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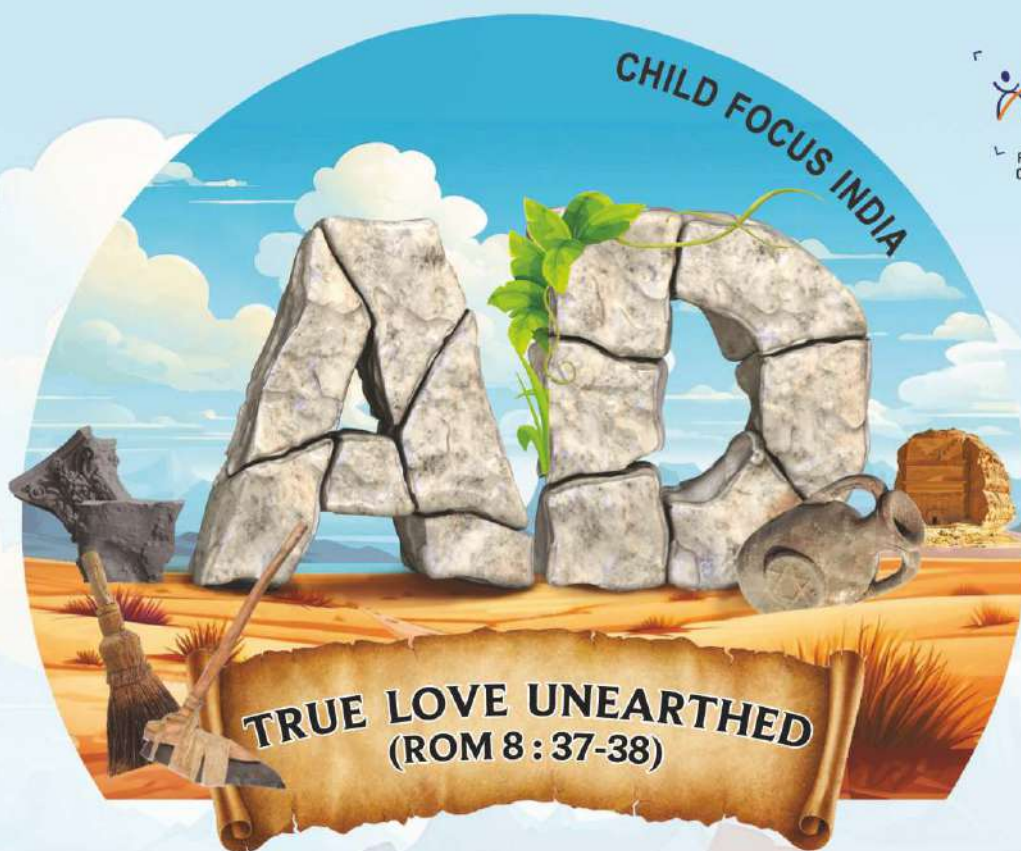
forerunner

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The godly care about the rights of the poor;
the wicked don't care at all.
Proverbs 29:7 (NLT)



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Let No One Be Homeless



"That is the vision of the *Hope Society* in Bangalore which has built over 1,500 shelters for the disadvantaged over the last 35 years. Initiated by Fr George Kannanthanam of the *Claretian Fathers*, it has been a beacon of light for those who lack adequate housing, persons facing terminal illnesses, individuals with disabilities, and victims of disasters. It built 150 houses for the tsunami affected in Tamil Nadu, 650 houses for the earthquake victims in Nepal in 2014 and more than 300 shelters and houses for the 2018 flood victims in Kerala. Its latest venture, called **Project Shelter**, aims at mobilizing 1 million rupees (10 lakhs) every month that is required to construct a house from 1,000 persons with each contributing Rs 1,000. (More info at: projectshelter.org.in) - Matters India

Igniting a fire within



The *Igniter* is an online monthly Christian newsletter produced by a group of dedicated Christian writers drawn from all over India. Now in its 2nd year, the periodical is packed with thought-provoking articles, devotionals, news, matrimonials etc. Their driving mission is to "share the love of Jesus through media," and "equip, encourage and empower readers of all ages in the Word of God, by the power of the Holy Spirit." For your free digital copy by email, write to: KEigniter@gmail.com. (Website: KraisthavaEzhuthupura.com/igniter)

The 5H Path to Happiness

"The first thing [my mum] taught me was '5H' - first, be Holy [ie put God first], Hard work, Honesty, Humble and Humane. All these will give you Happiness," says **Dr Prema Dhanraj**, a pioneer plastic reconstructive surgeon from Bangalore, in an interview with Rev K Vasudevan on *Hope TV* in 2023. Dr Prema is also a recipient of the 2024 Padma Shri award in Medicine. She adds: "If only people cling to God, they can achieve anything...with God I'm a hero, without Him I'm a zero." Triumphant over a personal burn tragedy, her mission *Agni Raksha* has to date provided free surgery to over 25,000 burn victims.



One step closer to justice

A recent demand by the gov't of Andhra Pradesh state to grant Scheduled Caste (SC) status to Dalit [caste-oppressed] Christians has been welcomed by Christian leaders across the country. The SC status provides benefits under India's affirmative action policy aimed at uplifting marginalised communities. A three-member national panel to study the implications of conferring SC status on Dalit Christians and Muslims will submit a report next year. There are 201 million Dalits among India's 1.4 billion. Some 60% of India's Christians, trace their origins to Dalit and other marginalized communities. - UCAN

Hospital breaks new ground

"Technological advancement in healthcare, especially in cancer care, will significantly improve public health," said Siddaramaiah, CM of Karnataka, who inaugurated the state-of-the-art TrueBeam Linear Accelerator (LINAC), the latest cancer treatment system, at **Bangalore Baptist Hospital** on Dec. 18. "Tumours that were thought to be inoperable can now be effectively reached," said Dr Spurgeon, director of the hospital. The 400-bed multispecialty hospital treated over 400,000 outpatients and 28,000 inpatients last year, along with conducting nearly 7,000 surgeries. Its overall vision is: "*Healing and wholeness in the spirit of Jesus Christ.*"



UCF records alarming trend

There was an average of three violent incidents per day against Christians in the last week of 2023, says the *United Christian Forum* (UCF), a watchdog organisation that documents such cases. This spike follows an already alarming trend, with an average of nearly two incidents daily, resulting in a staggering total of 720 incidents in 2023. (UCF's helpline is 1-800-208-4545)

Leading NGO denied aid

The Indian gov't has banned *World Vision India* (WVI), one of India's largest humanitarian Christian missions, from accepting foreign funds. Three million disadvantaged children in India benefit from WVI's services. Since 2014, the FCRA licenses of over 16,000 NGOs have been cancelled. - UCAN



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"FIRST OF ALL, I would that...PRAYERS...be made for EVERYONE, for RULERS and ALL IN AUTHORITY...TO BE SAVED." (1 Tim. 2:1)

"Anna [84 years old]... never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying..." - Luke 2:36-38

✚ **OVER 101,000 MEALS** were packed by 500 volunteers in a Tennessee (US) church last month which will help 275 children from developing nations to have enough food for an entire year, praise God.

✚ **MINIREVIVAL:** Last month the University of Michigan head coach Jim Harbaugh revealed that at least 70 of his players had been baptized over the past season.

✚ **PRAY FOR NIGERIA:** Following the massacre of 160 mostly Christian civilians in Nigeria's Plateau state at Christmas, radicalized Fulani herdsmen murdered at least 31 more Plateau Christians between Jan. 22-24.

✚ **MASSIVE BLAZE:** A Christian father from Indiana, was left in shock after five of his six children died after a massive blaze erupted at his home last month.

✚ **REFUGEES:** There are about 110 million forcibly displaced people world-wide (mid-2023), not including the two million displaced in the current Israel-Hamas war. (UNHCR) It is expected to go up to 130 million in 2024.

Pray for their relief and rehabilitation; for more nations to welcome refugees and asylum seekers; for aid to reach them; that many will seek refuge in Christ

✚ **PRAISE GOD** close to a million people have attended Gospel outreaches in Nicaragua last year, with tens of thousands accepting Christ, and thousands being healed. (CBN)

✚ **IRAN:** Thanks to Bible translators who risk their lives for the work, Christians who live under Iran's hostile Islamic regime are now able to read the New Testament in 12 more of their nation's 62 languages, praise God.

✚ **MIGRATION DEATHS:** Some 569 Rohingya people died or went missing at sea last year as they embarked on dangerous boat journeys to Southeast Asia, says the UN. They were fleeing crowded refugee camps in Bangladesh or persecution in their native Myanmar. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya live in crowded refugee camps in Bangladesh after a brutal crackdown by the Myanmar military in 2017. Pray for their relief and rehabilitation.

✚ **BELARUS** President Alexander Lukashenko has signed a law into effect that significantly tightens control over various religious denominations and organizations. Hundreds of priests have been warned that state agencies are monitoring them and other religious communities.

✚ **POST-PANDEMIC BURNOUT:** A new survey shows that 40% of US church leaders are struggling with post-pandemic burnout that is causing them to seriously consider leaving their congregations. Pray for all pastors.

✚ **HARVEST PLENTY; LABOURERS FEW:** Pray

✚ **HOSTAGE DEAL:** American-led negotiators are edging closer to an agreement in which Israel would suspend its war in Gaza for about two months in exchange for the release of over 100 hostages still held by Hamas, the New York Times reports on Jan. 27. Israel's military retaliation to the Oct. 7 attacks by Hamas has killed over 25,000 people, most of them women and children, according to Gaza's health ministry. Pray for lasting peace.

✚ **GOD IS MOVING** among the churches and people in **Cuba**, as nearly 5,000 people gave their lives to Christ during a missionary trip last December, praise God. (CBN)

✚ **OVER 100,000 YOUTH** rang in the New Year by packing churches and stadiums at Gospel events across the US, notes Matt Brown, founder of *Think Eternity*. Leaders say this may be evidence of true revival. (CBN)

✚ **CHINA:** In a further display of China's crackdown on evangelical Christianity, a court in Liaoning province has sentenced a prominent online Gospel preacher, his wife, and four house church members to lengthy prison terms for allegedly "using superstition to undermine the law" by expressing and sharing their faith. (CP)

✚ **ERITREA:** An estimated 400-500 Christian prisoners of faith are being held in horrifying conditions in Eritrea. Eritrean Christians are frequently tortured and imprisoned indefinitely, even without being charged or tried. "The world needs to wake up to the atrocities taking place in Eritrea today," said one leader.

✚ **PRAY** for the over 45,000 Christians in the West Bank, about 1,000 in Gaza and 185,000 in Israel.

✚ **VIOLENT GANGS** control up to 80% of **Haiti's** capital Port-au-Prince, and have been suspected of killing nearly 4,000 people and kidnapping another 3,000 last year.

✚ **SUDAN:** Millions of people in Sudan are acutely food insecure, after nine months of civil war. About six million people have fled their homes. Pray for God's intervention.

✚ **REVIVAL IN GAZA?** Abu Saada, a former Palestinian sniper turned Christian, believes revival will break out in Gaza and thousands will come to Christ after the war ends. He recently told CBN that God's Spirit is already changing Palestinian hearts through dreams and visions.

✚ **AWAITING THE SECOND COMING:** Pray that both the church and the world will discern the Biblical signs of the times and prayerfully get ready to "stand before the Son of Man," as Jesus urged in Luke 21:20.

✚ **PRAY FOR THE RELEASE** of thousands of Christians who are being unjustly imprisoned worldwide.



"The king's heart is like a stream of water directed by the Lord; He guides it wherever He pleases." - Prov. 21:1

"Righteousness makes a nation great; sin is a disgrace to any nation." - Proverbs 14:34, GNT

"Pray for the city in which you dwell, for, in its peace is your peace, in its prosperity is your prosperity." - Jere. 29:7

"Prayer is where the action is." - John Wesley

"The greatest thing anyone can do for God or man is pray." - S. D. Gordon

"I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach." - Charles Spurgeon

"He who runs from God in the morning will scarcely find Him the rest of the day." - John Bunyan

✦ **FOURTH-LARGEST:** India is projected to become the fourth-largest global economy in 2024, displacing Germany. The GDP of Germany is estimated to be \$4.4 trillion by early 2024, while that of India is estimated to be a shade over \$4 trillion. (India Today) *"Pray to the Lord for [your city], because if it prospers, you too will prosper."* (Jere. 29:7)

✦ **RISE IN ATTACKS:** The *United Christian Forum* reports that 720 violent incidents took place against Christians in India during 2023, compared to 599 in 2022.

✦ **PRAY FOR REVIVAL** and unity throughout India's diverse church groups in order to complete the Great Commission; for the defeat of all spiritual forces that oppose the gospel; for more workers to reach every people group.

✦ **ROAD ACCIDENTS** claim about 150,000 lives per year in India (or about 410/day). Pray for safety, better road conditions and safer driving.

✦ **DRUG ABUSE:** According to govt. data, about 2.1% of the India's population uses opioids, heroin, and pharmaceutical opioids.

✦ **HUNGER IN INDIA:** Pray for the over 189 million people in India who go to bed hungry everyday.

✦ **PERSECUTION:** Churches continue to be attacked and pastors imprisoned for just holding church services.

✦ **RECEIVING FOREIGN FUNDS** has become increasingly difficult. Pray for the many missions who have lost their FCRA license; that missions and churches will not be dependent on foreign money to make ends meet.

✦ **PRAY FOR THE POOR**, hungry, homeless, hurting, helpless, widows, orphans and the suicidal. One in every three children and one in seven adults live in poverty.

✦ **PRAY FOR OUR CHILDREN**, for their salvation, commitment, healing, deliverance, transformation, protection, health, education and well-being.

✦ **FUTURE OF PRINT MEDIA:** About 50% of India will stop reading "print" editions of newspapers & magazines, says a projection by *India Today* for 2024. One survey shows that a majority of young, middle-aged and old Indians do consume media, but in the digital format. Pray for the future of Christian print media.

✦ **CHINA & PAK.:** Pray for peace with our neighbours.

✦ **PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS**, *"that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness... [and for] all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."* (1 Tim. 2:1-4)

✦ **PRAISE GOD** for the work of Hope Society in Bangalore which has built over 1,500 shelters for the homeless over the past 35 years. Pray for more volunteers.

✦ **THE UPCOMING GENERAL ELECTIONS** in May will witness a divide between two major factions: the ruling *National Democratic Alliance* (NDA) and the opposition *Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance* (INDIA) bloc. While the BJP seeks to maintain power, the newly formed INDIA alliance, comprising 28 parties, aims to overthrow them. 543 seats in the Lok Sabha are up for grabs, alongside Assembly elections in eight states - Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Jharkhand. (Financial Express)

✦ **PRAY FOR MANIPUR:** The ethnic violence between the Meitei majority in Imphal Valley and the Kuki-Zo communities dominant in hill districts has been ongoing since May 2023. The conflict has claimed at least 207 lives and displaced around 50,000 individuals. Pray for God's intervention to bring about a lasting solution, genuine reconciliation, peace and harmony with justice.

✦ **JUSTICE:** Pray that millions of new believers who lost their economic benefits on conversion will have them reinstated.

✦ **FREEDOM:** At least 10 states in India have anti-conversion laws. Pray that such laws will not be misused by extremists and will be repealed asap; for wisdom and courage to the High Court and Supreme Court judges to uphold our constitutional freedoms.

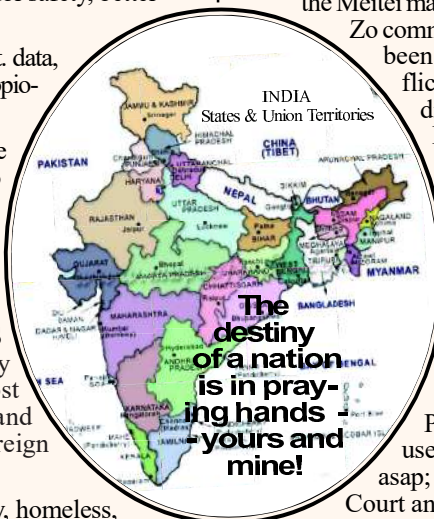
✦ **FOR AN OUTPOURING OF GOD'S SPIRIT** on all people; for miracles, signs and wonders; for a great revival, especially among our youth, that will empower the church to fulfill its mission.

✦ **PRAY FOR THE PREVENTION** of **natural disasters** like earthquakes, landslides, cyclones, floods, famine, drought, fires, excess rain etc, and **manmade disasters** like air, rail and traffic accidents, pollution etc.

✦ **DOUBLE MURDERS:** A Christian woman was brutally attacked and murdered at the St. Mary's Cathedral Church compound in Varanasi on Jan. 1, marking the second murder in that city this year, raising concerns among the community.

✦ **CYBER-FRAUD** increased sharply last year.

✦ **SALVATION:** Pray for India's healing and salvation.



"If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you." - 1 Peter 4:14, NIV

MESSAGES

THE
GREATEST THING

+ "These three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is **love**." - 1 Cor. 13:13

+ "If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have **love**, I am nothing." - 1 Cor. 13:13

+ "'**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: '**Love** your neighbor as yourself.'" - Mt. 22:37-40, NIV

+ "The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to **love** and **be loved** in return." - Gregory Porter



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A 222 Moment

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

Galatians 5:22-23, ESV

DATELINE

+ VBS Trg., B'lore, Sat. Feb. 24, pg 1 (outer cover)

+ VBS Workshops in Feb, B'lore & Meerut, pg 32.

+ Leaders' Trg., New Jersey (USA), May 20-24, pg 28.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

- Jeremiah 29:11, NIV



forerunner

Forerunner is a monthly Christian newsmagazine produced by the Forerunner Trust. Edited and published on its behalf by Dr Ananda Thejus.

Goal: To be a light to the world.

Mandate: Preparing the way of the Lord by "tell[ing] his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins. Because of God's tender mercy the morning Light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give Light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace." - Zechariah's prophecy concerning his son John, the forerunner of Christ. (Luke 1:77-79)

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MISCELLANY

RENT: 2 BHK on 2nd floor, near Kogilu Cross, Yelahanka, Bangalore, with attached bathrooms, lift, and parking. Available from April 1st. Christian family preferred. +91 9886768848.

SALE: House for sale in Shivajinagar, Bangalore-1, Close to main Queen's Road, measuring 20'x25' with old building. Rs. 60 lakhs. Contact: 9964751247.

AVAILABLE: Shop/Office space (8'x10') at 43, Mosque Road, Frazer Town, B'lore-5. Christians Preferred. Contact: Mrs. Martin - 9945899394.

FLOWER DECORATION for church pulpits, marriages and all functions.

Contact: Bro. Suresh - Mobile - 9880649690.

WANTED a self-denying disciple of Jesus Christ to join the Lord's ministry. Mark 8:34. Contact: Ph: 9620712857 / 97390 75617.

RENT: 1 BHK house (ground floor.) & 2 Shops on ground floor with Cauvery water, prime location in Williams Town, facing a park, Bangalore-560046. Call after 4 pm. Mobile: 6360980114.

SALE: Three flr. independent house, corner site in Viveknagar, ground and 1st floor are 2 BHK each, Cauvery water connected. Plot 30'x27', built 1,500 sq. ft. Mobile: 9880165328.

PRAYER MATTERS

All are welcome!

+ **ALL NIGHT PRAYER** gathering at the Wesley English Church Hall, 19 Promenade Rd. opp. Coles Park, B'lore - 5. Every Wed. at 9:30 pm. (Ph. 9845581295)

+ **WEEKLY PRAYER** at the Pavanasar Lutheran Church, Bangalore-560051. For prayer call: 959 130 2854. Every Monday Online Prayer at 6:30 pm.

+ **JESUS CALLS PRAYER TOWERS:** 24/7 at Phone: 04445999000. (www.prayertoweronline.org)

+ **ALL INDIA UNITED CHRISTIAN VOICE**, Bangalore, Day of Prayer by Prayer-line: 08028443992. Every 4th Saturday, 10 am to 12 noon by Zoom.

+ **CALVARY UNITED PRAYER:** Everyday prayer for the nations - Zoom Id 9343456677, P/W 195615 by Zoom meeting, 11am-12:30 & 7 pm - 8:30. (9343456670)

+ **SOLDIERS OF THE CROSS** meet at Jacob Ladder Prayer Centre, No. 406, 4th C Main Road, OMBR Layout, Banaswadi, Bangalore-560043. Prayer line: Phone: 8105975134. Every Friday: 10 am to 1 pm.

+ **HEALING SERVICE** at the Healing Stripes International Worship Centre, #4, 1st Cross Ramanna L/O, (Nisarga) Bileshivale Main Rd, Byrathi, B'lore-77 Every 1st Sunday, 10 am. (Ph.+91 9448243863)

+ **THE OVER 2,000 DAYS OF PRAYER GATHERING** at the FGAG Church in B'lore continues to meet everyday, along with an All Night Prayer - every Friday, 10 pm - 4 am. Ph. 1 800 200 4411. Website: fgag.in

"On your walls...I have appointed watchmen. All day and all night they will never sleep. You who call on the Lord, take no rest for yourselves..." - Isaiah 62:6

MATRIMONIALS

WANTED a suitable born again groom, for a Bangalore based Tamil Protestant girl, 28 yrs, ht.5'2", working as Product Manager in an INGO and has completed M.Phil., and MSW in social work. Contact: 8861569575 / 6363902179. Email: viewinviictory@gmail.com

WANTED a suitable Protestant girl, for a Tamil, handsome, MBA boy, 29 yrs, ht. 5'10", working as a senior accountant in Bangalore. Contact: Ph. 8951518234/8197494734.

WANTED a suitable God-fearing graduate girl, for a CSI Tamil boy, BE, 31 yrs,

ht. 5'7", working in an MNC at Bangalore. Email: princeet65@gmail.com.

WANTED a suitable groom, for a born-again B'lore based CSI girl, M.Sc. M. Phil., 38 yrs, ht. 4'11", fair, working in Reed Elsevier in Chennai. 9444613687/8015970621.

WANTED a suitable Christian medical doctor groom, for a God-fearing, MBBS, MD, CMC Vellore based, Tamil CSI girl, 32 yrs, ht. 5'2". Ph. 9094071256.

WANTED a suitable born again girl, for a B'lore based Baptist Tamil boy, 39 yrs, (no encumbrance), self employed. Ph 9742630010.

More matrimonial ads are below and on the next page.

Wanted a suitable God-fearing bride,

Protestant (but not Pentecostal), for a God-fearing, Lutheran Church Ex-synod President's son, 32 yrs, handsome, ht 6'2", BBM, MBA and working for a US company in Bangalore.

Email: revfrederickprasad@gmail.com

Contact: 9902578931

Seeking a fair Christian bride,

(widow or with no kids)

for a Marthoma Christian man, 46 years, heavy build, ht. 5'5", medium colour, widower with 18 year old son, well settled in Bangalore. Presently working in Chennai.

Contact:

9845297782 / 9686696982 / 9035800865

Wanted a suitable groom

for a Bangalore-based Telugu, AG Church Protestant girl, age 34 yrs, B.Com., ht. 5'ft., cheerful, woman of God, prayerful, bold & independent, middle class nuclear family, an active participant in various church activities, worked as quality analyst. Language no bar.

Contact: Pradeep - 9886173473 / 6360895703

Email: pradeep_umapathy1@gmail.com

MATRIMONIALS**Wanted a suitable boy,**

for a girl, working in ANZ bank Australia
(Melbourne) Height 5'1", DOB: 16th April,
1989, B.Com. / MBA Diploma

Contact:

**Ph: 9663211995 / 9986008655 /
9845465674**

Email: lucia.mary@gs.com

**Wanted a suitable Christian believer,
working / non-working (graduate) fair bride.**

from a good family and below 30 yrs .
for a Tamil boy, aged 31 years, height 5'6" and
working in an MNC Company at Bangalore.

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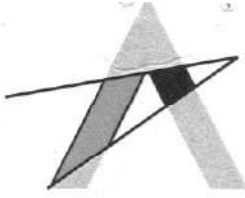
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BOB'S BANTER

By Robert Clements*

Your Prayers are Powerful!

The little boy was weeping outside the closed doors of the church. His tears flowed like tsunami waves down his cheeks. A stranger passing by, stopped and enquired, "Why are you crying little boy, that too outside a church?"

The little boy looked up to the stranger and said, "The priest could not pray for my mother! She's dying, but before I could reach the priest to ask him to pray for her, the doors were closed!"

The stranger sat next to the little fellow, and gave him a tissue to wipe his eyes. "Many years ago," said the stranger, "Jesus was preaching to people like the priest inside and others like me, and suddenly little children came running, creating a disturbance and wanting to speak with Jesus. "Ssshhh" said the crowd, but what do you think Jesus did?"

The little boy had stopped crying as the stranger gave him another tissue and continued, "Jesus called the children to Himself, put them on His knee and spoke to them even as they conversed with Him!"

"Will Jesus do it now?" asked the little boy hesitantly.

"Whatever Jesus did then," said the stranger with conviction,

*Robert Clements is a syndicated columnist based in Mumbai whose articles reach six million readers daily. (bobsbanter@gmail.com) To receive Bob's Banter daily, please send your name and WhatsApp number to: rtgclements@gmail.com.

"He did, so we would realise He would do the same today! Shall we talk to Jesus about your mother now?"

The stranger had tears in his eyes as he heard the little boy pray about his mother and the healing required. His tears flowed as he heard about how the little fellow felt, frightened and scared. They were so busy praying, they did not hear footsteps near them... "Kumar, you're here," said a woman's voice.

"Ma!" whispered the little boy, "I thought you were sick!"

"Sick people recover my son," said the smiling mother as she hugged the little boy who threw himself into her waiting arms. The man watched as the little boy came back and hugged him, then walked away with his mother.

All outside the church's door.

The man then sighed and then looked up to the heavens above. "Jesus," he said, "You tore the veil, so that no special person was needed to intercede for me. No priest. No elder. That my prayers are equal to the saints of God, because with your death I have been made a saint!"

He felt a God above smile as he continued, "I was like that dying thief next to you on the cross, nearly beyond redemption, looking for someone, maybe a priest who would pray to you for me, and then I spoke straight to you, and you forgave me and took me in!"

The man looked up, even as he saw the child waving to him, and he waved back. Two saints outside the closed doors of the church, who needed no one to pray for them, because their own prayers were as powerful as the ones inside those doors..!

Navigating the Teenage Years

By Jacob Varghese*

My wife and I have three grown up daughters. But for us the teenage years of their life have been a rollercoaster of emotions, challenges, and growth for both us as parents and our teenagers. As your child transforms into an independent individual, navigating this phase requires a delicate balance of understanding, guidance, and support. Here are some parenting tips from my experience and advice to help you navigate the tumultuous teenage years successfully.

1. Open Communication: Maintain open and honest communication with your teenager, echoing the wisdom found in Pro. 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Create a safe space for them to express their thoughts and feelings without judgment, just as God provides us with a safe haven for our prayers. Listen actively and be genuinely interested in their lives.

2. Set Clear Boundaries: Establish clear rules and boundaries, but be willing to negotiate and compromise. This fosters a sense of responsibility while allowing your teen to develop decision-making skills. "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." (Eph. 6:4)

3. Be a Role Model: Demonstrate the values and behaviours you wish to see in your child. They learn by observing, so model the qualities you want them to embody, such as respect, responsibility, and empathy. Mirror the teachings of God's Word in your life, like Mt. 5:16 - "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to [God]."

4. Encourage Independence: Support your teenager's growing need for independence. Allow them to make choices and learn from their experiences, even if it means making mistakes. This helps in building resilience and decision-making skills. Acknowledge the principles in Gal. 5:13, "For you were called to freedom but do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh..."

5. Educate on Risks and Consequences: Discuss the potential risks and consequences of various behaviours without being overly authoritative. Provide information that empowers them to make informed decisions. Proverbs 4:13 says, "Keep hold of instruction; do not let go; guard your children, for they are your life."

6. Stay Informed but Respect Privacy: Be aware of your teen's social circles, activities, and online presence. However, respect their need for privacy, and avoid being overly intrusive. Finding a balance between awareness and trust is crucial. However, respect their need for privacy, recognizing that God grants each person a personal space for growth.

7. Encourage Healthy Friendships: Encourage friendships that align with your family values and provide a supportive environment for your teenager. Pro. 13:20 says, "Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm."

8. Promote a Healthy Lifestyle: Emphasize the importance of physical and mental well-being. Encourage regular exercise, a balanced diet, and sufficient sleep. Discuss the impact of substance abuse and provide resources for healthy coping mechanisms. Guide them with the understanding that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

9. Discuss Academic Goals: Engage in conversations about your teen's academic aspirations and challenges. Offer support without imposing unrealistic expectations. Help them set realistic goals and provide guidance on time management. Encourage them to ask God for wisdom: "The Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding."

10. Teach Financial Literacy: Introduce basic financial principles and responsibility, balancing needs, wants, and values, as teens encounter peer pressure. Teach them to plan, save, and budget from their personal earnings/pocket money. Introduce them to financial apps and various banking functions, with parental oversight.

11. Handle Conflicts Constructively: Conflicts are inevitable, but teach your teen how to handle disagreements. Help to understand the conflict, by actively listening to them to identify the problem. Brain storm solutions and help them to make the right choices.

12. Celebrate Achievements: Acknowledge and celebrate your teens' achievements, big or small. Share their success with others. Plan a special party or outing on the occasion, give a thoughtful gift, write an encouraging letter to focus on newer goals.

13. Be Aware of Mental Health: Stay attuned to your teen's emotional well-being. Be proactive in addressing the issues they face. Know when they need your help.

14. Stay Calm in Difficult Moments: Teenagers may challenge our patience but staying calm in challenging moments is very important as parents.

15. Stay Connected as a Family: Despite their growing independence, emphasize the importance of family by giving them casual and planned time with them. Welcome their friends' home, listen and empathize, be curious about their interests and express appreciation.

The above principles can help you navigate this transformative period with grace and support your teenager's journey towards adulthood, all the while honouring the teachings found in the Word of God. The key is to strike a balance between offering guidance and allowing them the space to grow into their unique selves, guided by the light of biblical wisdom.

In conclusion, parenting during the teenage years requires adaptability, patience, and a willingness to evolve alongside your child.

*Jacob Varghese is a prolific writer, preacher, teacher and author of many books, based in Dehradun, North India. He can be reached at: roykollaka@gmail.com



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Children's Home for Children with Special Needs and for Children in Need of Care and Protection

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Sometimes parents are unable to provide care for their babies because they are financially or emotionally unable to handle a child's special need or because they have no family support. Some children are removed from their own family in order to protect the child from abuse or neglect. We seek to be an arm of love, stability, and hope to these precious little ones.

Loving care in a family-type setting can do miracles in the lives of children who are facing trauma and loss.

Our children need and deserve therapies that will help them to heal and to thrive. They deserve a good education when possible (depending on the level of their special need) and they deserve to know that they are safe and loved.

This is the primary purpose of the Alex Agape Home. To give this specialized love and care to the babies and children who need it the most. We become like a family to them and we love them as our own.



You may find centers all around the world where abandoned children are housed. Where special needs children are left laying on mats or in beds without anyone to believe in them or help them reach their fullest potential. Where they lay in the same place day after day, fed and bathed but alone. In our home, no matter what their age, gender, or special need, our children receive therapy, medical care, lots of holding, hugging, playtime, music and singing, outings, and stimulation.

Most of all, our children become a part of our family and they are loved and cherished as if they are **PEARLS OF GREAT VALUE**.

"Every child is a precious gift. A child's gender, cast, religion, ability, or special need does not make him or her any more or any less worthy of our love and commitment. All are equally worthy. Every child's life and future is worth fighting for!"

~ Erin Hunlock, Founder Alex Agape Home

As of October, 2022, we have 45 children in our care. All of our children have been through the pain of abandonment, loss, abuse, or neglect. We are here to help them to heal and to find hope. With your help, we can see miracles take place in their young lives!



We Need Your Help!

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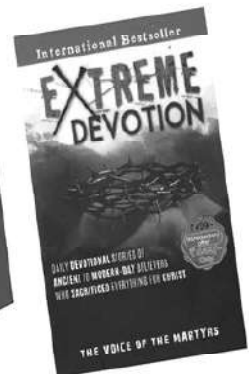
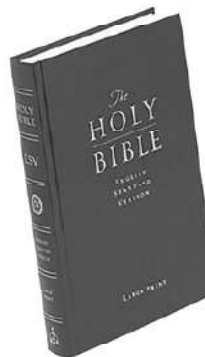
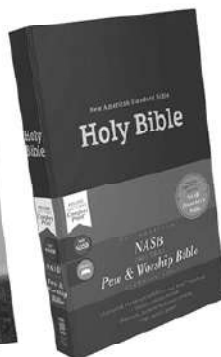
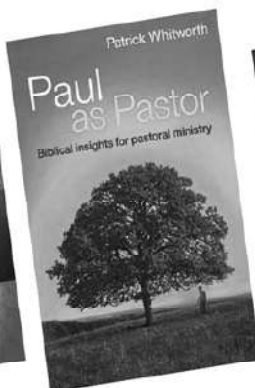


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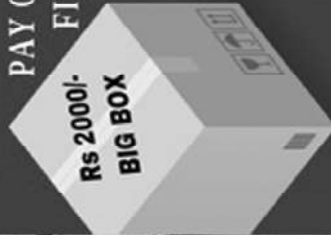


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Wrecked by Satan but Restored by Jesus

Many things we learn in our early lives we tend to forget but some remain with us for life! One of those which I learnt was the poem, *The Hollow Men* by T.S. Elliot, which typically describes what the devil can do to our lives.

"We are the hollow men, We are the stuffed men, Leaning together, Our dried voices, when, We whisper together, Are quiet and meaningless, Shape without form, shade without colour, Paralysed force, gesture without motion." In the first 18 lines of the poem, a bunch of hollow men are leaning together like scarecrows. They exist, they don't live. Everything about them is as dry as the desert, including their voices and their bodies. Everything they say and do is meaningless.

Jesus Himself in unequivocal terms said in John 10:10, the purpose of His coming and the plan, purpose, strategy and agenda of Satan on earth - *"The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows]"* John 10:10 (AMP). The stark contrast in this verse is that "Satan comes" but "Jesus came." Satan will keep coming but Jesus came once and for all to "destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8)

Here are some of the ways Satan aims to thwart God's purposes for our lives -

1. We are created in the image of God: "God created mankind in His own image... and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish..." (Gen. 1:27-28) Satan will do his best to deface or mar the image of God in our lives. Jesus restores and reclaims the image that is marred by Satan.

2. We are created for a purpose: Mark Twain said, "The two most important days of your life are these: the day you are born and the day you figure out why." We don't create purpose for our lives but we are created with a purpose. Millions exist without a purpose in life.

3. God created family: "It is not good for the man to be alone, the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man." (Gen 2:18-25) Satan works really hard to break families. His goal seems to be "fewer marriages and more divorce."

4. God created us to multiply: "Be fruitful and multiply" was the blessing of God to Adam and Eve in Genesis. "Children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. As arrows are in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. Happy, blessed, and fortunate is the man whose quiver is filled with them!" Ps. 127:3-5 (AMP) Satan tries to stop this blessing.

5. God created us to Rule the earth: We are destined for dominion. God made Adam and Eve and gave them authority and power and blessed them with ruling over the "fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth." Jesus

calls Satan the ruler of this world (John 14:30). But through Christ's resurrection, God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus...." (Eph. 2:6), to reign and rule with Him.

6. God created us to live with hope, joy and peace: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 15:13) However "the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some-one to devour," whom we need to "resist." (1 Peter 5:8,9)

7. God has created us with a Focus: Satan tries to blind our eyes or blur our vision so that we lose our focus. Paul while writing to the Philippians says that Satan has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. The following verses give us the clarity of where our focus should be: "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth." (Col. 3:2) "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Mt. 6:33)

8. God chose us to be His prized possession: God chose Abraham, Jesus chose the twelve and God chose us - "O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel. 'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you [from captivity]; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.'" (Is. 43:1) This is true for every one of us.

9. God wants to bless us: The Bible is sprinkled with verses which say God wants to bless us. "He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your land, your grain and your new wine and your [olive] oil, the offspring of your cattle and the young of your flock..." Deut. 7:13 (AMP) "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace." (Num. 6:24-26)

10. God wants to make us a blessing to the whole world: We are inheritors of the promise made to Abraham - "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. 12:3) "You get all of God's blessings because of the promise that God made to Abraham." (Gal. 3:29, ICB)

Satan may use all his weapons to destroy, rob and kill us, BUT let this not distract or disturb us, "for He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." (1 John 4:4)

God is able to restore, create, and resurrect all that is stolen, all that is destroyed and all that is dead. "Now to Him who is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly more than all that we dare ask or think [infinitely beyond our greatest prayers, hopes, or dreams], according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be the glory... forever and ever. Amen." (Eph. 3:20-21, AMP)

- Jose : josetnithi@gmail.com

"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers..." - Eph. 6:12.



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The cries for Justice are being Heard

By Andrew Towe*

The Lord spoke to me and said, "Get ready for a prophetic surge!"... I knew that even in the midst of chaotic times, His word would prevail, and God's people were on the verge of witnessing Him move in an unprecedented way.

A Shaking and a Shifting

In 2023, God declared that He would cause an exposure of things that had been concealed in the dark, and they would be brought into the light. We have seen this come to pass in a measured way, but **this year, the veil will be torn away, and hidden sin, corruption, and even impure motives will be revealed.**

God says, "There is a shaking coming, yes, even to My Church, but it is a result of My shifting. I am bringing order and alignment. **The fear of the Lord is returning, and My justice will be seen.** Where there has been injustice, I will cause a SUDDEN REVERSAL. The cries of the innocent have reached My ears, and I shall give them the justice they seek!"

Like a Mighty Tidal Wave

I delved further into the meaning of the term "surge" and discovered that it meant "to rise and fall actively," "to rise suddenly to an excessive or abnormal value," and "a swelling, rolling, or sweeping forward like that of a wave or a series of waves."

I heard the Lord say, "**Prepare to see the rapid and successive fulfillment of My prophetic words.** Just as the waves of the ocean sweep upon the sand, My words will sweep across the land - every word proving true, and not one returning to Me void. Like a mighty tidal wave, My surge will break through the barriers and blockades erected by man, and its impact will be overwhelming."

Redeeming the Time

As I sought the Lord further on this word, He instructed me to 1) tell His people to be spiritually attuned to His voice, and 2) to be led only by the Holy Spirit, for the enemy will send distractions to steal their hope and vision. Satan is seeking after their time and is diligently working to delay God's people, believing that by stealing their days, years, and even decades, it will be too late for them to fulfill the Lord's purpose. However, he is gravely mistaken! For the times of Believers are in God's hands. **He is the Redeemer of time and the Restorer of years.**

Paul wrote, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Colossians 4:5). The word "time" in the Greek is the word "kairos," meaning "time," "season," "opportunity," "due measure," or "right time."

God tells you today, "**I am bringing you to a full-circle moment. This is it. You can recover, recapture, recoup, and reclaim missed opportunities.** This is the turning point for you to seize what was lost and retrieve those squandered opportunities, for they are now within your grasp. It is I, the Lord, the Restorer of time, who will make this possible. I am causing such a divine acceleration on this surge, and you will catch up to the plans I have laid

out for you as if no time had ever slipped away. Did I not say in My Word, 'I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron'" (Is. 45:2)

God is the only one who can make crooked places straight. He alone can reverse poor choices, restore lost years, and give back missed opportunities. This is who He is and what He is doing for you!

"And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and My people shall never be ashamed." (Joel 2:24-26)

Mending Broken Relationships and Demolishing Obstacles

In this season of a prophetic surge, God is not only restoring time and lost opportunities, but He is also mending broken relationships. He is demolishing the obstacles that have hindered your progress.

Just as the floors will be full of wheat and the vats will overflow with wine and oil, God will restore the years that have been devoured. You will be satisfied, filled with plenty, and you will praise the name of the Lord who has worked wonders in your life.

Deliverance from Shame, Reproach, Grief and Disappointment

The shame and reproach of yesterday, and the chains that have restricted you are now lifted off you. The false labels that the enemy has tried to attach to you and your family are nothing but lies. **Only the words spoken by God are true.** Every word and promise He has made to you will come forth. God is delivering you from the grief and disappointment of past seasons to propel you into what He is doing now. It is time to release the old and embrace the new things God is doing in your life.

Ready Yourself and Govern Your Time Wisely

Be revived by the Word of the Lord today from the intense battle strategies of the enemy that have plagued you, wearing and tiring you. The season that you have been praying for is here. **Do not live foolishly, putting things off until tomorrow. Govern your time wisely. Refuse the distractions of the devil and rebuff sin. Walk in holy consecration unto the Lord. It is time to WAKE UP, STAND UP, and make the devil SHUT UP!** Ready yourself for the surge of God's prophetic words coming to pass speedily.

*Andrew Towe and his wife Brooke are the lead pastors of Ramp Church Chattanooga in Tennessee, USA. Andrew preaches the Word of God with fire, with signs and wonders occurring in his services. Original title: *Get ready for a Prophetic Surge!* Partial emphases ours. www.andrewtowe.org (Source: ElijahList.com, Jan. 18 2024)

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Are you throwing a Party ? Who will you invite?

Luke 14:12-14

Then Jesus said to his host, *'When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.'*

How many of us who profess to be Christians would do the above, as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ?

On 7th Jan 2024 we hosted an evening function celebrating our daughter's Confirmation. Confirmation is the process to induct candidates into the church as full members and enable them to start taking Holy Communion, after few weeks of training them in the Christian faith and its history.

During December, while we were inviting friends and relatives for the function, a thought occurred to us to invite kids from an orphanage run by a relative. The relative agreed, and he brought the kids to the function.

Having the 28 kids along with our family and friends, gave a different sense of satisfaction.

I am 40+ years old. I have attended many functions but have not seen such kids being part of the celebrations. Of course, many people send food or support financially to orphanages or old age homes.

But would we host a party for the under-privileged rather than our family and friends?

Many of the guests were surprised and touched seeing the kids and they said they will follow the same henceforth. Also, we wanted to retain the sanctity of Holy Confirmation, so we limited the evening celebration to a quick game, prayer, worship, and a sermon.

This inspired many cousins who had included movie songs during such celebrations, that it should not have been so.

We felt happy to have set the trend on what should be followed and what should not be followed during a Confirmation celebration.

Humbly we are grateful to the Lord God Almighty who enabled us to take a step towards following what the Lord Jesus Christ said in Luke 14:12-14.

May all of us Christians obey the Lord Jesus and not just call Him "Lord! Lord!". -- **Lydia**

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Devotion: Going the Extra Mile

"Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'Come along now and sit down to eat'? Won't he rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink'? Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.' " - Jesus, Luke 17:7-10, NIV

Here Jesus shares a parable about a servant and highlights the idea that our devotion should go beyond mere duty.

The 'servant' plowed the field, tended the sheep and diligently fulfilled all his duties. At the end of the day, he returned home, tired and worn from a day of hard work. Instead of being treated as someone special because he did the work, he would serve his master by preparing a meal and waiting on him.

A Deeper Understanding of Devotion: This parable challenges Christians to reflect on the nature of their devotion to God. It's a call to move beyond a transactional relationship, where we fulfill our duties as if checking items off a list. Instead, Jesus invites us into a deeper, more meaningful connection with God, one that extends beyond the routine and enters the realm of genuine love and devotion.

Loving Above and Beyond Duty: Instead of seeking recognition or reward for our service, we are called to serve with joy, understanding that our identity as children of God is the ultimate reward. Gratitude transforms our mindset, enabling us to see our service as an opportunity to express love and appreciation for the grace we have received.

The parable teaches us that fulfilling our duties is essential, but love and devotion go beyond the completion of tasks. Christians are called to serve not out of obligation but out of a genuine love for God. This love transforms our daily tasks and actions, making them offerings of gratitude from a heart of love rather than mere duties or obligations.

Devotion in the Ordinary: The parable emphasizes that devotion is not confined to grand gestures or extraordinary acts. Instead, it is found in the ordinary moments of life, in the routine tasks that make up our daily existence. Whether studying, doing office or factory work, preparing a meal, etc., our devotion to God is expressed in the everyday choices we make. Recognizing the sacredness in the ordinary allows us to infuse our entire lives with devotion, making every moment an opportunity to draw closer to God.

True devotion involves a deep and transformative love for God. Our service, no matter how ordinary, becomes an expression of gratitude and devotion when rooted in love.

Conclusion: Many Christians genuinely believe that living a good life (fasting, praying, not eating meat during Lent, giving up smoking, etc.) is sufficient to enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus challenges Christians to move beyond mere duty and embrace a lifestyle of devotion. As followers of Christ, let us strive to live lives that reflect a commitment surpassing duty, cultivating a relationship with God that permeates every aspect of our existence.

- T J Joseph, tjj.jayess@gmail.com

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WORD POWER

Loved to Love God and Others

A Pharisee who was an expert in the law once asked Jesus, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matt. 22: 36-40)

Jesus summarised all the commandments with one action to follow - LOVE! We are to first show our love to God and then to all around us! He then proceeded to show how much He loved us by dying on the cross for us.

God's love for us is sacrificial. "This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him." (1 John 4:9)

His love overflows in grace and abundance. "The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love... He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him." (Ps.103: 8-11)

Nothing can separate us from God's love. "I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8: 38-39)

We are loved with an everlasting love. "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness." (Jeremiah 31:3)

God disciplines us in His love. "Do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when He rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and He chastens everyone He accepts as His son." (Heb.12:5-6)

God loves us just as we are, in our sinful state! His love is not based on our righteousness but on His perfect faithfulness. "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8)

We are made alive in Christ and saved by His grace, because of God's love. "You were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world... we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved." (Eph. 2:1-5)

Considered precious! "Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you, I will give people in exchange for you, nations in exchange for your life." (Is. 43:4)

Loved to love God and others: What should be our response to God's undeserving and limitless love to us? "We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

May we ask God to work in us to keep the greatest commandment - to love God and one another! "For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose." (Phil 2:13) - VM

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Transformed by Christ's Love

In a world proud of its scientific progress and freedom, fear still grips our lives. We are haunted by uncertainties, leading us to ponder our deepest fears - death, guilt, anxiety, brokenness or deception.

Yet, there is hope. Jesus Christ offers unique answers to our heart's and mind's questions. His death and resurrection stand as humanity's singular beacon of hope.

A Story of the Triumph of Love over Abandonment

After the Korean War ended in 1953, numerous Korean women were left pregnant by departing American soldiers. These women faced societal scorn and contempt, as their mixed-race children were often seen as symbols of shame. Some were forced to take the lives of their own infants to escape the shame.

Amidst this bleak backdrop, one brave mother defied all odds. She chose to keep and raise her daughter, enduring seven years of relentless rejection, taunts, and harassment from society. However, overwhelmed, she eventually abandoned her daughter, Sully, on the streets.

Sully's life took an unexpected turn when a new orphanage opened its doors and took her in. One day, the orphanage received news that an American couple sought to adopt a baby boy. The prospect of a fresh start ignited hope among the orphans. When the American couple arrived, their hearts were open to every child, regardless of their past. The couple was captivated by the scrawny, scar-covered Sully and expressed their desire to adopt her. However, the deep wounds of Sully's past led her to react with confusion, spitting at the man and fleeing.

Remarkably, the couple returned the next day, undeterred by Sully's initial rejection. Understanding the trauma she had endured, they insisted, "We still want this child." They adopted Sully, providing the care and love of Jesus she desperately needed. Today, Sully is happily married and a living testament to the transformative power of love and acceptance in Jesus Christ.

Conquering Fear Through Christ's Love

The life of Sully is a reflection of how Jesus Christ can extend His comforting hand to us no matter the circumstances, bitter past, and distressing times. He alleviates fears, offering hope against insurmountable burdens. God's love, embodied in His Son, brings joy, replaces sadness, and restores fellowship.

The Bible doesn't say God has love; it says God is love. It is in the nature and character of God. God's love is unconditional and constant. It's not based on our actions but on His very nature, for God is love. We will never be able to fully comprehend how much God loves us, as it is beyond the capacity of our human minds.

Romans 8:38-39 says, "Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?" This

means that we may face trouble, calamity, persecution, hunger, danger or even death threats - but amidst all these, Christ emerges as the beacon of hope, offering forgiveness, security, and victory.

Embracing the above truth dissipates fear, making room for a life marked by joy, fellowship, and unwavering hope. In Jere. 31:3, God says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love." Col. 1:27 says: "...the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in and among you, the hope and guarantee of [realizing the] glory." (AMP) This is the grand secret, the mystery of mysteries.

From Darkness to Light: A Personal Transformation

In 2004, battling severe depression and pneumonia, my life hung in the balance. While I was on a ventilator with failing lungs, death seemed inevitable. But in that darkness, I experienced a divine intervention. I received a vision of the Cross of Jesus and the great sacrifice made on my behalf. A voice, clear and comforting, reassured me that I was being given a new life. This awe-inspiring experience repeated three times, and I felt the embrace of God enveloping me with His presence and love. I understood that the King of Kings did not view me as a piece of garbage, worthy of death; rather, He saw me from the perspective of the Cross, and that of a loving Father.

This divine encounter transformed me. Immersing myself in the Bible, I found emotional healing and purpose. I came to know the Creator of my life - the Source of my life and the Wisdom behind the Wonders of my life. Today, I live with a sense of eternal significance, knowing that my end is not death but eternal life with God.

The Power of Christ's Cross and Resurrection

God intervened in my life at precisely the right time. When I thought I would perish in despair, God had a different story in mind for me. I wouldn't have believed it if someone had told me, during my years of depression, that I would not only survive but thrive. The Grand Weaver had a different narrative for my life than I could have ever imagined. An endless wilderness transformed into a path of hope and redemption through Christ's Cross and resurrection.

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace, capable of bringing peace to your heart and home. Let Him be the Master of your life. When we accept Him, God adopts us as His children and His Holy Spirit as our counselor. His love will drive away all fear and empower us with His Spirit of love, power, and self-discipline (1 Tim. 1:7-8)

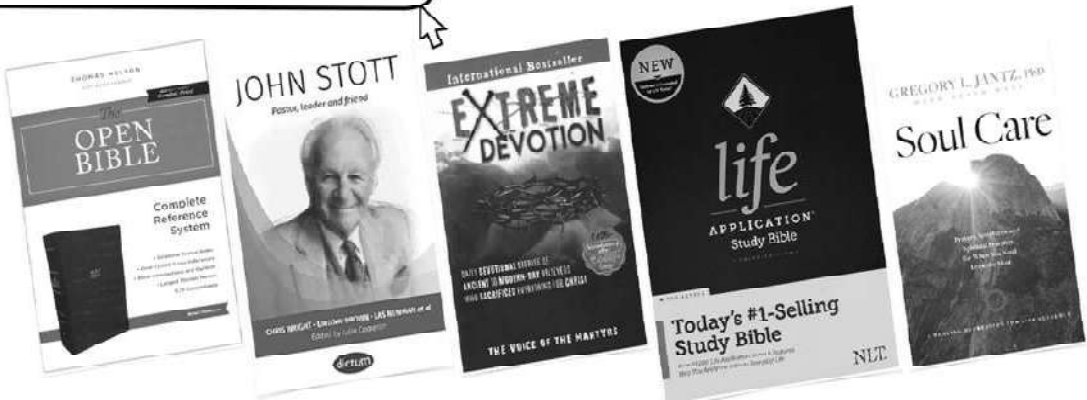
*Dr Latha Christie is a scientist based in Bangalore who has served with the government of India for about 35 years. She is a certified Christian counsellor and the author of four books. Dr Latha is also the founder of the *Deborah Rise Movement* which advocates for women, children and families. She can be reached at: drchristie07@gmail.com Details: www.deborahrise.org or www.lathachristie.com.





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His wife, Beth, said it was the biggest and most original Valentine she had ever received. She said some people might think it's gross, but she says it's cute, and "Why not do something fun with what you've got?"

And maybe she's got a point. If you have lots of ... manure, why not have some ... fun with it! But I don't want you

to think about that too hard.

What I do want you to think about is this; this seems like a strange way to show someone you love them, doesn't it?

But of course, at first glance, the way God shows us that he loves us also seems strange. Check out Romans 5:8.

"But God demonstrates His love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

God shows that he loves you and me by sending His only beloved son, Jesus Christ, to die for us.

How does this show His love? Well, as sinners, we have rebelled against God and set ourselves up as mini gods. But to live life without any concern for the Living God means you will not live forever. Judgment awaits those who judge God not to be worthy of their time.

But there is another option. Out of love, God sent Jesus to take the punishment we deserve for rebelling against God. Jesus died the death we deserve, to give us a life we don't deserve.

"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ... But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved." - Ephesians 2:1, 4 & 5

"God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." - Romans 5:8

So all we have to do is turn back to God and turn in trust toward Jesus as the sinner's saviour.

Sending your only Son to die on a cross is a strange way to show someone that you love them. But is also a wonderful sign that you are loved by the God who made you. And God's love for you is unparalleled, undeserved, incredible and life changing.

Never doubt God loves you. Look to the cross and see for yourself.

- Mike Everett, youth minister, in Fevr.net.



LOVE

SUFFERS LONG AND IS KIND;

love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;

**BEARS ALL THINGS,
BELIEVES ALL THINGS,
HOPES ALL THINGS,
ENDURES ALL THINGS.**

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7 NKJV

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They risked their lives to save the lost and needy.

One Missionary Biography

YOUTH CHALLENGE

Graham Stuart Staines

Birth	: 18.01.1941
Death	: 23.01.1999
City	: Queensland
Country	: Australia
Place of Vision	: Orissa, India

Graham Stuart Staines was the second child of William and Elizabeth Staines. At the age of fifteen, he heard a visiting missionary talk about the plight of those suffering from leprosy in India. Moved by the visuals, Staines decided to dedicate his life to serve among the lepers in India. Shortly thereafter, he attended a missions meeting, where he became assured of his call for missionary service.

He joined the Evangelical Missionary Society of Mayurbhanj and was assigned to work in the tribal area of Odisha, India. He came to India in 1965 and saw the hapless plight of people suffering from leprosy. With love and commitment, he started working among lepers. Gaining fluency in Odiya and the local dialect Santhali, he preached Jesus Christ to the tribal people. He also established the Mayurbhanj Leprosy Home in 1982 and took over the management of the Mission at Baripada in 1983. Staines found a perfect partner in Gladys, a missionary nurse when he married her in 1983. They both work relentlessly to provide education, health care, social development to the tribal people.

As thousands of people were being led to Christ, the Hindu activists had other plans. One night, when Staines and his two sons, were returning from a jungle camp in Manoharpur, they halted and slept inside their wagon. A mob attacked them with axes and set their vehicle on fire, locking them inside. All the three were burned to death. Although the murders were widely condemned, Gladys forgave the men who killed her husband and children and said that she harbors no bitterness towards them. Her act of forgiveness led to the proclamation of Christ's love on the front pages of the Indian newspapers. In the face of persecution, many have come to Jesus who had rejected the gospel for years. She stayed along with her daughter in India until 2004 to finish the work which God intended them to do.

Beloved, are you willing to forgive the one who wrongs you?

**Lord, enable me to stand firm in my faith
and forgive those who wrong me. Amen!**

BenjaminForChrist @ +91 9842513842

Thanks: Dr. Hepsiabah Selvam

"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" - 1 Jn. 3:1, NIV



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(Abbreviations used: P = President; PM = Prime Minister; H = Head; E = Elect; A = Acting; G-20 nations are in bold capitals; Territories are not in bold.)

HEAVEN RULES

"Acknowledge that the Most High is sovereign over all kingdoms on earth and gives them to anyone He wishes your kingdom will be restored to you when you acknowledge that Heaven Rules." (Dan. 4: 25-26)

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USA: P: Joe Biden

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Antigua & Barbuda: PM: G. Browne
Aruba (Neth.): PM: Mike Eman
Barbados: PM: Mia Mottley
Bermuda: PM: Michael Dunkley
Costa Rica: P: Rodrigo Robles
Cuba: (P): Miguel Díaz-Canel
Dominica: P: Sylvanie Burton
Dominican Republic: P: L. Abinader
El Salvador: P: Nayib Bukele
Grenada: PM: Dickon Mitchell
Guadeloupe (Fr.): J. Jacques Gillot

"Whoever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven... if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father."
Jesus, Matt. 18:18,19

Guatemala: P: A. Giammattei
Haiti: PM: Ariel Henry
Honduras: P: Xiomara Castro
Jamaica: PM: Andrew Holness
Martinique (Fr.): Serge Letchimy
MEXICO: P: López Obrador
Nicaragua: P: Daniel Ortega
Panama: P: Laurentino Cortizo
Puerto Rico (USA): G: Pedro Pierluisi
St. Kitts & Nevis: PM: T. Drew
St. Lucia: PM: Philip J. Pierre
St. Vincent & Grenadines: PM: Ralph Gonsalves
San Marino (H): Filippo & Gaetano
Trinidad & Tobago: PM: Keith Rowley

"All the world is my parish."
JOHN WESLEY

SOUTH AMERICA

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Bahamas: PM: Philip Davis
Belize: PM: Johnny Briceño
Bolivia: P: Luis Arce
BRAZIL: P: Lula da Silva
Chile: P: Gabriel Boric
Colombia: P: Gustavo Petro
Ecuador: P: Guillermo Lasso
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French Guiana: P: John Raineri
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Uruguay: P: Luis Lacalle Pou
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"Righteousness makes a nation great."
- Prov. 14:34

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Andorra: PM: Antoni Martí
Armenia: PM: Nikol Pashinyan
Austria: Chan: Karl Nehammer
Azerbaijan: PM: Ali Asadov
Belarus: P: Alexander Lukashenko
Belgium: PM: Alexander De Croo
Bosnia-Herzegovina: eljka Cvijanovic
Bulgaria: PM: Nikolai Denkov
Croatia: PM: Andrej Plenkovic

"You...have made us kings and priests to our God"
Revelation 5:10

Czech Republic: PM: Petr Fiala
Denmark: PM: Mette Frederiksen
Estonia: P: Alar Karis
Finland: PM: Petteri Orpo
FRANCE: P: Emmanuel Macron
Georgia: P: Salome Zourabichvili
GERMANY (C): Olaf Scholz
Greece: PM: K. Mitsotakis
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Hungary: P: Katalin Novák
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Ireland: PM/T: Leo Varadkar
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Liechtenstein: H: Adrian Hasler
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"Thy will be done on EARTH as it is in HEAVEN."
—The Lord's Prayer

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Slovakia: P: Eduard Heger
Serbia: P: Tomislav Nikolic
Slovenia: P: Nataša Pirc Musar
Spain: P: Pedro Sánchez
Sweden: PM: Ulf Kristersson
Switzerland: P: J. Schneider-Amman

"You are like salt for ALL MANKIND... You are like light for the WHOLE WORLD. A CITY set..." (Mt 5: 13-14)

UK: PM: Rishi Sunak / King Charles III
Ukraine: P: Volodymyr Zelenskyy
Vatican City (S): Pope Francis
EURO. UNION (P-G): Ursula von der Leyen

AFRICA

Algeria: P: Abdelmadjid Tebboune
Angola: P: Joao Lourenço
Benin: P: Patrice Talon
Botswana: P: M. Masisi
Burkina Faso: A/P: Ibrahim Traoré
Burundi: P: É. Ndayishimiye
Cameroon: PM: Joseph Ngute
Cape Verde: PM: Correia Silva
Central African Rep.: PM: F. Moloua
Chad: PM: Saleh Kebzabo
Congo-Brazzaville: P: D. Nguesso
Congo-Kinshasa (DRC): P: Felix Tshisekedi
Comoros: P: Azali Assoumani
Djibouti: P: Ismail Omar Guelleh
Egypt: P: Abdel Fattah el Sisi
Equatorial Guinea: P: T. Mbassogo
Eritrea: P: Isaias Afewerki
Eswatini: A/PM: M. Gamedze
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Gabon: P: Ali Bongo Ondimba
Ghana: P: Nana Akufo-Addo
Guinea: P: M. Doumbouya

"In you all the families of the earth will be blessed."
Genesis 12:3

Guinea-Bissau: P: Umaro Embaló
Ivory Coast: P: Alassane Ouattara
Kenya: P: William Ruto
Lesotho: PM: Sam Molekane
Liberia: P: George Weah
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Mauritania: P: M. O. Ghazouani
Mauritius: P: Prithviraj Singh
Mozambique: P: Filipe Nyusi
Namibia: P: Hage Geingob
Niger: (P): Abdourahmane Tchiani
Nigeria: P: Bola Tinubu
Rwanda: P: Paul Kagame

"Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance." - Ps. 2:8

Sao Tome & Principe: P: Carlos Nova
Senegal: P: Macky Sall
Seychelles: P: W. Ramkalawan
Sierra Leone: P: Julius Maada
Somalia: P: Hassan Mohamud
SOUTH AFRICA: P: C. Ramaphosa
Sudan: A/G: Abdel Fattah Burhan
South Sudan: P: Salva Kiir Mayardit
Tanzania: P: Samia Hassan
Togo: P: Faure Gnassingbé
Tunisia: P: Kais Saied
Uganda: P: Yoweri Museveni
Zambia: P: H. Hichilema
Zimbabwe: P: Emmerson M.

UNITED NATIONS: SG: Antonio Guterres

ASIA

Afghanistan: PM: M. H. Akhund
Bangladesh: PM: Sheikh Hasina
Bhutan: PM: Tshering Tobgay
Brunei: Sultan Hassanali Bolkiah

"The king's heart is... in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He will." - Pro. 21:1

Cambodia: PM: Hun Manet
CHINA: P: Xi Jinping
East Timor (P): José Ramos Horta
Hong Kong (H): Carrie Lam
INDIA: PM: Narendra Modi
INDONESIA: P: Joko Widodo
JAPAN: PM: Fumio Kishida
Kazakhstan: P: K. J. Tokayev
Kyrgyzstan: P: Sadyr Japarov
Laos: PM: Sonexay Siphandone
Macau (China): Ho Iat Seng
Malaysia: PM: Anwar Ibrahim
Maldives: P: Ibrahim Solih
Mongolia: PM: L. Oyun-Erdene
Myanmar (M/H): Min Aung Hlaing
Nepal: PM: P. Kamal Dahal
North Korea: Kim Jong-un
Pakistan: A/PM: Anwaar Kakar
Philippines: P: Bongbong Marcos
Singapore: PM: Lee Loong
SOUTH KOREA (P): Yoon Suk-yeol
Sri Lanka: P: Ranil Wickremesinghe
Taiwan: P: Tsai Ing-wen
Tajikistan: P: Emomali Rahmon
Thailand: PM: Srettha Thavisin
Turkmenistan: P: S. Berdimuhamedov
Uzbekistan: PM: Abdulla Aripov
Vietnam: PM: Pham Minh Chinh

Pray for the...

Lord's name to be uplifted & glorified;
Light of Jesus to shine brightly;
Living Word and His love to spread;
Life-giving Spirit to be poured on all;
Lost to be saved and know the truth;
Love and compassion of Christ to fill the world through His church;
Lands to be healed, sins forgiven; to be righteous, just, peaceful, free, prosperous, united, stable & blessed;
Leaders to be of God's choice; for His wisdom, integrity & innovation; for media, edu, businesses, banks, gov't;
Labourers for God to increase; for all churches, missions, institutions;
Lands to be free of crime, sin, injustice, wars; idolatry, apathy, debt, slavery, discrimination, racism, abuse, terrorism, hate, fear, violence, guns, poverty, corruption, injustice, cruelty;
Larger amount of int'l. aid & giving;
Lessening & prevention of accidents, natural disasters, epidemics, pollution; global warming;

MIDDLE EAST

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Cyprus: P: Nikos Christodoulides
Iran: P: Ebrahim Raisi
Iraq: P: Abdul Latif Rashid
Israel: PM: Benjamin Netanyahu
Jordan: P: King Abdullah II
Kuwait: PM: Ahmad Al-Sabah
Lebanon: PM: Najib Mikati
Oman (H): Haitham bin Tariq
Palestine: P: Mahmoud Abbas
Qatar: PM: Mohammed bin Al Thani
SAUDI ARABIA: PM: M. B. Salman (MBS)
Syria: P: Bashar al-Assad
TURKEY: P: Tayyip Erdogan
UAE: P: Khalifa Zayed Al Nahyan
Western Sahara: PM: B. Hammoudi
Yemen: P: Mansour Hadi

"If my people pray... I will heal their land." 2 Chr. 7: 14

OCEANIA

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Cook Islands: PM: Henry Puna
Fiji: PM: Sitiveni Rabuka
Kiribati: P: Taneti Marama
Marshall Islands: P: David Kabua
 Micronesia: P: Wesley Simina
Norfolk: P: Russ Kun
New Zealand: PM: Chris Hipkins
Niue (NZ): PM: Toke Talagi
Palau: P: Surangel Whipps Jr.
Papua-New Guinea: PM: J. Marape
Samoa: PM: Fiame Mata'afa
Solomon Islands: PM: M. Sogavare
Tonga: PM: Siaosi Sovaleni
Tuvalu: PM: Kausea Natano
Vanuatu: PM: Charlot Salwai

Laws to be just & righteous; for all judges & lawyers; police, prisons, prisoners; armed forces;
Less fortunate, sick, dying, aged, poor, orphans, challenged, hurting, hungry, homeless, un-born, persecuted, oppressed, bereaved, suffering, refugees and needy;
Lonely, suicidal and the helpless;
Lands to be abundant in resources: food, clean water, housing, jobs, medicines, education, religious freedom, finances, discoveries;
Living and working conditions to be healthy, humane and just; for health, healing, fitness, accessible and affordable health care;
Loosening & breaking of Satan's hold and freedom from addictions like liquor, gambling, sex, drugs, television, smoking, porn, work etc.
LGBTQ, youth, women, children, aged;
Lukewarm churches on fire; revival;
Leisure activities, social media, TV, radio;
Loved ones, families, friends, others.
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"My house shall be called a House of Prayer for all the nations" - Jesus



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LENTEN
THOUGHTS

VOICE OF PEACE

"As He came closer to Jerusalem and saw the city ahead, He began to weep. 'How I wish today that you of all people would **understand the way to peace**. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes.'" - Luke 19:41-42, NLT

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

Jesus was born to give humanity the gift of peace - peace with God, peace with one another and peace within and around us. At His birth, the angels blazed: "*Glory to God... and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased!*" (Lk. 2:14)

"He Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups [Jews & Gentiles] one... His purpose was to create in Himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross... He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near." (Eph. 2:14-16)

To help us "understand the way to peace," was Christ's main mission, in addition to creating that way by His own death and resurrection. It was a cause worth weeping (and dying) for, as the above passage says. In the words of Zechariah the prophet, Jesus' mission was to *"give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace."* (Luke 1:77-79) Here are more verses to help guide us along this path --

★ Peace with God ★

- § "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1)
- § "He [Jesus] was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5)
- § "I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace unto His people and to His saints; but let them not turn again to folly." (Psalms 85:8) / "He (God) maketh peace in His high places." [Job 25:2(b)]
- § "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Psalms 85:10)
- § "'There is no peace for the wicked,' says my God." (Isaiah 57:21)

★ Peace with Others ★

- § "When people's lives please the Lord, even their enemies are at peace with them." (Proverbs 16:7, NLT)
- § "He Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups [Jews & Gentiles] one..." (Ephesians 2:14)
- § "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for Thou Lord only, makest me dwell in safety." (Psalms 4:8)
- § "He [The Lord] maketh peace in thy borders..." (Ps. 147:14) / "He causes wars to end..." (Psalm 46:9, NLT)
- § "As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (Jn. 13:34) / "Love your neighbour as yourself." (Mk. 12:31)
- § "Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14, ESV)

★ Peace within and around Us ★

- § "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." - Jesus (Jn. 14:27) / "The Lord blesses His people with peace." (Ps. 29:11)
- § "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." (Isaiah 26:3)
- § "Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." (Psalms 37:37)
- § "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body." (Colossians 3:15) § "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places." (Is. 32:18)
- § "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." Is. 32:17
- § "I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near," saith the Lord..." (Is. 57:19)
- § "The meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity." (Ps. 37:11) / "Seek peace and pursue it." (Ps. 34:14)

OTHER REFERENCES: Psalms 122:6-9; Jeremiah 51:50; Isaiah 2:3; 51:12; 66:10; 4:4; John 1:12-13; Romans 8:14.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." - Jesus, Mt. 5:9

With love, best wishes and prayers: Bro. Vetha Thoothan
& all the Family Members at Prayer Gospel Band,
(A Movement to Connect People with the Scriptures)
Flora Cottage, Devinagar, Bangalore - 560094.

★
➡ TO THE WAY OF LIFE



"The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." (Rom. 16:20)



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NAMES OF GOD

Jehovah Jireh - Our Provider!!!

Memory Verse: "My God will supply all your needs according to HIS riches in glory in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 4:13

Bible Lesson:

Genesis 22: 1-14, Hebrews 11:17-19, John 6:30-35

One morning, George Muller awoke to the news that the orphanage, which housed 300 children, had no food. Muller instructed the housemother to seat all the children in the dining room. He thanked God for food, and they waited for God to provide, as He always did. Within minutes, a baker knocked at the door.

"Mr. Muller," he confessed, "last night, I could not sleep. Somehow, I knew that you would need bread this morning. I got up and baked three batches for you. I will bring it in."

The next knock revealed a milkman whose cart had broken down in front of the orphanage. The milk would spoil by the time the cart was fixed, the milkman explained, so would the children like some free milk? Praise Jesus!... for He is our Jehovah Jireh, our Provider.

Dear boys and girls, in our previous lessons we saw that Jehovah Adonai is our loving master & Jehovah Shalom saves, shields & sends us in His peace. In our last lesson we saw that He is Our Wonderful Counselor.

What does 'Jehovah Jireh' mean?

Jehovah is the covenant name for God. It tells us how God relates intimately or closely with us.

'Jireh' means provider. The name speaks of God providing for every human need.

When God introduced Himself for the first time as 'Jehovah Jireh' to Abraham in Genesis 22:1-2; 9-10, it was not in the context of God providing us with our daily needs like food, clothing, shelter etc. It is much more than all of these needs.

Come let us understand this Name by going into the story. One day God appeared to Abraham and said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love - Isaac - and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you." (Genesis 22:2)

Did Abraham obey God ?

Abraham had been tested before. He was called to leave his home. He was called to give up his past. Now he is called to give up his future. Remember that Isaac was the son of promise, a miraculous gift from God when Abraham and Sarah were old. God had promised to make him into a great nation. He was God's provision

Genesis chapter 22 is one of the most dramatic and moving stories of the Old Testament. Abraham had to go to Mount Moriah with Isaac. When they came to the place which God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there. He



Children's Corner

-- Dr. Sara Chandrakumar

then placed the wood in order and bound Isaac his son, laying him on the altar, on top of the wood.

Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son.

What happened next? Well, the angel of the Lord called out, "Abraham! Abraham!"

"Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." (Genesis 22:12).

God miraculously provided a ram caught in a thicket as a substitute sacrifice. Abraham called the name of that place, *Jehovah Jireh*. (Gen. 22:14)

Boys and girls, God wants us to love Him with all our hearts and we should be willing to say Yes to Jesus which is the same as laying everything on the altar.

As a little girl I wondered why Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his only son. But, as a 12 year old girl when I gave my heart to Jesus, I realized the great cost paid by our heavenly Father in giving up His only Son to take away the sins of the world. God miraculously provided for us in Christ.

Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad." (John 8:56). "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)...the only sinless, Jesus Christ.

Isaac too willingly carried the wood for the sacrifice. Jesus too carried His own cross. On the other side of Mt. Moriah is Mt Golgotha where Jesus triumphantly said, "It is finished".

CROSS OUT THE X'S IN Hebrews 10:4, 10, AND SEE THE GREATEST SACRIFICE EVER MADE -

Forxxitx xxisx ximpossiblexxforxx thexxbloodx
xofxbullsx xandxx goatsx xtoxxtakex xawayxsins... x x
xByx xthisx xwill,x xxwexxhavexxxbeenx xsanctifiedxx
throughxxthexxoxxfferingxxxofxxthexxbodyxx
xofxxJesusxx Christxxoncex xorxxxall.



foreignNews

THE LAST WORD

Persistent Prayer Prevails

New AI-powered Bible app

Amid concerns that Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology constitutes a major threat against faith in God, a newly available AI-powered Bible app aims to help users deepen their walk with Jesus by personalizing their study of Scripture, *CBN News* reports. A key feature of the app is *Pastor AI*, a digital Bible assistant that can clarify users' questions about the Scriptures and about life in general. "*Insight Bible* goes beyond static engagement," says the app's creator, Tiatun Tiatun. "The app evolves with you, utilizing Machine Learning to personalize your Bible journey. As you interact with the app, it adapts to your preferences and study patterns, providing a truly personalized experience."

Pastor accused in \$3.2m scam

Jan. 24: An online pastor in the US has been charged with civil fraud for selling a cryptocurrency that regulators described as "practically worthless." According to *CBS News*, Eligio & Kaitlyn Regalado are accused of raising \$3.2 million by allegedly targeting the state's Christian community with the cryptocurrency, marketed as INDXcoin, claiming divine guidance from God for financial prosperity.

'Sleeping giant' awakens

The Evangelical missionary movement in Latin America has grown so remarkably in recent years that it has been likened to a "sleeping giant" arising to plant needed Gospel-based churches in the region, *Christian Daily International* (CDI) reports. There has been a reported 300% increase in the number of Latin American Evangelical missionaries since 2000, with over 10,000 working in 100 countries, including nations with rigid Islamic, Buddhist, and Hindu societies. Latin America now ranks third in the world for the most evangelical missionaries, after the US and Europe. - *Worthy News*

Another massacre in Nigeria

Following the massacre of 160 mostly Christian civilians in Nigeria's Plateau state at Christmas, radicalized Fulani herdsmen murdered at least 31 more Plateau Christians in coordinated attacks between Jan. 22-24, *Morning Star News* (MSN) reports. Nigeria ranks first in the world for the number of Christians murdered on account of their faith; around 60,000 Christians have been killed since jihadist insurgents took root in Nigeria in 2009. As the Nigerian gov't and the international community allow the slaughter to continue unabated, rights groups have repeatedly warned of a genocide. - *WN*

It is said that when God wants to do something big, He first gets people praying. It took about 400 years of persistent prayer and waiting before the prayers for the coming Messiah were answered. One of those early prayer warriors was Anna the Prophetess who *"never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshipping God with fasting and prayer..."* (Luke 2) She is an example of how travelling prayer prevails.

Jesus devoted two full parables to drive home the point that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18). He concludes the *Parable of the Persistent Widow* by saying: *"Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to His chosen people who cry out to Him day and night?"*

After teaching His disciples a model prayer ('The Lord's Prayer'), Jesus immediately went on to explain the importance of persevering prayer by narrating to them the *Parable of the Persistent Friend*. (Lk. 11) He concludes by saying: *"If you keep knocking long enough, he [sleeping friend] will get up and give you whatever you need because of your shameless persistence. And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened... how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him."*

Jesus Himself practised what He preached. Hebrews 5:7 tells us: *"During the days of Jesus' life on earth, He offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the One who could save Him from death, and He was heard..."* (NIV) One day He spent the whole night in prayer on top of a mountain (Luke 6:12) - the world's first all-night prayer!

While praying at night is good, praying first thing in the morning is even better. D Martyn Lloyd-Jones would often tell aspiring preachers, **"Safeguard your mornings!"** And the noted prayer warrior, E M Bounds, once said: "The men who have done the most for God in this world have been early on their knees. He who fritters away the early morning, its opportunity and freshness, in other pursuits than seeking God will make poor headway seeking Him the rest of the day."

In an article entitled, **"Travail before you Prevail,"** *Shane Idleman*, founder-pastor of a leading church in California, writes: "As in pregnancy, there is travail before the blessing. The same holds true in prayer: We must persevere, as some strongholds and many blessings are only wrought through gut-wrenching, soul-searching prayer... Don't you, as a parent, run outside when you hear your children crying for help? Travail tells God that this is important ... that it matters to you ... that you will do whatever it takes to see the prodigal come home, the marriage restored, or the healing take place. When prayer becomes the priority of the day, your whole life is energized."

Shane concludes by saying; "While five-minute devotionals and prayers can be good, they aren't going to cut it in these dire times. We need powerful times of prayer, devotion, and worship. **The depth of God's blessings is in direct proportion to the depth of our prayer life. Prayer matters... it fuels the flames of revival.**"

IN GOD WE TRUST
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KARUNYA MAZEL-TOV

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