy, hatred etc. should be burnt! The love of money should be burnt!

ALL OUT FOR GOD!

It is the same fire that was burning in the hearts of apostles. They considered suffering for Christ as a privilege. The New Testament Christianity is Christianity of martyrdom.

The fire is still burning!

Are you ready to die for Christ?

What is the use of living a hundred years and not win a single soul for Christ?

What is the use of having dozens of qualifications without the passion for souls?

What is the use of building business empires if I do not share the Good News of Jesus Christ?

What gain? I ask, What profit?

“For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.” Mark 8:35

Blessing Youth Mission

*A transdenominational ministry dedicated to
Revival and Evangelism functioning since 1971.*

*Conducting Revival Camps, Bible studies
and Training Programmes.*

*Establishing witnessing groups in schools
and colleges through Campus Programmes.*

*Visiting villages, slums, hospitals etc., through hundreds
of outreach teams of laymen and lay women.*

*Church planting and Church revival ministries in
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Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Tamil and Telugu.*

*Helping the poor and the downtrodden through medical,
literacy and relief works.*

Bless Bharat -First Phase (2014-2018)

A questionnaire for better understanding the Project of BYM launched in 2014

1. What is meant by Bless Bharat?

This is a project launched by Blessing Youth Mission to reach our Nation in this generation. It is an inter-denominational and inter-organizational effort to bless our Nation.

2. Who can be part of this?

All those who are cleansed by the blood of Christ can join this.

3. For years, missionary organizations and ministers have devised several projects and programmes like this. Is not Bless Bharat a programme like this?

No. It is quite different. It was Oswald J. Smith, the great missionary statesman who thundered that every Christian should go as a missionary to needy countries. If you are not able to go, he added, then you have to send. Hence the slogan, "Go or Send." But in a country where there are 127 Crore people (127 Million), we cannot entrust the job of preaching the Good News only to the full-time missionaries. Every Christian is a missionary and every non-Christian is a mission field. Only when every Bible-believing Christian transforms into an active soul winner, India can be reached. This is what Bless Bharat endeavors. Instead of calling this as programme or project, it would be better to call this effort as 'God's Burden.'

4. Are you saying that we would need to leave our secular job in order to get involved?

No, what we actually say is that we need to do all that is possible to win souls for Christ. It may be in the places where we work or going out for an outreach

mission nearby. Apostle Paul was a tent-maker but his passion was for the Gospel. In the book of Acts we read that Philip and Stephen who were appointed for looking after tables, were in fact ministering for God. Hence we need to go all out for God. Statistics tell that there are 2 Crore Christians in India. If all Christians would decide to tell the Gospel to one new soul in a week, then our Nation would hear the Gospel within one year.

5. I am regular goer to the Church. I tithe and lead a reasonably good life. Will this not be enough?

It is never enough. This is only one side of the coin. Woe unto me if I do not preach the Gospel said the great Apostle. Jesus is the greatest gift than we can give to our brethren. "Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day" (Psa 96:2).

6. I am a new believer and I do not have a theological education. Can I join this movement?

A candle which is lit gives out light immediately. Theological education is good but it is not indispensable to tell what God did in your life to your friends and relatives. You can involve in tracts distribution or you can join an outreach team in your locality.

7. I am woman. I have not studied much. I am afraid to talk even in my home. What can do by joining this?

Definetly you can do so much things through Bless Bharat. All through the history, woman have played a vital role in the Church. India still lives in villages. You can go for a village outreach with a team. Or you can visit hospital or old age homes and take the Good news to them. Children ministry is a great avenue that you can consider. Start doing what you can in a small way and God will bless you. Words are not required to show love. Millions found Christ in the smile of Mother Teresa.

8. *What are the roots of Bless Bharat? Is it a man made plan or divinely inspired one?*

In the year 1970, a group of young Engineering students gathered for a time of prayer in Southern India under the leadership R. Stanley. God visited them and promised them that, *'There shall be showers of Blessing'* (Eze 34:26). And Blessing Youth Mission was born. One of the burden of these young men was to reach our nation with the Gospel and they launched a project called, 'Project India.' Bless Bharat is the extended programme of Project India launched in 1974 by the Mission.

9. *Tell me more about Blessing Youth Mission?*

Blessing Youth Mission is a revival movement which resulted in evangelism and explosive outreach programmes. It started off as a lay man movement and later on full time missionaries were inducted. Today BYM has around 500 lay volunteers and around 400 full time missionaries.

10. *Why Bless Bharat is important and urgent today?*

According to Mathew 24:14, evangelistic efforts will be multiplied many times so that all the people will come to the knowledge of Christ. The Lord is going to come soon and hence, we all should be involved in the kingdom ministry.

11. *I do not have a personal 'Call' to do ministry. Should we not only proceed when we have a clear call from the Lord?*

Yes. We need to proceed as full time missionaries when God says us so. But to tell Gospel to others, God has already called us. In fact every believer in Christ have a 'Call' already (Mat 28:19). So now it is the matter of obedience or disobedience.

12.What will be part of full time missionaries in Bless Bharat?

The full time missionaries are already working with a set of targets in this first five years(2014-2018). They are mobilising lay force in the North and are spear heading the movement in the pioneering areas, winning the lost for Christ. We are proceeding to Phase 2 of Bless Bharat.

13. I want to do something through Bless Bharat. What should I do?

- 1.You can organise a small ESAP prayer cell (Every Street A Prayer Cell) in your locality with 2 or 3 believers.
2. You can involve in personal soulwinning or outreach evangelism with like-minded believers in your locality.
- 3.If you stay in Tamil Nadu know the districts which has adopted North Indian States and get involved.
- 4.Involve in 'Bless My State' programme (If you stay in non-Tamil State) and get involved in the Mission work in your state.
- 5.Donate for Bless Bharat project.

14. What would be effect of Bless Bharat project?

As promised by God, there would be a great revival in our small groups, prayer cells, Churches and organisations. As the prophet saw in the vision(Eze 37), the dry bones will come together and will raise up like an army working for the Kingdom of God.

Come, let us bless Bharat in our generation with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To know more about Bless Bharat:

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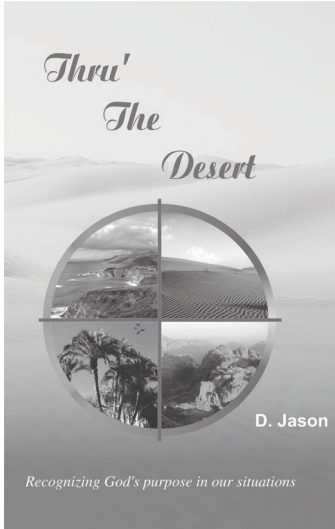
About the Author

Jason committed as a full time missionary when God called him while he was doing his engineering. He served in Odisha among the tribal people for eight years. Along with his equally committed wife, Esther Bercy they established congregations in the interior places and strengthened them. They experienced severe persecution during their stay at Odisha. The persecution strengthened their faith in the Lord and also created a love for the persecutors.

Later on, they moved to Madhya Pradesh and served in a semi-urban town called Sagar. It was here God used them to challenge young people for evangelism. After serving in Central India for three years, they moved to Chennai, South India. Presently, they are editing the Mission's monthly magazine, 'Blessing.' They are also involved in youth and revival ministries. They are blessed with a son Ephraim (10 Years).

Other Books By The Author...

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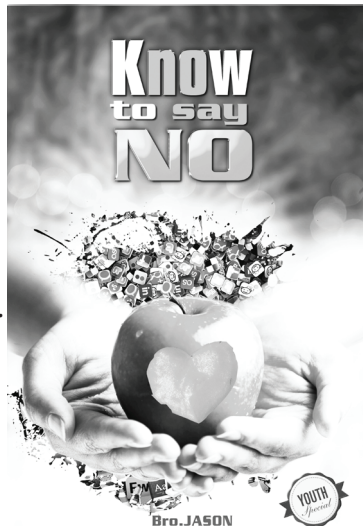


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Help Me Understand!

The world is full of pain and suffering;

Lord! Help me to be a comforter.

The world is full of hopelessness and despair;

Lord! Help me to be a hope-giver.

The world is full of hatred and enmity;

Lord! Help me to manifest true love.

The world is full of bitterness and envy;

Lord! Help me to show sincere piety.

The world is full of betrayal and treachery;

Lord! Help me exhibit true loyalty.

The world is full of groans and tears;

Lord! Help me to understand its' cries.

- D. J



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