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forerunner

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Verify, verify, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

John 14:12

LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME Matthew 19:14

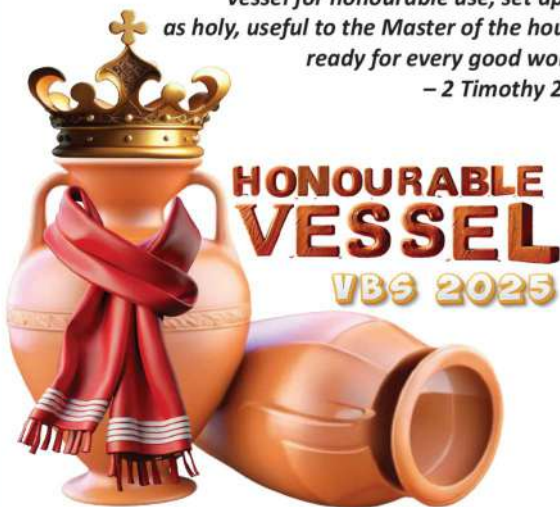
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"Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonourable, he will be a vessel for honourable use, set apart as holy, useful to the Master of the house, ready for every good work."
— 2 Timothy 2:21



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APRIL 26

Mr. Rajan
Meerut
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A beacon of unity and joy

● **Mumbai:** "In its 59th year, the *Prabhu Yeshu Janmotsav* ('Lord Jesus' Birthday') has grown into a beacon of unity and joy, bringing together people from all walks



of life," said Cardinal Oswald Gracias to the over 20,000 people who had gathered at the Girgaon Chowpatty beach in Mumbai on Dec. 8 for one of India's largest multi-denominational Christmas gatherings.

● **Hyderabad:** Thousands of visitors were transported into a world of history and Christmas cheer at the *Christmas Carnival* hosted by the New Life AG church in Hyderabad, on Dec. 14 & 15. Along with colorful parades, live bands, real animals and food stalls, the festival showcased four dramas on multiple stages with 16 shows, all centred around the theme of 'A King is Born'.

Promoting 'Our Eternal Hope'

Bengaluru: For over 40 years he used his unique gifts of designing Christian publications and promoting God's Word and love to the people of India and the world. But on



Dec. 19, **Philip Solomon** was himself promoted to glory. He was 65. Philip worked in the *Indian Evangelical Mission* for 19 years, and launched the *Humanitarian India Mission (HIM)* in 2005, taking God's love to the needy.

For the past 8 years, Philip worked in a Bible mission, training over 9,000 pastors in evangelism and distributing over 800,000 Bibles and 1 million Gospels through them. His last publication was a 2025 calendar entitled *Our Eternal Hope*, with over 300 verses on hope. The Church has lost an amazing man of God. But thank God for his life, work, labour of love and legacy.

11th anti-conversion state?

Nov. 30: The **Rajasthan** Cabinet has cleared an anti-conversion Bill set to be tabled in the next session of the Assembly. If passed, Rajasthan will be the 11th state to have such a law, next to Odisha, Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Jubilee of Hope 2025 begins

"The Jubilee calls us to spiritual renewal and commits us to the transformation of our world, so that this year may truly become a time of jubilation," said Pope Francis on Dec. 24, launching the Vatican's 2025 Jubilee Year. This year's theme is being "*Pilgrims of Hope*" in a world of desperate need. Since the 1500s, jubilee celebrations in the Catholic church have been held once every 25 years. In India, for the last two years the Catholic Church has been preparing for the 2025 Jubilee Year. - NCR

PM makes historic CBCI visit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a historic visit to the Christmas celebrations of the *Catholic Bishops' Conference of India* (CBCI) in New Delhi on Dec. 23. "This is

for the first time that the Prime Minister of India is coming to the CBCI Centre, a centre of the Catholic



Church... We are honoured," said Rev Mar Andrews Thazhath, Archbishop of Trichur and CBCI President.

"As we rejoice in the message of Christmas, we are also mindful of the challenges faced by some members of our community in certain parts of the country... These incidents of violence and discrimination not only harm the affected individuals but also disrupt the harmony and unity that you so tirelessly strive to uphold," the archbishop added. Nearly 200 prominent Indians protested the prime minister's visit in the wake of an alarming rise in anti-Christian violence across the country. - Cruxnow/Christian Today/ANI

Jesus in the market place

Nov. 29: Over 150 delegates attended the two-day '*Khristi Udhayamotsav 2024*' - Gujarat's first-ever Christian business summit and trade fair hosted by the Christian Business Association (CBA) in partnership with EFI-Saksham, a project of the Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI). Their main goal is to equip young people to bring the Gospel into the marketplace. - Christian Today





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2025**



**CEO CENTER
Bangalore**

**LIGHTHOUSES IN
THE MARKETPLACE**

MATT 5:14

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How to start
a business

PICK-UP

Benchmark &
Best practices

LEARN

How to make
your business
a lighthouse

LEARN

How to grow
your business

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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

✦ **PRAISE GOD** for the new year and for each new day. Praise Him for all that is past and trust Him for all that is to come. Great is His faithfulness, love, goodness, patience and mercy. He is slow to anger and full of compassion. *"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."* (Heb. 4:16)

✦ **PRAISE GOD** for the millions of people who were rescued last year from sin, sickness, suffering, slavery, self, Satan and death; for the thousands of new churches planted among the unreached; for God's kingdom which is growing by leaps and bounds; for the answers to all our prayers; that He is still in control.

✦ **PRAY THAT IN 2025** God's name is glorified and *"the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."* (Hab. 2:14)

✦ **PRAY FOR THE WORLD**, that all seven requests in the Lord's prayer are fulfilled every single day: *"Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; Lead us not into temptation; Deliver us from evil."*

✦ **PAKISTAN:** That unjust blasphemy laws will be repealed. Praise God one person was released on bail last month.

✦ **PRAY FOR THE RELEASE** of thousands of Christians and others who are being unjustly imprisoned. *"Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering."* (Heb. 13:3)

✦ **REFUGEES:** There are over 122 million forcibly displaced people worldwide as of June 2024, says the UN. Pray that many will find Christ; for more welcoming nations.

✦ **SOCIAL AND MASS MEDIA:** Praise God for the social media revolution which is rapidly helping to spread God's Word. Pray that Christians would maximise their use.

✦ **SUDAN:** Over 24 million people - half of Sudan's population - are experiencing high levels of hunger, mainly due to the ongoing civil war. About 12 million people have become refugees. Pray for God's intervention.

✦ **PRAY FOR ALL WARS TO END**, especially those in Ukraine, Gaza, Myanmar, Sudan, Burkina Faso, Yemen etc.; for all remaining hostages in Gaza to be returned.

✦ **WOMEN** in many nations are systematically silenced, subjugated, and stripped of their most basic rights.

✦ **CANCER:** About 10 million people die from cancer every year (or 1,100 per hour). Pray for breakthroughs.

✦ **ALL NIGHT WORSHIP:** Possibly the largest and longest gospel music concert in the world took place on Dec. 6 in Lagos, Nigeria, when hundreds of thousands of people gathered for the annual music extravaganza known as *The Experience*. Birthed by a God-inspired vision, the dusk-to-dawn experience provides a platform where "all can raise their hearts, hands and voices together as one in unfettered praise to the Almighty God, irrespective of tribe, denomination, creed or language." It is hugely anticipated by Christians and non-Christians alike, with an average attendance of about 500,000 attendees. Millions more watch it online around the world. Hallelujah!

✦ **BIBLE BOOM:** Bible sales are skyrocketing in the US, with publishers reporting a 22% increase in Bible sales in 2024 (through October). Bookstore owners and online sellers say people are hungry for the truth.

✦ **TRUMP'S INAUGURATION** is to be held on Jan. 20. Pray for a smooth transition; for wisdom to the new rulers to make the right decisions for all people and enact policies that are good, fair, unselfish and compassionate.

✦ **PERSECUTION:** About 13 Christians a day were killed for their faith in 2023, or nearly 5,000, says *Open Doors*. Nigeria remains the deadliest place to follow Jesus.

✦ **PEACE IN SYRIA:** With the defeat of Hezbollah forces in Lebanon and the fleeing of brutal Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad to Russia, there's another chance for peace in this troubled region, praise God. Pray for the new leaders and the transitional govt.

✦ **PRAY FOR AIR SAFETY:** At least two major air crashes in the last week of 2024 claimed over 200 lives.

✦ **PRAISE GOD**, Barnabas Aid has freed a further 100 Christian families from bonded labour in the brick kilns of Pakistan by paying off their debt owed to the owners.

✦ **KINGDOM WRESTLING?** A church in Shipley, UK, now hosts Kingdom Wrestling, a Christian professional wrestling charity that merges faith with entertainment, featuring prayer, worship, and personal testimonies. Founded in 2021, over 30 people have been baptized to date.

✦ **NIGERIA:** Over 30 million people are facing hunger.

✦ **POVERTY:** Some 600 million are in "extreme" poverty.

✦ **WEATHER CONDITIONS** worldwide to be normal, with no cold waves, fires, drought, floods, earthquakes etc.

✦ **DISCERNING THE TIMES:** Pray that both the church and the world will discern the Biblical signs of the times and prayerfully get ready for Christ's soon return.

✦ **HARVEST PLENTY; LABOURERS FEW:** Pray.



"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

✚ **PRAISE GOD** for the many new **believers, blessings** and **breakthroughs** in India this past year and let's look to Him for many more to come. *"All glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."* - Eph. 3:20

✚ **PRAY, GIVE, SEND AND GO:** The great tragedy in India is that though the gospel came about 2,000 years back, over 95% of the people are still living in darkness. "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray..."

✚ **PRAISE GOD** for the many achievements of India and the progress made thus far in meeting people's needs.

✚ **RISING PERSECUTION:** The *United Christian Forum* says, "745 incidents of violence were registered on its toll-free helpline number" by Christians across India from Jan. to Nov. last year. Pray that the govt. will take action.

✚ **UNIFORM CODE:** Pray for wisdom and consensus to our leaders as they seek to implement a Uniform Civil Code.

✚ **ACCIDENTS:** Govt. data shows 461 people die everyday from road accidents.

✚ **RECEIVING FOREIGN FUNDS** has become very difficult. Pray for those who have lost their license to receive foreign funds; that FCRA restrictions will be lifted; for Christians to give more.

✚ **FOR SPIRITUAL HEALTH:** As we enter the New Year: *May we be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; May we walk worthy of the Lord; May we please God fully; May we bear fruit in every good work; May we increase in the knowledge of God; May we be strengthened with all might according to His glorious power; May our lives express thanks to the Father for His grace to us.* (Colossians 1:9-12)

✚ **FOR HEALTH, STRENGTH AND FITNESS:** "Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers." - 3 Jn. 1:2, NASB

✚ **PRAY FOR THE RICH** of India and their salvation.

✚ **FOR DELIVERANCE:** Pray that India may be free from **social evils** like child marriage, dowry, casteism, untouchability, superstitions etc.; from all forms of **crime and sin**, like robbery, rape, theft, adultery, murder, domestic abuse, violence, corruption, bribery, etc.; from **addictions** such as drunkenness, gambling, pornography, smoking, taking drugs, television, social media, etc.; and, **injustices** such as forced or child labor, nepotism, gender inequalities, anti-conversion laws, those in jail waiting for justice, situation in Manipur etc.

✚ **PRAY FOR OUR CHILDREN** and their salvation.

✚ **THINGS WE TAKE FOR GRANTED:** In spite of increasing restrictions and opposition, by and large the church continues to experience much freedom to carry out its mission of taking God's love to the lost and needy of the land, for which we can thank God. Having 24/7 Christian television channels, for example, is truly amazing. So also is having Christian bookshops or public churches or constitutional protections or freedom to buy Bibles!

✚ **DOORS MAY BE CLOSING:** We cannot take our liberties for granted and need to not only fervently pray for continued freedom to "preach, practise and propagate the faith" without hindrance but also seize the current window of opportunity to take the life-changing gospel to the ends of the land. **Christians need to also sacrificially give more for God's work** so that the church does not have to rely on "foreign funds" to carry out its mission.

✚ **RELIGIOUS FREEDOM:** Rajasthan may become the 11th state to enact an anti-conversion law, the others being: Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh. Pray that such laws will not be misused by extremists and will be repealed asap.

✚ **PRAY FOR THE RELEASE** of those in prison because of their faith; for wisdom and courage to the High Court and Supreme Court judges to uphold our constitutional freedoms.

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

✚ **FOR AN OUTPOURING OF GOD'S SPIRIT** on all; for miracles, signs and wonders; for revival.

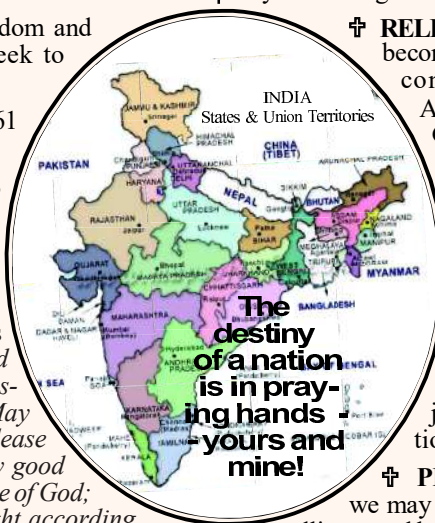
✚ **PRAY FOR THE POOR,** hungry, homeless, hurting, helpless, widows, orphans, unemployed and the suicidal. One in every 3 children and one in 7 adults live in poverty.

✚ **PRAY FOR THE PREVENTION** of natural disasters like earthquakes, landslides, cyclones, floods, famine, drought, forest fires etc, and manmade disasters like air or land accidents, home fires, building collapses etc.

✚ **INTOLERANCE:** Pray for an end to intolerance of other faiths, discrimination, India's caste system, etc.

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

✚ **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**NEW YEAR BLESSINGS**

+ "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." - 2 Cor.5:17

+ "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness..." - Isaiah 43:18-19

+ "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." - Jer. 29:11

+ "You crown the year with your bounty... your carts overflow with abundance." - Ps. 65:11

+ "From this day on I will bless you." - Haggai 2:19

Forerunner wishes all its readers, subscribers, advertisers, supporters and prayer partners, a very happy, healthy & heavenly New Year 2025!

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

CONTENTS

- 3 *News from the Church in India*
- 5 *First things First: Praying for the World*
- 6 *Interceding for India*
- 8 *Classifieds & Matrimonials (Pages 8-10)*
- 14 *Bob's Banter: Starting the Year with Thanks!*
- 17 *Foresight: Mentors: Everyday Superheroes*
- 35 *Bible Study: Voice of New Birth*
- 41 *Family: Striving for Peace, Unity & Love*
- 43 *Youth Ablaze: Attempt Great Things For God*
- 45 *Faith: God can Reset, Revive & Restore*
- 49 *Keys to receiving an abundance of rain*
- 51 *Lessons from a Persistent Widow*
- 53 *The Old has gone, the New is here!*
- 55 *Children's Corner*
- 56 *Around the World*
- 56 *Last Word: Turning the World Upside Down*

A 222 Moment

"The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek Him: your heart shall live forever."

Psalms: 22:26, KJV

DATELINE

- + **Women's Conference**, B'lore, Tues. Jan. 14, pg 29
- + **All Night Prayer**, B'lore, Fri. Jan. 17, pg 60. (Back)
- + **Business Summit**, B'lore, Jan. 30 - Feb. 1, pg 4.
- + **Miracle Services**, Bangalore, Sundays, pg 27.
- + **Students' Bible Church**, Bangalore, Sundays, pg 50.
- + **Leaders' Seminar**, Bangalore, Sat. Jan. 18, pg 32
- + **VBS Training** in five regions, pg 1. (Front)
- + **VBS Trg & Kit Launch**, B'lore, Sat. Feb. 15, pg. 28.
- + **Intercession Conference**, Nilgiris, Feb. 18-22, pg 48.
- + **Leaders' Conf.**, Coimbatore, Mar. 18-21, pg 37.
- + **Int. Vision Conf.**, Malaysia, April 27-May 2, pg 44.

"You crown the year with your goodness; your paths overflow with rich food."

PSALM 65:11

"My God will supply all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19, BSB

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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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RENT/LEASE: 1 BHK, 2 BHK, semi-furnished houses on 1st & 3rd floor with solar & car parking, at

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

FOR RENT: 2 BHK fully furnished house on 2nd floor at 117, 3rd Cross, 7th Block, Koramangala, Near Nexus Mall, B'lore. Preferably for a single person. Rent: Rs.20k. Advance: Rs. 80k. sinahep@gmail.com

HOUSE PAINTING : Painter is looking for an opportunity to do painting work in and around Frazer Town & Tannery Road, B'lore-5. Ph: 8310172464

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WANTED a suitable Christian girl below 34 years, BE/MS/MD/MBA/Post-graduate, for a CSI Tamil boy, BE, 39 years, height 5'9", working in an MNC at B'lore. Contact: 8867172000. Email: adsk46@gmail.com

WANTED: Born-again Medical / BDS / MS / Veterinary Doctor grooms, below 35 yrs, for B'lore based born-again doctor girls: Elder : MBBS, MD, 34 yrs, ht. 5'3"; Younger : MBBS, MD, 32 yrs, ht.5'5". Language no bar. Contact: 8217772403/9242107826/samuellaurence76@gmail.com

WANTED a God-fearing working girl, for a B'lore-

based, Tamil, handsome, graduate boy, 33 yrs, ht 5'7", working in IT at Bangalore. Contact Email: anmanickam7@gmail.com.

WANTED a God-fearing born-again working girl, (preferably a teacher), for an Ambur, Tamil Nadu-based, Tamil Christian self-employed boy, height 5'7". Mobile: 9886686999.

WANTED a God-fearing graduate working girl, for a Protestant CSI, handsome Tamil boy, B.Tech., 32 years, height 5'7", working in IT-Philips at Bangalore. Please contact through Email address: princeet65@gmail.com.

More matrimonial ads are on the next two pages.

PRAYER MATTERS

All are welcome!

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

+ **WEEKLY PRAYER** at the Pavanasar Lutheran Church, Bangalore-560051, on Mondays. For prayer call: 959 130 2854. 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.

+ **THE OVER 2,500 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

Forerunner Prayer Centre

3 BCC Building, Wheeler Rd, Cox Tn., B'lore - 5.
Cell: + 91 9739978454 / 11 am - 4:30 pm (Mon-Fri)



Dear Heavenly Father,

As we stand at the beginning of a New Year, we come before You with gratitude and hope. We thank You for the blessings of the past year, for the love and support of family and friends, and for the opportunities to grow and learn.

As we look to the future, we ask for Your guidance and direction. Help us to set our priorities straight, to focus on what is truly important, and to live each day with purpose and intention. Grant us the courage to face new challenges, the wisdom to make wise decisions, and the strength to persevere through difficult times.

Help us to be kind, compassionate, and generous, to love You with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves.

Help us to be a blessing to those around us.

As we embark on this New Year, we pray for Your protection, Your provision, and Your presence in our lives. May we be filled with Your joy, Your peace, Your love, and Your hope. May we reflect Your light to a world that desperately needs it.

In Jesus' Name and for His Glory. Amen.

Send your prayer requests, testimonials and suggestions to: prayeratforerunner@gmail.com



"I have posted watchmen on your walls; they will pray day and night, continually. Take no rest, all you who pray to the Lord. Give the Lord no rest until He completes His work, until He makes Jerusalem [church] the pride of the earth." - Isaiah 62:6-7, NLT

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Wanted a suitable born-again groom,
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Contact: 9481779626

**Wanted a suitable girl, (Nurse / Teacher
B.Sc., M.Sc.,) below 31 years,**
for a CSI Tamil Boy, M.B.A., 32 years, 6 ft
and working in an MNC at Bangalore.

Language no bar.
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Email: vincentjarad@gmail.com

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Wanted a suitable born-again groom,
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Bangalore.

(No encumbrance)
Contact: 88612 47114

Wanted a God-fearing RC/ believer girl,
for a RC boy, 25 years, height 5'6",
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Contact:
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Wanted a suitable Protestant educated boy,
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working as an accountant in Bishop Cottons
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Email: aprems143@gmail.com

**Wanted a suitable CSI Protestant
working girl,**
for a CSI boy, B.Com., 29 years, height.
5'5", working as a senior associate in
JCSS Consulting Pvt., Ltd., Bangalore.

Contact: 9845989747

**Parents looking for a God-fearing
groom, preferably Kannada-speaking,**
for their daughter, 38 years, B.Com.,
MBA., height 5', working in a bank
at Bangalore.

Contact:
9886198472 / 8073963626

Wanted a suitable Christian boy,
for a CSI Protestant girl, 40 years, height
5'7", MBA finance and having
her own business.

Language and denomination no bar.
Contact : 9880882278

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bank, Australia (Melbourne)
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9845465674**
Email: lucia.mary@gs.com

**Parents seeking a well settled, born-again
Christian boy, below 31 years,**
for their daughter, 28 years,
working as a HR person in IT.
Contact: 9845125561
Email: rebak_has@yahoo.co.in

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an Audit Manager at Deloitte USI.
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Email: neethasimon355@gmail.com

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below 37 years, graduate, working in B'lore,
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Contact: 9986254835

**Bangalore-based parents are looking for
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B.E., M.S. (U.K.), working in London as a
Data Scientist.
Contact: 9448751444
Email: thinagaraj.e@gmail.com

**Looking for a God-fearing
Kannada / Tamil Protestant boy,**
for a CSI Protestant girl , 27 years ,
height 5'2", Engineering in E&C and
working as a teacher.
Contact : 9742217156

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BOB'S BANTER

By Robert Clements*

Starting the Year with Thanks..!

A principal of a school, a dear friend of mine, was telling me of an incident where he'd seen a girl crying outside her classroom: "I asked her what the matter was and she told me her cat had died. Did it have any kittens?" I asked. "Yes," said the little girl, her eyes gleaming, "She had two lovely kittens and they are at home." "Then be thankful for them!" said the principal, hugging the child.

And maybe that's how we need to transition into the new year - thanking God for what we've got, not focussing on what we don't have, and trusting Him for the future. A friend sent me these lovely lines which I'd like to share with you: I am thankful:

- For the spouse who snores all night because he's at home asleep with me and not with someone else.
- For the children who complain about doing dishes, because that means they are at home and not on the streets...
- For the mess to clean after a party, because it means, that I have been surrounded by friends.
- For the clothes that fit a little too tight, because it means I have enough to eat...

*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.

- For a floor that needs mopping, and windows that need cleaning, because it means I have a home.
- For all the complaining I hear about the government, because it means we have freedom of speech...
- For the noise I have to bear from my neighbors, because it means I can hear.
- For the pile of laundry and ironing, because it means I have clothes to wear.
- For weariness and aching muscles at the end of the day, because it means I have been capable of working hard.
- For the alarm that goes off in the early morning hours, because it means I am alive.

Ah, it's good to be thankful isn't it?
*For flowers that bloom about our feet,
For tender grass, so fresh and sweet,
For song of bird and hum of bee,
For all things fair we hear or see
Lord, God, we thank Thee!*

*For mother-love, for father-care,
For brothers strong and sisters fair,
For love at home and school each day,
For guidance lest we go astray -
Lord, God, we thank Thee!*

*For thy dear, everlasting arms;
That bore us through all ills and harms,
For guarding us throughout this year,
Knowing always that you were near -
Lord, God, we thank Thee!*



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“God will make this happen, for He who calls you is faithful.” - 1 Thessalonians 5:24



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Mentors: Everyday Superheroes

Name any successful person, and you will likely find one - or many - mentors who supported them along the way. A genuine mentor is crucial to one's overall growth and well-being, because they offer valuable guidance, support, and insights from their own experience, helping you avoid mistakes and navigate challenges.

After Billy Graham, Rick Warren is arguably one of the most influential living evangelicals in the world. The day Graham died at age 99, Warren, the pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, and author of the bestselling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, said he was mentored by Graham for 40 years, and Graham was his hero and model. (TIME, Feb. 21, 2018)

The Bible offers numerous examples of **mentor-mentee** relationships that highlight the importance of guidance, support, and the transfer of wisdom across generations. A mentor guides you towards your goals, offering valuable advice, support during challenges, and encouragement to develop strong moral character, while respecting your confidentiality and leading by example.

Guidance: A mentor helps you find the best route to your goals, gives you tips to avoid detours, and assists you when you feel lost.

Role Model: A mentor shares their experiences, lessons learned, and guidance for navigating life's challenges.

Courage: A mentor supports you like a trusted friend, helping you find your voice, stand up for what's right, and build self-belief while overcoming obstacles.

Moral Values: A mentor emphasizes doing what is right, teaching values like honesty, kindness, and respect, to help you develop a strong moral character.

Commitment: A mentor is dedicated to your growth and success, offering unwavering support tailored to your goals.

Respect for Confidentiality: A mentor safeguards your trust by respecting your privacy and never sharing your personal information with others.

Exemplary Behavior: A mentor leads by example, demonstrating respect and kindness, and encouraging others to do the same.

● **MOSES AND JOSHUA:** Moses, who led the Israelites, helped train Joshua to take his place. Moses recognized Joshua's potential earlier on, and entrusted him with significant responsibilities, such as leading military campaigns (Exodus 17:9-16). He also took Joshua with him to Mount Sinai, allowing him to witness God's

covenant with Israel (Exodus 24:13) and to receive direct instruction from God (Numbers 27:18-23). Joshua demonstrated a willingness to learn from Moses and to embrace the challenges that came with his mentorship. Joshua's journey highlights the importance of recognizing potential, providing guidance, and entrusting responsibilities to mentees.

● **ELIJAH AND ELISHA:** Elijah, one of the powerful prophets of God, trained Elisha. Elijah's mentorship of Elisha demonstrates how close observation, a willingness to learn, and asking for guidance, can prepare a mentee for great responsibilities.

● **PAUL AND TIMOTHY:** The Apostle Paul's guidance extended beyond initial training. He continued to support, encourage, and challenge Timothy throughout his ministry. Paul entrusted Timothy with significant responsibilities that demonstrate the importance of providing opportunities for mentees to apply their skills. Paul's consistent demonstration of faith, character, and leadership served as a powerful model for Timothy.

● **JESUS AND THE DISCIPLES:** While it's impossible to perfectly replicate Jesus' unique role, many of the principles He embodied can be applied to modern mentoring relationships. Jesus prioritized spending time with His disciples, building genuine relationships with them. Jesus didn't just preach, but practised what He preached.

Jesus' actions and teachings were intertwined, showing His disciples how to live out their faith in everyday life. Jesus gave His disciples responsibilities and opportunities to grow. He sent them out to preach, heal, and spread the gospel, trusting in their abilities and empowering them to use their gifts. *"Anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works."* (John 14:12, NLT)

History, from the Old Testament figures to the revolutionary impact of Jesus, provides undeniable evidence that the rise of exceptional leaders is deeply intertwined with the wisdom and guidance of their mentors. Through unwavering patience, selfless sharing of hard-earned knowledge, and an unshakeable belief in their mentees' potential, mentors cultivate a legacy that extends beyond their own lifetimes.

If the divine spark within you recognizes the sacred calling of mentorship, answer it. Embrace this mantle and embark on a journey that not only transforms lives but leaves an enduring legacy.

-- Jose, josetnithi@gmail.com (9448033518)



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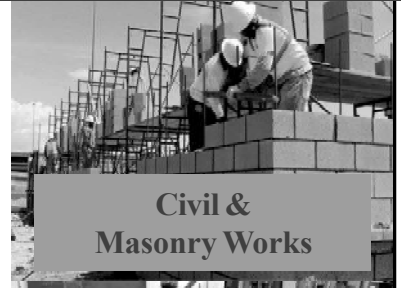
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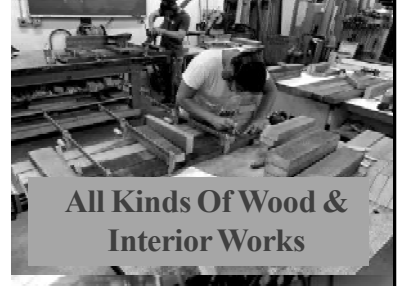
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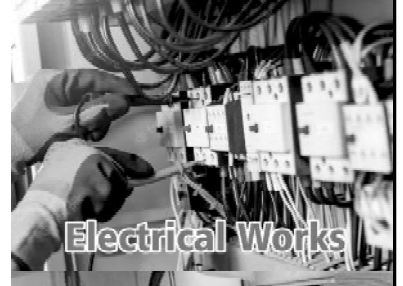
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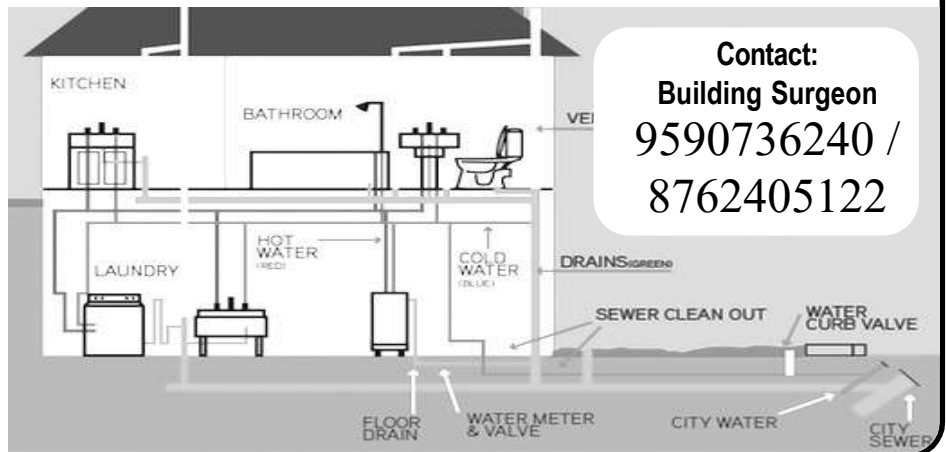
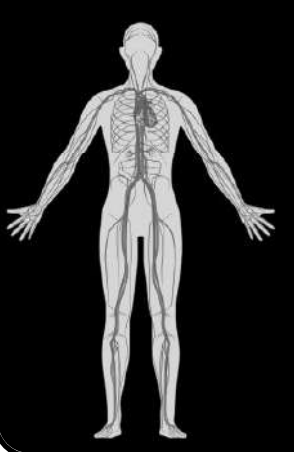
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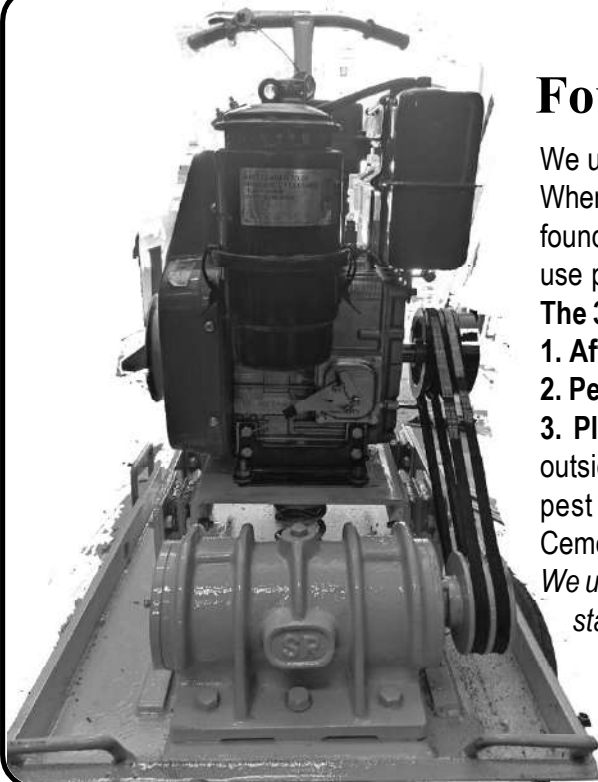
The 3 stages are..

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Dip. CS (Eng/Telugu)	2 Yr	Inter/+2

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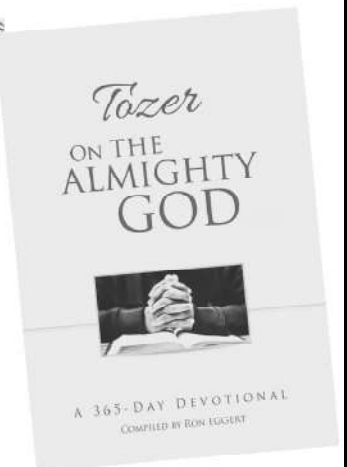
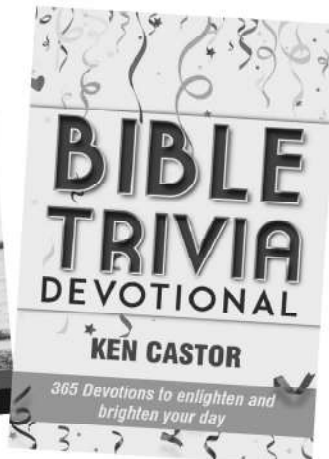
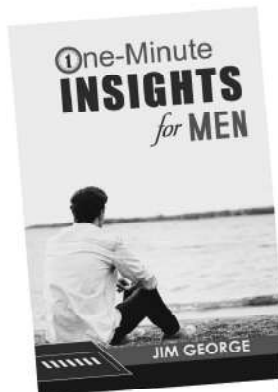
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VOICE OF NEW BIRTH

- "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away... all things have become new." - 2 Cor. 5:17
- "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (Jn. 10:10); "I am the resurrection and the life." (John 11:25)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Sin entered the world through our ancestors, Adam and Eve, who disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. But Jesus was born to take away our sins and create in us a **new heart and a new spirit**: "I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart." (Ez. 36:26, NLT)

Jesus was born to "destroy the works of the devil," which include sin, sickness, sorrow, selfishness, suffering, Satan and death, and grant us new life with Him forevermore. As Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us: "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets... but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things..." Here are more aspects of the new life that Jesus gives to all who believe on Him -

★ The Necessity of New Birth ★ ★ ★

- "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again **he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" - Jesus, John 3:3
- "God our Saviour, **who wants all people to be saved** and to come to a **knowledge of the truth.**" - 1 Tim. 2:3-4
- "The **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness..." - Gal. 5:22-23
- "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the **judgment.**" - Hebrews 9:27
- "Everyone born of God **overcomes the world,** and we achieve this victory through our faith." - 1 John 5:4
- "Put on all of God's armor so that you will be **able to stand firm** against all strategies of the devil." - Eph. 6:11

★ The Path to New Birth ★ ★ ★

- "Except a man be **born of water** and of the **Spirit,** he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." - Jesus (Jn. 3:5)
- "Whosoever **believeth in Him [Jesus]** should not perish, but have everlasting life." - John 3:16 / "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." - Jn 1:12 / "Whoever has the **Son** has life." (1 Jn. 5:12)
- "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every **Word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." - Matthew 4:4(b)
- "You have been born again... through the living and abiding **Word of God.**" - 1 Peter 1:23
- "We serve in the **new way of the Spirit,** and not in the old way of the written code." - Romans 7:6
- "**Love... God with all your heart... all thy soul... all thy mind...**[and] your neighbour as yourself." - Mt. 22:37-39
- "**Do not conform** to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind.**" - Rom. 12:1-2

★ The Rewards of New Birth ★ ★ ★

- "Whoever believes in Him **should not perish but have everlasting life...**" - John 3:16-18
- "He has caused us to be **born again to a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus..." - 1 Peter 1:3-5
- "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow **rivers of living water.**'" - Jn. 7:38
- "**Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,** where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not..." - Mt. 6:20
- "**Ask and it will be given to you;** seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." - Mt. 7:7
- "**Peace I leave with you;** my peace I give you... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." - Jn. 14:27

★ The Responsibilities of New Birth ★ ★ ★

- "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only **he who does the will of My Father.**" - Mt. 7:21 / "Let us also **lay aside every weight, and sin** which clings so closely..." - Heb. 12:1
- "Since you have been **raised to new life with Christ,** set your sights on things above, where Christ sits..." - Col. 3:1
- "Whoever wants to be my disciple must **deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.**" - Lk. 9:23
- "**Let us not neglect our meeting together** [church], as some people do, but encourage one another..." - Heb. 10:25
- "I focus on this one thing: **forgetting the past** and looking forward to what lies ahead." - Phil. 3:13
- "**Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks** in all circumstances..." - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17
- "**Go... and teach all nations, baptizing them...** teaching them to observe all things..." - Matthew 28:19-20
- "**Put on the Lord Jesus Christ,** and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires." - Romans 13:14

We Wish all the Readers of Forerunner a very Joyous New Year!

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By Jacob Varghese*

During a recent visit to a family, I was met with a situation that left me deeply unsettled. As I approached their home, I heard the distant echoes of raised voices—a husband and wife in a heated argument. The sound of their small child crying loudly added to the turmoil. When they greeted me, they wore polite smiles, as if nothing was amiss, but the tension in the air was unmistakable.

Out of genuine concern, I gently inquired about what was going on. It took some time, but I eventually understood the root of their conflict. Their relationship was riddled with constant criticism, blame, and manipulation—a cycle that seemed impossible to break. The lack of peace was not just affecting their lives but was also leaving a profound impact on their young child, caught in the crossfire of their discord.

This experience brought to mind how such patterns, if left unchecked, can erode the foundation of any relationship, especially within a family. It reminded me of the importance of seeking solutions based on humility, trust, and love - the values that God calls us to embrace in our lives and homes.

RESTORING HARMONY IN RELATIONSHIPS:

In recent times, conflict and discord within families has become a recurring concern. The lack of empathy, emotional support, constant criticism, manipulation, and control within families has led to emotional exhaustion, damaged self-esteem, and strained relationships. Yet, God's Word provides wisdom and solutions to address these challenges and restore harmony in family life.

1. Lack of Empathy and Emotional Support:

Families thrive on understanding and compassion. When members fail to empathize, it fosters isolation and resentment. *Solution:* Cultivate a habit of active listening and intentional care. Show love through actions and words that uplift one another.

As 1 Peter 3:8 says: *"Be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble."* By embracing Christ-like compassion, families can become safe havens for every member.

2. Constant Criticism and Manipulation:

Unnecessary criticism and manipulation harm trust and create hostility. This behaviour is often rooted in unmet personal expectations. *Solution:* Shift from criticism to constructive dialogue. Highlight positive aspects while addressing concerns tactfully. Avoid manipulative behaviours by prioritizing honesty and integrity.

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." (Eph. 4:29) Families must focus on building each other up, not tearing one another down. Develop an attitude of gratitude. Trade compliments instead of insults.

3. Emotional Draining and Self-Centered Behaviour:

When family members prioritize their needs above others,

it creates emotional exhaustion for those constantly giving without reciprocation. *Solution:* Foster a spirit of service within the family. Share responsibilities and look for ways to lighten each other's burdens. Develop a spirit of compromise, realizing you cannot get all of your needs met all of the time. Let go of the unimportant issues.

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:2) Serving one another reflects Christ's example of selfless love.

4. Control, Boundaries, and Autonomy:

Over-controlling behaviour diminishes trust, while the absence of boundaries can lead to chaos. Balance is essential to maintaining harmony. *Solution:* Respect each member's individuality and establish healthy boundaries. Open discussions about expectations and limits can prevent misunderstandings. Be ready to make the first move.

"Do to others as you would have them do to you." (Lk. 6:31) Mutual respect fosters trust and peace within the family unit.

5. Damage to Self-Esteem:

Constant negativity and lack of affirmation can crush the spirit, leading to low self-esteem and emotional insecurity. *Solution:* Celebrate achievements and encourage one another. Create a culture of appreciation.

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:11) Affirmation and encouragement strengthen confidence and self-worth.

PRACTICAL STEPS TO BUILD PEACEFUL FAMILIES

1. Regular Family Prayer & Devotion: Seek God's help. A family that prays together, stays together. Regular devotion cultivates a spiritual bond that transcends conflicts.

2. Open Communication: Create safe spaces for each member to express their feelings without fear of judgment.

3. Conflict Resolution: Address issues promptly with forgiveness and understanding, as Jesus instructed.

4. Modelling Christ-like Behaviour: Parents must exemplify love, humility, and patience, as children often emulate what they see.

5. Try Something New: "If you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting what you've always got."

6. Seek Help When Needed: When issues feel insurmountable, seek guidance from counsellors or pastors. "There's safety in having many advisors." (Pro. 11:14)

Conclusion: A peaceful family reflects the love and unity God desires for His people. While challenges may arise, applying Biblical principles and fostering empathy, emotional support and respect, can transform relationships. As Romans 12:18 says: *"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*

* 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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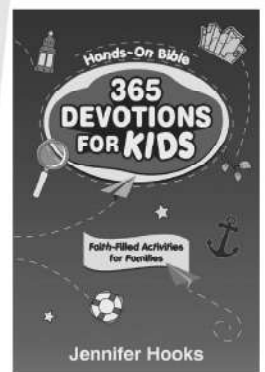
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Expect Great Things From God. Attempt Great Things For God. – William Carey

William Carey, known as the “*Father of modern Protestant missions*,” embodied the above quote. Apart from his **bold faith**, his **sacrificial lifestyle**, **incredible perseverance**, **passion for souls** and **prioritisation of prayer**, all contributed to the ‘great things’ he accomplished for God and by God.

Carey and his team translated the Bible into 44 local languages, developed multiple dictionaries, started 26 churches and 126 schools, launched medical missions, savings banks, a seminary, a girls’ school, and even a Bengali-language newspaper. In addition he fought against the inhumane practice of sati for over 35 years, and created thousands of jobs for locals by partnering with English businessmen.

● **BOLD FAITH:** When Carey proposed a missionary enterprise at a ministers’ meeting in 1786, he was sharply reprimanded with the words, “*Young man, sit down! When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine!*” However, this didn’t deter Carey!

Six years later, Carey’s fellow ministers had at last become open to the idea of sending missionaries overseas. Incredibly, the missionary society established by these poor, slightly educated, humble country ministers, became the model for 19th Century missions’ organizations and essentially transformed 19th Century Christianity! Within a few years, all major denominations were inspired to form their own societies.

● **SACRIFICIAL LIFESTYLE:** When Carey became a professor of Sanskrit & Bengali at Fort William College, Calcutta, at a salary of Rs 500 a month, he devoted his entire salary to the work of spreading the gospel, keeping only a small portion for necessary expenses. As Carey explained: “We might have had large possessions, but we have given all to the Mission.”

● **AMAZING PERSEVERANCE:** Throughout his ministry in India, Carey faced opposition and resistance from businesses and the Indian government. Several of his children died from various diseases at young ages, and his first wife became mentally unstable until her death in 1807.

In 1812, an unfortunate fire at the mission printing shop destroyed thousands of Bible translation manuscripts that Carey and his team had been working on for more than 15 years. It took them about seven years to re-do much of the lost work.

Despite these various setbacks, William Carey still pressed on, motivated by a desire to see the unreached peoples of India hear the Gospel. He once said: “I’m not afraid of failure; I’m afraid of succeeding at things that don’t matter.”

● **PASSION FOR SOULS:** Even before Carey

became a missionary to India, he had an all-consuming passion for saving souls. “My real business is to preach the gospel and win lost souls. I cobble shoes to pay expenses,” he said.

● **PRIORITY OF PRAYER:** “Carey believed that success in ministry came only through zealous prayer,” writes Andy Osborne, a lead pastor of a Baptist church in Toronto, who did a study on Carey’s prayer life. He adds: “For Carey, success was much deeper than simply counting numbers; in fact, if he saw any visible success without earnest communion with God he considered it failure. For him, prayer was both the means and the end of ministry, and he believed that longevity of the work depended on his reliance on prayer. When he saw others entering the mission field, Carey would stress their own need for prayer in ministry if they desired to see any success in the spread of the Gospel.”

William Carey was an ordinary man from England who believed in a God with whom all things are possible. Jesus still needs a few good men and women who will seek and save the lost and needy of this world on His behalf. Will you be one of them? (BethanyGU.edu, CalvaryChapel.com)

“I’m not afraid of failure; I’m afraid of succeeding at things that don’t matter.” - William Carey

They risked their lives to save the lost and needy.

Ernest Oliver

Birth	: 20-08-1911
Home Calling	: 20-09-2001
Native Place	: London
Country	: England
Place of Vision	: Nepal & India

One Missionary Biography

YOUTH CHALLENGE

Ernest Oliver was a missionary from England who is known for his ministry in India and Nepal. Born in a pious Baptist family, Oliver was baptized when he was fifteen. He began teaching at Sunday School and by the age of eighteen, he was preaching in local churches and mission halls. Once when he visited a circus with his church friends. There he felt God clearly speaking to him about wasting his time in amusement while there were many souls yet to be saved. That day he realized God’s plan for his life and committed himself to missionary service.

In 1933, he gave up his architectural calligrapher profession and joined All Nations Bible College for theological training. There Oliver was preparing himself to minister in Congo on behalf of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union (RBMU). But in a prayer meeting, he heard of a devastating earthquake that hit Nepal and Ganges Valley in Bihar, North India. He sensed that it was God’s will for him to go to Nepal instead of Congo.

Oliver sailed to India in 1935 and arrived at Motihari in North Bihar. There Oliver somehow befriended a member of the Nepali Royal Family, Bahadur Rana, and led him to salvation. Bahadur Rana who was also called Colonel Sahib became instrumental for Gospel propagation in Nepal. In 1951, the Nepal borders finally opened up and Oliver was allowed to visit Kathmandu.

In 1954, Oliver established United Mission to Nepal (UMN) along with a few other missionary agencies. Along with his wife, Margaret, he labored among the Nepalis preaching Gospel and establishing churches. He did not want to westernize the Nepali church and instead made efforts to develop churches appropriate to the culture and context of Nepal. He was also instrumental in establishing hospitals, leprosariums, and orphanages there.

In 1961, Oliver returned to London and worked as executive secretary for RBMU. Despite his old age weighing him down, Oliver remained an active enabler of several missions and administrator of missionary organizations till the end.

Beloved, are you wasting your time in amusement while many souls have not yet heard of Christ?

“Lord, help me to seek Your approval and not men’s. Amen!”

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God can Reset, Revive & Restore

As we enter the new year, this is the perfect moment to remember that God's plans for us are never derailed, no matter how overwhelming life may seem. He has the power to reset, revive and restore what is lost.

The promise of Jeremiah 29:11 declares: *"For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* This promise reminds us of God's unchanging faithfulness and His ability to bring hope and restoration, even in the darkest times.

Hope for a Backsliding Nation: God gave this promise to the nation of Israel, who tragically strayed from their calling. Instead of transforming the culture around them, they conformed to it, adopting the practices of the surrounding nations. For over a century, God sent prophets like Isaiah, Micah, and Hosea to call them back to Him. But their hearts remained hardened, and they rejected His message.

Eventually, God allowed Babylon to invade Jerusalem, destroy the land, and take His people into exile. This period of immense pain and loss left the people of Israel feeling abandoned, believing that God no longer had a plan for their lives. Yet, even in their disobedience, God's love never wavered.

In the midst of their exile, God spoke through the prophet Jeremiah, sending a letter to reassure them. He reminded them that their time in Babylon would last 70 years—a period of refinement and restoration. It wasn't a promise of immediate deliverance but a call to hope, patience, and trust in God's perfect timing.

God's Plans Are Never Derailed: God's words remain as relevant today as they were then. Life's challenges—whether past, present, or looming on the horizon—can leave us feeling defeated. But just as God had a plan for Israel, He has a plan for you. He sees the end from the beginning. Even when life feels uncertain, He is in control.

God's plans are designed for a specific time and season - never too early and never too late. As Isaiah 40:11 beautifully illustrates, "He tends His flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; he gently leads those that have young." This is the heart of our God: a loving Shepherd who walks with us, carries us in our weakness, and leads us with care.

Jeremiah 29:12-13 assures us of His desire for closeness: *"Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."* This promise is a reminder that no matter what we face, God is near. He listens to our prayers, speaks to our hearts, and longs for a deep, meaningful relationship with us when we seek Him wholeheartedly and trust in His unwavering presence.

Trust God's Timing: God's timing is perfect, even when it feels like we're in a dark pit with no way out. Consider the story of Joseph, who was thrown into a pit by his own brothers. The pit was deep, dark, and seemingly hope-

less. Yet, God had a plan - not just to rescue Joseph but to elevate him to a position where he could save many lives.

Life's circumstances may push us into pits of despair. The walls around us may feel steep, and escape may seem impossible. Yet Joseph's life reminds us of a profound truth: no one and nothing can thwart God's plan for your life. **Help is just a reset button [prayer] away.**

Joseph's journey from the pit to the palace was marked by pain - betrayal, slavery, false accusations, and imprisonment. Yet, the Bible repeatedly assures us, "The Lord was with Joseph." Through every trial, Joseph trusted God, refusing to let bitterness or hatred take root in his heart. His faith enabled him not only to survive but to thrive, even in the most challenging circumstances.

Similarly, God knows when to lift you out of your struggles. Trust His process, for His plans are always greater than anything we can imagine.

My Personal Experience: This is not just Joseph's story; it resonates with many of us. There was a time when I, too, found myself in a pit. I felt abandoned, unloved, and without purpose. Life's pressures weighed heavily on me, and the future seemed bleak. I

wrestled with questions about God's fairness and doubted His love and even His existence.

During one of the darkest moments of my life - while battling a serious illness and standing on the brink of death - I encountered God in an unexpected way. As I lay on a ventilator, I saw a vision of the cross and the blood of Jesus covering my sins. I heard His voice saying, "I am giving you new life." That moment changed everything.

Trust in God's Plan for Your Life: Joseph's story and my own remind us that God is not distant. He is with us, even in the pit. The trials we face are not the end of the story - they are part of the process through which God works out His perfect plan. He can turn what is meant for evil into something good.

As we enter the year ahead, let's remember: ■ God's timing is perfect. His plans are never early or late. ■ God's presence is constant. Even in the darkest moments, He is with us. ■ God's redemption is certain. What others mean for harm, God can use for good.

May 2025 be a year where we embrace God's perfect timing, lean into His love, and live with the confidence that His plans for us will surely come to pass. God is faithful to complete the good work He has started in us.

Happy New Year, and may God bless you abundantly!

*Dr Latha Christie is a scientist based in Bangalore who has served with the government of India for about 37 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
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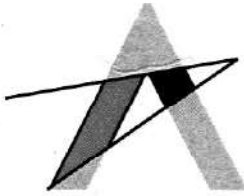
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Keys to Receiving an Abundance of Rain

"Finally, the seventh time, his servant told him [Elijah], 'I saw a little cloud... rising from the sea'... heavy downpour." (1 Ki. 18:44)

"The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful." (Mark 4:19)

Is worship seasonal?

Not too long ago, I spent time in prayer. It felt as if I was hitting a brick wall. I complained, "God, I feel so dry!" I thought about the Scriptures in Ezekiel about the dry bones, and I wondered, "Is there any life here today?"

Suddenly, the Lord spoke to my heart. "Is worship seasonal?" He asked.

My mind quickly returned to the previous week and a conversation with a friend. We talked about how sometimes it seems easy to pray and worship, and sometimes it looks like toil and labor. She asked me a question: "Do you think those times are seasonal?"

"Yes, I suppose they are," I responded.

When God asked me the same question days later, I knew I had given the wrong answer. When I hesitated to answer God's question, He continued to speak to my heart. "Is rain seasonal?" He asked. I continued to listen while He continued to speak: "If you didn't have rain for an entire season, what would you have?"

I answered, "A drought."

Drought: When Worship Is Seasonal

A drought is a moisture deficiency that adversely impacts people, animals, or vegetation. It also causes significant imbalance.

I was feeling dryness or a drought, which I had convinced myself was seasonal. But what I was really feeling was imbalance. **The truth is there would be no drought if there was rain. Rain, as we know from Scripture, comes with worship.**

"And should any of the families of the earth not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, then the rain will not fall on them." (Zechariah 14:17)

Drought affects everything. Nothing grows or yields what it is supposed to produce in a dry season.

A couple of years ago, we had a drought in our area. It affected everything that was planted. We had very few strawberries, blueberries, and blackberries. We had little produce. It even affected the hay in our area for an entire season.

What Causes Spiritual Drought?

Thinking back on these things, I began asking God how I arrived at this dry place, especially when I seek Him daily. He spoke one sentence to me: "The *cares* of this world."

Mark 4:19 says, *"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."*

The word *cares* is defined as a "distraction," and it means "to divide" (Strong's G3308; G3307). To "choke" is "to suffocate" (Strong's 4846) and to "hinder the growth, development, or activity of" (Merriam-Webster). And the word *unfruitful* implies that it is not yielding what it ought to yield.

Therefore, when distractions come, they divide our focus. We become out of balance. If not dealt with, distractions eventually suffocate and hinder the growth of the Word we have sown. The result is that the Word will not produce or yield what it should.

Distractions. It seems this entire year [2024] has been filled with distractions. Until recently, I didn't clearly see their purpose, which is to divide. You know that old saying, "divide and conquer"? That is what the enemy means to do. Because he knows while my mind is stayed upon God, I will have perfect peace—shalom (Strong's H7965)—nothing broken and nothing missing. But when I am divided, there is no peace.

Are You Feeling a Bit Dry Today?

So, what now? I command the distractions to go until I have become refreshed in Him, and, even more than that, until I have ministered adequately to Him.

I know we all have distractions and cares of this world, but we can't allow them to take our minds off God. We can't allow them to choke the Word of God that we have sown in our hearts and cause it to become unfruitful. We must keep our eyes on Him, and He will ensure everything else works out.

Are you feeling a bit dry today? Then stop what you are doing and spend time worshiping God. Remember, **He said that if you come up to worship Him, abundant rain shall be upon you.** Let the rain come through your times of worship! God will then cause the Word sown in your heart to become fruitful, yielding precisely what it is supposed to yield.

I am reminded of 2 Chronicles 26:5, which says, "... as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."

This word was accurate then, and it remains true today. **As long as we seek the Lord, He will cause us to prosper in our soul, mind, emotions, finances, health, and families; it's a promise from a God who cannot lie.** Don't allow the cares of this world to stop the rain of God from flowing in your life. Seek God, and let it rain!

*Kim Potter is the founder of A New Thing Ministries, which sends a daily teaching to over 10,000 people worldwide. www.anewthingministries.com (Source: ElijahList.com, Dec. 15, 2024. Original title: *Let it Rain*)

“Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them”-Mathew 18:20

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WORD-LY WISDOM

Lessons from a Persistent Widow

"Then Jesus told His disciples a parable to show them that they should **always pray and not give up**. He said: '*In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, 'Grant me justice against my adversary.'*

'For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, 'Even though I don't fear God or care what people think, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice, so that she won't eventually come and attack me!'...

'Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off? I tell you, He will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?'" - Jesus, Lk. 18:2-8, NIV.

This parable revolves around an unjust judge and a persistent widow, who becomes a **profound teacher of spiritual tenacity**. The parable starkly portrays an unrighteous judge - who neither fears God nor respects people. In contrast stands a widow, from a traditionally vulnerable segment of society, who comes to him repeatedly seeking justice. Her persistent appeals stems from a deep need for righteous intervention.

Her Persistence Pays Off: Despite the judge's initial indifference, the widow's relentless pursuit eventually moves him to action. Not out of compassion or moral conviction, but simply to stop her continuous petitioning. Jesus uses this paradoxical scenario to illuminate a critical truth: if an unrighteous judge can be moved by persistent pleading, how much more will a loving, just God respond to the consistent prayers of His children?

The parable teaches that prayer is not a transactional moment, but a transformative journey. Persistence in prayer is not about wearing God down, but about eroding our own doubts, fears, and spiritual lethargy. It's about maintaining a dialogue with God, even when answers seem delayed or unclear.

A Life of Prayer: Jesus ends the parable with a provocative question: "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" This rhetorical query challenges believers to examine their spiritual endurance. Faith is not measured by occasional moments of devotion, but by consistent, resilient trust that sustains through seasons of waiting and uncertainty.

In practical terms, persistence in the Christian life means maintaining hope when circumstances seem hopeless, continuing to pray when silence seems the only response, and trusting God's character when human logic suggests otherwise. It's about approaching prayer not as a one-time request, but as an ongoing conversation that shapes our spiritual formation. The widow's tenacity becomes a metaphor for the Christian walk - a journey marked by continued asking, seeking and knocking.

Conclusion: Ultimately, this parable invites believers to cultivate a prayer life characterized by boldness, consistency, and unshakeable faith. It challenges us to view prayer not as a last resort, but as our first and most powerful resource. Like the persistent widow, we are called to approach God with confidence, knowing that He is not a distant, indifferent judge, but a loving Father who delights in His children's persistent faith.

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



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WORD POWER

The Old has gone, the New is here!

Making New Year resolutions are great, but hard to keep! 'Old habits die hard' and it takes more than a resolution made in momentary repentance to bring about a change.

"Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.' Jesus replied, 'Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.'"

"How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit." (John 3:1-5)

● **New Life:** Nicodemus was puzzled. How could this be? Jesus was talking about a spiritual change. He was talking of a new birth or a new life, with new habits based on believing in Him. Jesus went on to say, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life... Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light." (Jn 3:16, 20, 21)

● **New Attitude and Image:** Paul instructed the Ephesians to change to a new way of life. "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Eph. 4:22-24)

● **New Behaviour:** Paul went on to give more instructions. "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbour... share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen... Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger... Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Eph. 4:25-32)

● **New Faith:** Nicodemus believed and later, in spite of being a Pharisee, he came boldly to claim the body of Jesus along with Joseph of Arimathea. His change was not temporary but eternal as he believed in an eternal God.

● **New Power:** This change cannot take place without Jesus who said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (Jn. 15:5)

● **New Habits:** Good habits come from putting on the armour of Christ and being vigilant. "Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God... take up the shield of faith... the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God... be alert and always keep on praying for all..." (Eph. 6:10-18)

"If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Cor. 5:17) - VM

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THE NAMES OF GOD

El Chuwl : The God Who Gave You Birth.!!!

Memory Verse:

"You deserted the Rock... you forgot the God who gave you birth." - Deuteronomy 32:18.

Bible Lesson: Psalm 139:13-18, Isaiah 43:1-3

Dear Boys and Girls,

We have been studying the various Names of God. Our many lessons were about: *Jehovah Adonai* - Our Loving Master; *Jehovah Shalom* - Our Peace; *Wonderful Counsellor* - the first name given for the Messiah; *Jehovah Jireh* - Our Provider, *Jehovah Nissi* - Our Defender.

Jehovah Tsidkenu - Our Righteousness; *El Elyon* - The Most High God; *Jehovah Rapha* - Our Healer; *ABBA Father* - Our Eternal Dad; *Jehovah Shammah* - The Lord is with Us; *El Deah* - God of Wisdom & Understanding; *Alpha & Omega* - the Beginning & the End; *The Ancient of Days*, and, *The King of kings*.

Growing up in the slums of Aberdeen, Scotland, with an alcoholic father, and little hope of changing your circumstances, does not seem like a promising start for anyone. But for **Mary Slessor** (1848-1915), her childhood taught her a tenacity and a strength that would serve her well in Nigeria.

Mary knew who her Creator was... **El**

Chuwl, who formed her in her mother's womb and His great plan for her life. She grew up hearing her devout mother read the mission paper every month. In her heart grew a desire to share Jesus with others. She was 27 when David Livingston passed away, and she decided that she would go and continue his work to reach all of Africa.

In Calabar, she faced life-threatening illness and hardship. She lived with the Okoyong and Efik people for 15 years, learning their languages and helping them settle disputes; working tirelessly to educate and overcome superstitions. She earned their love and respect and as a result was able to spread the gospel to areas no other missionary could.

What does El Chuwl mean?

El Chuwl means: 'The God who gave you birth.' CHUWL means 'to be born', to twist or whirl, to writhe in pain; bring forth, to calve etc. Chuwl has the letter 'CHET' which is equal to the number eight and is referred to as the letter of LIFE - (chayim - life) and (chayah - living).

In all their birthday parties they would sing...

*"Happy birthday to you. Only one will not do.
Take the gift of salvation. Then you will have two."*

All genuine Christ-followers have two births: our physical one and our spiritual one. From Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus, a religious leader (John 3) we can understand just what the Lord meant by being twice born or born again. Yes! Our physical births are denoted by our birthdays.



Children's Corner

-- Dr. Sara Chandrakumar

Psalm 139:13-18 is a beautiful description of how God is totally involved in each of our making ..."

"For you created... you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made... My frame was not hidden from you... Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be"... when I awake, I am still with you." God has put eternity in our hearts and put a divine purpose in it.

Well, Scripture is clear that His involvement in our spiritual births is equally intricate and intimate. "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent Me draws him." - John 6:44 *"For He chose us in Him (Christ), before the foundation of the world..."* Ephesians 1:4. Our spiritual births take place when we ask the Lord to be our Savior, to forgive our sins, and we surrender control of our lives to Him. - 1 John 1:9

We are born into His family and now have eternity with Him as our secured future. *"But now, thus says the Lord, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not... you are Mine. When you pass through the waters... When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned..."* - Isaiah 43:1-2.

God is saying, "I created you, and then I saved you. Now, I am going to take care of you." (Matthew 28:20) "Even when sin marred God's original creation, God did not say, 'I'm finished with it.' No. God made it and God stays with it." Isn't that a wonderful arrangement?

Says Dr. Adrian Rogers: "He is the God of Life who gives us both of our births." So how do we respond?

Romans 12:1-2 exhorts us to offer ourselves to the Lord and renew our minds... When we focus on God as the 'Master' craftsman, it is easier for us to appreciate, with thankfulness and contentment, that we are His marvellous workmanship.

Cross out the q's and see what Ephesians 2:10 says. What a Masterpiece should do?

qqForqqweqqareqqHisqqworkmanship,q
qcreatedqqinqqChristqqJesusqqforqqgoodq
qworks,qqwhichqqGodqqpreparedqqforehandq
qsoqqthatqqweqqwouldqqwalkqqinqqthemqq. ❖



Around the World

A 21-day fast to start the year

Many churches in North America are kickstarting 2025 with a 21-day period of prayer and fasting. "The goal of fasting is to draw near to God. It hits the reset button of our soul and renews us from the inside out," says the leader of the *Church of the Highlands* in Alabama, which intends to have its meetings from Jan. 5-25. The *Bethel Church* in Ottawa, Canada, is having theirs from Jan. 6-26.

"Spirit-filled prayer is the key that unlocks the power of God... To the extent that we pray as Spirit-filled believers, we will be equipped to share Christ's liberating power. We will bear healing and freedom to a world bound by sin and death," said Randy Remington, president of the worldwide *Foursquare Church*, which also is observing a global 21-day fast from Jan. 6-26. With over 67,00 churches in 150 countries, the movement continues to prioritize prayer. Last year, over 24,000 individuals signed up to observe the annual *21 Days of Prayer*.

'Jesus Wins' at music concert

NIGERIA: *The Experience*, one of the world's largest gospel music concerts, took place on Friday, Dec. 6, in Lagos, Nigeria. Organised by Pastor Paul Adefarasin of the *House On The Rock* church, this free, all-night worship event drew hundreds of thousands of attendees from across Nigeria and around the globe. Millions more tuned in online to the live stream, according to their website. This year's theme was: *Jesus Wins*. - PCN

Bible sales are skyrocketing

US: The reputed *Wall Street Journal* reports that Bible sales in the US have risen 22% in 2024 (first ten months) whereas total print book sales have increased less than 1% in the same period. Publishers have attributed the jump in Bible sales to concerns about the economy, global conflicts, political uncertainty, and a search for hope. Bible sales have been primarily driven by first-time buyers and younger people, including from Generation Z.

"One more day to preach"

MOLDOVA: "Each morning I wake up, I say to myself, Yuriy, you are still alive, and you have one more day to preach the gospel, one more day to do something for God's Kingdom," says Pastor Yuriy Semenyuk, who has pioneered a fast-growing church in Transnistria, a Russian-controlled part of Moldova. "We have an unbelievable revival," he says. "We are still alive 24 years later on the mission field, we are still alive!" Semenyuk has served here for the past 24 years. Each Sunday, hundreds pack the church, with many hearing the gospel for the very first time. - CBN

THE LAST WORD

Turning the World Upside Down

The Body of Christ, also known as the Church, is the most powerful force in the world. That's because Jesus is in the midst of them. "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them," said Jesus. (Mt. 18:20) "AGAIN I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about ANYTHING they ASK, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven." (Mt. 18:19) Important things are always repeated again and again!

A believer in Christ does not need extraordinary talent to "turn the world upside down," like how the early fishermen-turned-apostles and believers did! (Acts 17:6) We don't have to be powerful preachers or mighty 'faith healers' or television evangelists or wealthy people or even the president of America, to change the world - though all of them can make a difference. In fact, the weaker we are, the stronger God is in us - "When I am weak, then I am strong," said the Apostle Paul in 2 Cor. 12:10.

In short, if you can "open your mouth wide" in prayer (Ps. 81:10) in a prayer meeting ("two or three"), you can by the power of God's Spirit be an influential 'game changer' on our planet. Two or three persons with God is a majority. Many missions have their origin in the humble prayer meeting, including this magazine. The ball is in your court and mine to "cover the earth with the knowledge of God." (Is. 11:9)

Determination: As Gen. 27:40 says: "...when you decide to break free, you will." We need to be decisive, disciplined and determined, as all authority has been given to us! In these last days, God has also equipped us with the ability to harness the power of the World Wide Web to spread His Word to the ends of the earth.

Greater Works: Throughout the Bible we are called upon to call upon God to do great things. Jere. 33:3 says: "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things..." God is waiting to hear from us to fling open heaven's doors. "I will yet for this be inquired of." (Ezekial 36:37)

Blank Cheque: Seven times in one discourse (Jn ch. 14-16) Jesus urged His disciples to "ask whatever" of His Father in His name and it will be granted. "Whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things... I will do whatever you ask in my name... You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it." (Jn. 14)

Going Global: What does God want us to pray for? It's for the entire world! "Go into all the world..." said Jesus. "The world is my parish," noted John Wesley. We inherit the promises made to Abraham, that through us "all the families of the earth will be blessed." The model prayer that Jesus taught us is for the Lord's "will be done on earth" - which includes everything.

Top Priority: Jer. 29:7 urges us to pray for our city while Paul urged Timothy to "First of all... prayers... be made for all people, for rulers and all in authority... to be saved." (1 Tim. 2:1-3) In Eph. 6:18 he says "always keep on praying for all the Lord's people."

Through prayer we can silently send thousands of workers into the ripe harvest fields (Mt. 9:38), save precious souls from hell, send loads of money to needy people, repeal unjust laws, bring down rulers and appoint new ones, prevent accidents and natural disasters, set prisoners free, heal the sick - and even send 535 workers to plant churches, like how one church in Bengaluru did on its 200th day of daily prayer in 2018! Elijah even brought on 'climate change' through his fervent prayers!

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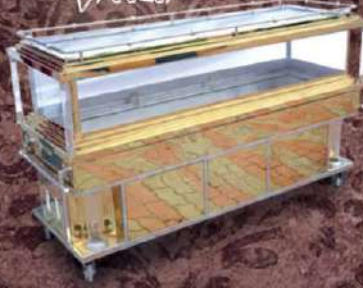
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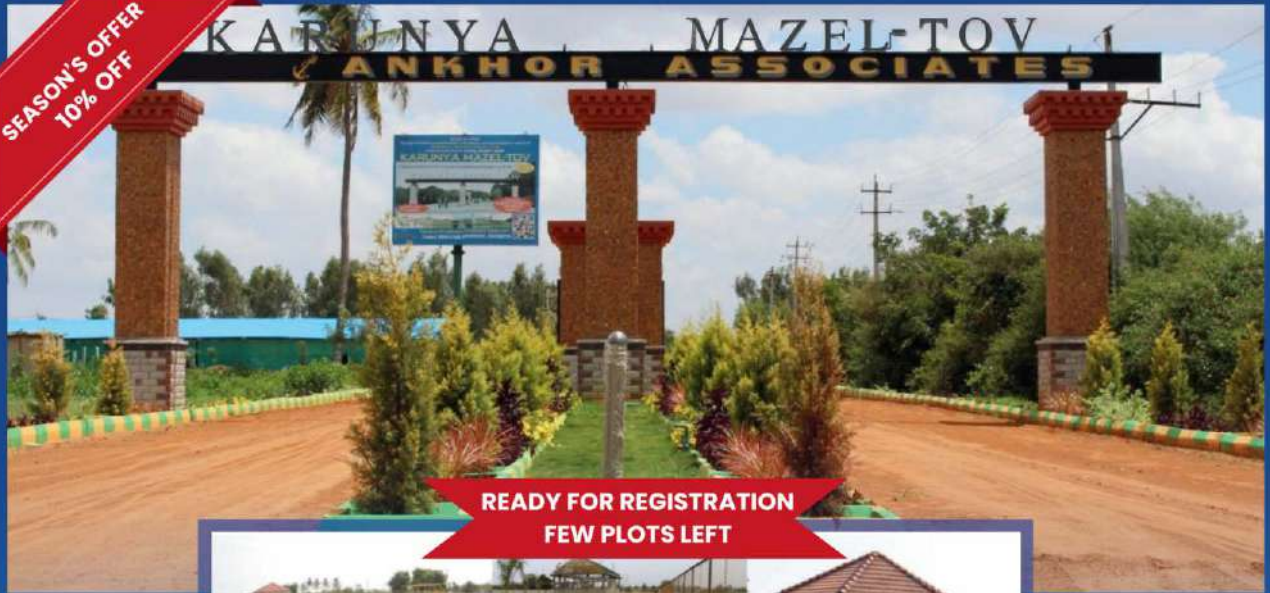
KARUNYA MAZEL-TOV

"My people shall abide in a peaceful habitation, in safe dwellings and in quiet resting places, Isaiah 32:18"

40-ACRES OF LUSH GREEN GATED COMMUNITY ON SH-96

Devanahalli-Jangamakote H-Cross Highway (North Bengaluru)

SEASON'S OFFER
10% OFF



READY FOR REGISTRATION
FEW PLOTS LEFT



RERA
Certified
"A" - KATHA



Bank financing upto 75-90%



DC CONVERSION
ALNSR 358/2014-15
220/2015-16
DTCP APPROVED

AMENITIES

- ✓ Landscaped parks
- ✓ Electricity & street lights
- ✓ Water connection to each plot
- ✓ Well planned 40 ft wide roads
- ✓ Underground sewage lines
- ✓ Drainage lines
- ✓ Architect designed layout
- ✓ Overhead water tank

LOCATION HIGHLIGHTS



For site visits
& more info



+91 9845101868
+91 9845009793



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ankhorassociates4u@gmail.com



CHAT WITH US





BANGALORE CITY
UNITED CHURCHES
ALL NIGHT
Prayer

Worship by
**BROTHER
ISAAC JOE**

Organized by
**REV. PAUL
THANGIAH**

PRAYING FOR ALL PASTORS, CHURCHES AND BELIEVERS TO BE BLESSED.

FRIDAY 17TH, JAN. 2025

DINNER
8:30PM TO 9:30PM
PRAYER
10:00PM TO 4:00AM

VENUE:
FGAG CHURCH
189, 6TH MAIN, DEFENCE COLONY,
INDIRANAGAR, BANGALORE - 560 038.



FGAG Care Centre

FOR ANY ENQUIRIES,
PLEASE CALL THE FGAG CARE CENTRE:
+91 97424 11111

FOLLOW US ON:



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