



# Sunday School Text Book

Class

12

Published by  
**Sharon Fellowship Sunday  
School Association**

**SHARON FELLOWSHIP CHURCH**  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEXT BOOK**  
**CLASS - 12**



Published by  
**SHARON FELLOWSHIP**  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**  
Thiruvalla 689 101

# **SUNDAY SCHOOL TEXT BOOK**

*Class - 12*

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# SHARON FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Sharon, Tiruvalla, Kerala, India- 689 101

**Dr. T. G. Koshy**  
(President)

## FOREWORD

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The role that Sunday school plays in moulding children spiritually is truly significant. It is noteworthy that the children who attend Sunday School are mentally and spiritually strong and are different from other children. The children who regularly attend Sunday School grow spiritually, excel in character formation and are blessed by the almighty in all their ways.

Through Sunday School ministry the church shapes a spiritual and righteous generation who will be worthy citizens in the society. Hence the church and the pastor should give due importance to the Sunday School and offer any encouragement needed for its smooth functioning. There are many men and women of God who accepted the Lord through the Sunday School and have later become great personalities. May the Sunday School ministry of our Church equip many more children to become famous in the Lord.

I congratulate the Sunday School Association workers for publishing thirteen textbooks, including one for playschool, and for having fulfilled the noble task entrusted to them. I praise the Lord Almighty for He was gracious and enabled the workers to bring out a English edition of the twelfth standard text book. I especially pray that all their efforts be fruitful and that our children and the churches be blessed always.

In His Service,

**Dr. T. G Koshy**

Manakala  
05-01-2015

## DECLARATION

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The Sunday School is an inevitable part of the church. The very existence and growth of a church depends to a great extent on the activities conducted for its children and youngsters. If children and youngsters receive Bible classes and spiritual training they turn out to become an asset for the church and the Kingdom of God.

Sharon Bible College, Tiruvalla and Faith Theological Seminary, Manakala had published text books for our Sunday School. Those text books ran out of stock and for a period of time there was a great shortage of good textbooks. Therefore enquiries for bringing out a good text book began to be directed to the Sunday School Association members.

Our Church Vice-President Dr. T. P. Abraham was instrumental in coordinating the efforts and bringing out text books for 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> classes for Sunday School in 1998 by the grace of God. These books were warmly received by the teachers and students of other Sunday School groups too. The books were distributed as soon as they were published and hence several reprints had to be made for books of all classes. When eleventh and twelfth grade classes were begun, we had to rely on other textbooks for the conduct of classes.

The decision to publish our own textbooks for classes 11 and 12 was taken by the Sunday School committee in 2003 and consequently the textbook for class eleven was brought out in 2004 and the textbook for class twelve in 2008. God also enabled us to publish a new textbook for nursery kids and a new activity based text books for Class 1&2. Owing to the developments in the arena of education

and the situation of the present generation, this text book is being revised and brought out for the adolescents and teenaged group.

The text book we have published not only facilitates a comprehensive study of God's Word from the beginning to the end, but also helps to learn about the church, history of the church, great missionaries, different religions and even about false doctrines. The lessons are arranged in such a manner that the student achieves a clear understanding about Christian Education, Christian mission, problems of adolescence and its solutions etc. in addition to learning God's Word.

**Pastor Abraham Mannamaruthy** is the author of this book.

In 2009, Sharon Fellowship Sunday School Association took the decision to publish the text books in English, as the demand was so high. Many of our students are studying in English medium schools and text books in English became inevitable. By God's grace Sunday School Association published the text books for classes 4,5,6, and 7 in English language on 2010, and the text books for classes 1,2,3,8,9 and 10 published in English language in 2013. Now in this year 2015, by the grace of God, the Sunday School Association is publishing the text books for class 11 and 12. Now books for all classes are available in English language.

English translation of this text book done by **Prof. Susan Thomas** (*Marthoma College, Tiruvalla*). We extend our heartfelt thanks to the precious work behind it timely.

This book is offered at the feet of our most merciful God with the prayer that it may touch the hearts of thousands of students and that it may be a blessing to the churches and that the name of God be glorified.

For Sunday School Association,

**Pastor. Jacob George**  
(*Chairman, Curriculum Committee*)

**Brother K. Thankachen**  
(*General Secretary*)

Thiruvalla.  
05-01-2015

## PREFACE

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This book has been prepared with a specific aim to reach out to the twelfth standard students. Factors like the age of students, mental growth, and spiritual needs are taken into consideration while compiling the book. This textbook has been prepared with three definite goals in mind.

Firstly, twelfth standard students who are about seventeen years old, are at the peak of the adolescent period of their life. This is a period when they have to face lots of challenges internally and externally. Proper knowledge is essential for students to get over this period successfully. Else they may fall into the traps of love affairs or drug abuse and lose their very life. Therefore the main aim of this text book is to offer to the students information about adolescence, challenges faced during adolescence and provide solutions for these challenges.

Secondly, on completing the curriculum from nursery to twelfth grade, students acquire a sound knowledge about the Bible and related topics. After successfully passing out from the twelfth grade, the student has to be prepared to take up Sunday School teaching. With this aim in mind this book has been designed to include Christian Education, Its medium and the like.

Thirdly, it is essential to prepare students to volunteer for missionary work. One of the main goals of Sunday School is that students become witnesses of Jesus Christ. Students need to be aware of the fact that serving God is the greatest vocation and that it is the responsibility of every believer. Hence the lessons on Christian mission and the different ways to fulfil it have been included in this book.

### **For the attention of twelfth standard teachers**

Sunday School teaching is a ministry ordained by the Lord and hence be sure to engage classes with due preparation and prayer. Lessons are not to be read out in class. The lessons in this book are given in a detailed manner. Details are provided so that the lesson may be clearly understood by the teacher and the student alike. Therefore it is necessary to learn about the topic and teach it clearly to the students. As the students are grown-ups the teacher can encourage self- learning and group discussions.

### **For the attention of students**

This textbook is a handbook for adolescents. The aim of this textbook is not just to assist you in preparing for the annual examination, but it will also help you by guiding you on areas you have to carefully tackle, in your practical life. So, do not limit this textbook to the Sunday School class, but ensure that you read each lesson your own when you are at home. After you complete your course do not dispose this book but keep it handy for future use.

### **With Gratitude..**

Sharon Sunday School Association created history by first publishing a Sunday School textbook for nursery students. This textbook for adolescents and teenagers is also another landmark. It's with joy that we remember the visionary leadership encouraging these ventures. I express my gratitude to all the Sunday School teachers, students and churches who gladly accept all these efforts. I give all glory and thanks to the Almighty God who has been showering His grace on all the activities of the Sunday School Association.

For Sunday School Association

**Pastor Abraham Mannamaruthy**  
*General Director*

Thiruvalla.

05-01-2015

## LESSON - 1

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

**Memory verse:** II Timothy 2: 1,2

**Introduction:** Religious instructions are a part of every religion. Religious education is a way of propagating the beliefs, rituals etc, particular to each religion. Christian education is an effective and powerful method of the church to educate the coming generations. It helps in imparting knowledge about Christian teachings, beliefs and goals. Moreover Christian Education also facilitates the building up of a value based society.

### Education

Before we attempt to understand Christian Education, it is essential to know what 'education' means. Broadly speaking, any endeavour that increases knowledge, makes a person cultured to live in society or equips him to make a living can be called 'education'. But 'education' has more deeper and profound levels of meaning. The word 'education' comes from the Latin word 'educare', which means 'to bring out'. Therefore education is the process of bringing out the latent talents and abilities in a student. If abilities are to be brought out and developed, the necessary conditions for such a process have to be provided. To develop the latent and inherent talents in children, it is imperative to provide them with apt knowledge and experiences. A general understanding of 'education' includes: the development of an individual's abilities in order to equip him to lead a complete and useful life, promoting good practices, cultivating healthy attitudes and acquiring knowledge and experience. Education is the training imparted to a person through different life experiences, in order to bring out the best in him.



Education has certain specific aims, a few of which are: the polishing of the multiple skills inherent in a student, moulding of an individual so that he can be useful to the society he is a part of, developing persons into powerful personalities, imparting professional skills or training to make a living, developing a holistic attitude, equipping to serve society, nurture nationalistic fervour etc. These are related to cultural upliftment, acquisition of knowledge and development of aesthetic skills. Thus, education aims at the overall development of individuals.

Education can be broadly classified into two types: 'Formal' and 'Informal'. Formal education is obtained from schools/institutions and is the process of learning and acquiring knowledge. Informal education is the wisdom gained from different life situations and experiences from a person's birth to his death.

### **Christian Education**

If education aims at developing an individual's talents and abilities, Christian Education aims at developing talents and putting them to good use, with the attitude of Christ. The simultaneous development of the physical, mental, intellectual, spiritual and social realms in an individual will lead to a balanced growth. In Christian Education, equal importance is given to the development of all these factors. Spiritual growth is given utmost importance. Secular education does not focus on spiritual growth. There are several similarities between Christian Education and Secular Education. The fundamental principle of education is the imparting of knowledge from one person to another. The main difference in a Christian Education is the divinity in it. Therefore, Christian Education is God – centered. It is the gap between man and God that makes man imperfect. Christian Education aims at bringing back man to God, through Jesus Christ, and thus perfects him in Christ (Col 1:28). To become 'perfect in Christ' implies the acquisition of a 'Christ like attitude' in man. Thus when "all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:12), we become perfect in him. Christian education strives to attain such perfection in individuals.

### **Biblical Basis**

The Biblical Basis for Christian Education is the commandment of Jesus Christ himself. In the Great Commission, it is instructed to 'teach' (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark. 16:15). The disciples who took up this

Commission preached from house to house (Acts 20:20). The early church gave much importance to teaching (Acts 18:25).

### **Aims of Christian Education**

Christian Education has certain definite aims. The International Council for Religious Education elaborates the aim of Christian Education, which can be classified into eight subtitles.

**1. Help in building a personal relationship with God.**

The first goal of Christian Education is to help individuals acquire a realistic understanding of God through their life experiences thereby guiding them to foster a personal relationship with God.

**2. Help in accepting Jesus Christ as personal Saviour**

Christian Education serves to inculcate in individuals a good understanding of the identity, life and teachings of Jesus Christ which will lead them to accept Christ as their personal Saviour. It also aims at enabling them to be faithful to the Lord and his teachings.

**3. Create the attitude of Christ**

Christian Education also aims at the development of a 'Christ like attitude' in individuals.

**4. Partnering in building a good society**

To equip and inspire youngsters to contribute to the society in a fruitful manner, believing in the divinity of God the Father, and in the universal brotherhood of man.

**5. Help in becoming an integral part of the Church**

Another goal of imparting Christian education is to prepare individuals and equip them to become a part of the orderly institution of the Christians- the church.

**6. Enabling good family lives**

Youngsters are taught the importance and necessity of leading a good family life, to respect the institution of marriage and be a part of it, and to contribute to society in a constructive manner.

**7. Help in leading a life according to God's will**

Christian Education aims at providing to individuals the right perspective about the world and about life. It also aims at helping them to position God's plan and purpose for their lives in this perspective and lead a life accordingly.

**8. Teaching that the Bible is the true guide**

Helping individuals understand that all spiritual experiences emanating from and based on those mentioned in the Bible provide the necessary guidance for mankind to lead successful lives.

To summarize, Christian education aims at helping individuals to accept the Lord as their personal Saviour, lead a life as per as the example shown by him and to be fruitful both to God and to man.

***Questions:***

1. What does 'education' mean? What are the aims of education?
2. Explain clearly what is meant by Christian Education.
3. What are the aims of Christian Education?

## LESSON - 2

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION THROUGH THE AGES - I

*Memory Verse:* Deut. 6: 4-7

*Introduction:* To study the history of Christian Education is a worthwhile effort. Judaic Education has a considerable influence on the Christian Education worldwide. It can be said that Christian Education was formulated according to Judaic Education. This lesson will throw some light on the modes of Hebrew Education.

### **Jewish Education/ Judaic Learning**

The Judaic Education can be classified into two time periods: The Pre-Exile period and the Post Exile period.

#### **1. The Pre- Exile Period**

The Pre-Exile period dates from the origin of the Jews to BC586 when Jerusalem was destroyed. There are no evidences about the system of learning prevalent during the days of the Israelite patriarchs. Yet it can be assumed that most of the learning took place in the homes through the family. After Israel was shaped into a nation, apart from the homes, religious learning was imparted to children through priests, prophets, sacrifices and other such sources.

##### **a) Home- An Institution of Learning**

The home is the primary centre of learning for the children, according to Jewish thought. The father was the chief teacher. The parents had to educate a child about religious beliefs, history, the Commandments, the order of worship, ethics and value systems (Exodus 12:26, 27; Deut 4:9,10; Deut 11:19; Psalms 78:5-7; Prov. 1:8). The command "These commandments I give you today are to be

upon your hearts. Impress them on your children” (Deut 6:5-7), was the underlying principle behind the education at home.

When a child grew up, he observed the verses written on the doorposts of his home (Deut 6:8,9). Other practices like wearing a strap on the arms, praying three times, giving thanks before and after food, observance of the Sabbath, partaking of the Sabbath, going to the Temple of the Lord and participation in the celebration of Festivals helped to sow the seeds of religious faith in young minds. When a child began to speak, he would be first taught to say the words of blessing in the Law. The child would confess his belief in One God, learn by heart the words of the Law and understand the meaning of the Sabbath. The child was also trained to respect elders and practice obedience and discipline. The religious practices observed in the family also served to be opportunities to learn more about religion. The traditions at home like religious observances, memorial rites, and other activities evoked curiosity in the minds of children, and they learnt about it in depth from their fathers. The observance of the Passover, the stone heaps and memorial pillars (Joshua 4:21,22, I Samuel 7:12) etc. prompted the children to ask numerous questions.

### **b) Priests and Prophets**

The Priests were the anointed people who revealed the characteristics of God and made known His will to the people. They were the mediators between God and the people. Giving Religious instructions was a part of their ministry (Deut 33:8-10; 31:9-13). Hence they also functioned as Teachers. They were designated to teach The Books of the Law (II Chronicles 17:7-9). According to Deuteronomy 31:9-13, they held the responsibility of reading out the Law in public. Jeremiah 2:8 refers to priests as “they that handle the Law”, Malachi 1:7 exhorts to ask the priests for advice, and Deuteronomy 17:9 calls them “priests who pronounce sentence of judgement”. Through the performing of sacrifices, the priests were teaching as well as informing the people about the attributes of God. These rituals were adorned with the Holy and miraculous presence of God.

The Prophets conveyed to the people the will of God. They also performed the role of ‘teachers’ by instructing the people the necessity to follow God’s commandments. During the time of Prophet Elisha, these prophets lived together and were called ‘the clan of prophets’ (I Samuel 10:10; II Kings 2:3-5). Moreover there were ‘schools’ or places of learning for these prophets. It can be deduced from history that a prophet plays an important role in Jewish religious learning.

## 2. The Post Exilic Period (The Period After Exile)

The exile of the Jews began in B.C 586 when the Southern country of Judea was taken into captivity by the Babylonians. The Jews lived in Babylon in exile until BC 538 when the Persian king Cyrus gave permission to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem. Though the Jews had close relations with the Babylonians, they protected their teachings and laws from being corrupted. One group of Jews in exile had migrated to Elephanta in Egypt. There they built a Temple unto the Lord. Slavery and Exile did not diminish the hope of the Jews, instead it became the reason for their motivation and strengthening of their faith. The priests and the scribes became more prominent during this period.

In the Old Testament canon, there were three types of Scriptures: (1). Pentateuch of Moses (2). Historical books (including Prophecies) and (3). Holy Writings (Psalms, Proverbs etc.). The Scriptures or the Law of the Jews comprised of these three books and was known as the 'Torah' meaning 'instruction' or 'learning'.

It was the 'Torah' that helped the Jews to keep up their spiritual values, in spite of foreign invasions. The laws in the 'Torah' disapprove of intermingling with other nations. It was deemed compulsory to teach 'Torah' and its interpretation to the children and adults. This was taught in the family and in the Synagogue.

### Synagogue

The Synagogues (meaning: place of fellowship) came into being after the Period of Exile around 538 BC. The Synagogue was the common place of worship of the Jews, where they gathered every week. 'Torah', which was given by God Himself, was taught to the people here. Portions of Torah were read out during the worship on the Sabbath Day. For each verse read out from the Pentateuch, three verses from the Prophecies would be read out. Anyone who came for the worship was allowed to read out the Torah but preference was given to a 'priest' or to a 'Levite' if they were present. The passage being read out would be interpreted as well.

In Palestine and other places of Jewish migration the Synagogues became the place for worship and studying the Word of God. The good beginning made by Nehemiah and Ezra Scribes turned out to be a great inspiration for the Synagogues (Nehemiah 8:2). Language, Religion and Arithmetic were taught freely to the children, in the Synagogues. The Law and the Prophetic books were also taught to them from the age of four. The Teachers of the Law were held in high

esteem in those days and their word was deemed final, in instances of arguments.

The aim of religious instruction was to increase national fervour and religiosity and instil the fear of the Lord in children. Time was set apart in the morning and in the evening for learning the Law. Various religious rites were held nearly thirty days a year and these turned out to be learning experiences for children. By the time they finished elementary school, the Jewish children learnt by heart a good portion of the Pentateuch. By the age of 12, a Jewish boy was bound to follow all the commands given in the Law (Luke 2:46). On the first Sabbath after his thirteenth birthday, he would be made to stand in the Synagogue and in front of everyone assembled there, his father would announce, "Hereafter I shall not be responsible for any acts committed by my son". After this, he would become a member of the Jewish community and an adult believer. Although the formal education of the Law, ends after this, a Jew was expected to learn and meditate on the Scriptures all through his life.

There was no admission for girl children into Schools. They had to acquire a basic knowledge of their religion from the home itself. They had to pay attention to conduct the affairs of the home, learning to honour God, care for her husband and bringing up children. They also acquired some knowledge through their visits to the Synagogue, Temple and participation in the Festivals.

The basic pattern for our worship today has been derived from the mode of worship in the Synagogues. Christians followed the kind of worship in the Synagogues in singing, prayer, reading the Word of God, Preaching The Word of God and pronouncing of blessings.

### ***Questions:***

1. Explain the role of the family/ home in Jewish religious learning.
2. How was learning imparted in the Synagogues?
3. What is the role of the priests and prophets in Jewish religious learning?

## LESSON - 3

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION THROUGH THE AGES - II

**Memory Verse:** Acts of Apostles: 19:9,10

**Introduction:** The Christian church has always given utmost importance to Christian Education. Jesus Christ was not just a preacher, but he was a teacher as well. The Apostles also gave due importance to teaching. Jesus Christ and the Apostles exhorted and followed the practice of learning the Word of God and teaching it. The learning system of the early church is the topic dealt with, in this lesson.

### **The Early Church and Christian Learning**

Consistent with the custom of the Jews, the home was the primary place of learning for the early church. The Synagogues of the Jews were also used by them to impart learning.

There were no formal places of learning at the beginning of the Church; but Aquila and Priscilla who received Appollos in to their home to explain to him the way of God (Acts 18:26) is an excellent example of how Christian Learning was carried out in the early Churches. Another example is of Paul who taught the Word of God to the disciples of Ephesus at the lecture hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19: 8-10). The early churches gave equal importance to learning and teaching. The Apostles who were the leaders of the Church were also good teachers.

The style of teaching of these Apostles was much similar to that of a Jewish Rabbi. But the subject was always Christ centred. Most of Paul's communication was didactic. Paul's letters prove this fact. By the end of the first century, schools were established to impart Christian education.



## **Catechumenal School**

In the first and second centuries, formal education was imparted through Catechumenal Schools. These schools were begun with the purpose of training people who were saved from the Gentiles and added to the Church. New believers and the children of believers were also trained here. These classes were known as 'Catechism' and the learner was called a 'Catechumen'. This word can be found in the Greek New Testament in many places (Luke 1:3; Acts 18:25; 21: 21-24; Romans 2:18; I Cori. 14:19; Gala. 6:6). These classes lasted for two to three years and were a preparation for baptism. The aim of these classes was that each believer should be well trained in the New Testament doctrines. The learners were trained in three phases.

- a) The first year learners were called 'hearers'. They were only allowed to hear the reading of the Scriptures, discourses etc. which formed the first part of the worship.
- b) After remaining 'hearers' for some time people who led a good life and lived according to the Word were promoted to the second grade. They were called 'Kneelers'. They were allowed to participate in the whole worship, except at the Lord's Supper.
- c) The third group of people were those who completed the training period successfully and followed the requirements for baptism. They were called 'the chosen'. They were given compulsory training in worship, teaching the Word, fasting etc. and only then permission was accorded to get baptised. It was only after they fulfilled all these conditions that they were given full membership of the Church.

The Catechumenal School was the pioneer venture in teaching the faith principles and Word of God to the believers.

## **Catechetical Schools**

The Romans and Greeks some of who were philosophers and rationalists started coming to Christ. This necessitated raising the standard of teaching. The Church was facing the threat of false teachings and this also required an in-depth and comprehensive study of the Word of God. It was with this aim in mind, that the Catechetical schools were established. These who had received baptism and were a part of the Church, were also allowed to attend these schools. The Catechetical Schools which were centres for higher studies, had a much deeper level of teaching, compared to the Catechumenal Schools. Along with religious studies, subjects like history, Greek literature and

Philosophy were also taught. These schools were similar to the Bible Seminaries of today, because their syllabus included Scriptures, Christian traditions and theology. Both the Jews and the Greek could learn about their religious insights and also about their culture in these schools. They were open to everyone who accepted the faith, and they united religious instruction with moral discipline. Rabbis like Gamaliel taught Judaism here.

The first and the most important Catechetical School was at Alexandria. It was led by the great scholar 'Pantaenus' (AD 179). In later years Clement, Origen and other scholars led this school. This school has also been influenced by Platonic thoughts. The teachers of the school include famous personalities like Methodimus, Parrochylus, Herclas etc. Other similar schools were the school in Antioch founded by Lusian, the Antioch School, the School at Edessa, the Persian school at Nisibis etc.

### **Cathedral School**

In the course of time, Bishops started gaining popularity in the Christian Church. Different dioceses came into existence and their headquarters were built. As a result of this, few of the above mentioned schools came under the administrative purview of the Bishop and came to be known as 'Cathedral Schools'. Scripture also began to be taught at monasteries.

### **The Middle Ages and Reformation**

The church gradually began to slip over to worldly affairs and power play. Many people who were saddened by this began to choose a life of celibacy and lived in monasteries as they wanted to adopt a simple and sacrificial living. Such people set up monasteries. Gradually these monasteries became centres of learning. Little children who devoted their life to these institutions, learnt to read and write over here. These centres also started giving Christian Education both to the inmates and to people from outside the monastery. Arithmetic and music were taught along with religious lessons. From the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, such 'monastic schools' gained much importance.

As the Church began to move forward ignoring the importance of God's Word, a few Christian groups and 'Reformists' who realised the importance of the Scriptures, began to secretly teach the Word of God to children and adults, in their homes. 'Valdenses' was the most important of such groups. Another prominent reformist group were the 'Lollards' who functioned under the leadership of John Wycliffe.

They paid much attention to teaching the Word of God to children and ensuring their participation in the worship.

Reformists like Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli etc. gave much importance to Christian Education. They spoke and wrote about the need for children to be taught the Word of God in their homes. Martin Luther's translation of the Bible into German, created a Revolution in the arena of Christian Education.

***Questions:***

1. What were the methods adopted for giving Christian Education in the early church?
2. Elaborate : 'Catechumenal Schools'
3. What are 'Catechetical' schools? What was aim of such schools?
4. Discuss the methods of Christian Education during the Middle and Reformation Ages.

## LESSON - 4

# THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT

**Memory Verse:** 2 Timothy 3:14, 15

**Introduction:** The Sunday school is an effective medium for the successful imparting of Christian learning. For many centuries, the Christian Church has been engaged in this ministry which enables children, to learn about God, from their tender age. There are many sacrificial services which have gone a long way in the development of the Sunday School Movement. This lesson throws light on the commencement and the growth of the Sunday school Movement.

### Robert Raikes

Robert Raikes is known as the father of the Sunday School Movement. Raikes was born on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1736 at Gloucester in England. His parents were senior Robert Raikes and Mary Drew. Being born into a wealthy and well known family, he was brought up in good circumstances. He obtained his primary education from St. Mary de Crypt Grammar School, close to his home. His father was a newspaper journalist and Raikes followed his father's footsteps in choosing his profession. Raikes married Anne Trigge in December 1767 and the couple had nine children.

He inherited a publishing business from his father, becoming proprietor of the *Gloucester Journal* in 1757. He spent a good part of his life for journalism serving as the editor of the journal, but he also worked for the upliftment and betterment of children. He was known as the 'friend of the orphans' and he went to be with the Lord in his heavenly abode on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1811.

### Sunday School- The Inception

The eighteenth century witnessed the Industrial Revolution in England. The Middle and lower class population were forced to send

their children for factory work, from a tender age. As the children went to work from the age of six, they were denied even a primary education. Education was reserved only for the privileged and the upper classes.

The Children had to work in the factories for nearly 12 hours a day. Even little children were left with no other option but to work for long hours. Thousands of children were employed to clean the narrow chimneys of the smoke producing factories. Sunday was the only day of leisure for these children after six days of hard work. These children ended up being a burden on the society which could not give them an education, moral instructions for character building or even religious teachings. Eight out of ten children landed in jail, before the age of 21. One out of five of these children ended up in the gallows. On Sundays, these unruly children roamed about in the streets shouting, insulting the passersby, throwing muddy water on them and creating nuisance to the people around. Gloucester then one of the poorest towns in England witnessed these social evils at large.

Robert Raikes a philanthropist and a lover of humanity was much pained at this state of affairs. He started writing enlightening articles in his publications; but of no avail. Then he decided to approach the children directly. Filling his pockets with sweetmeats, Raikes went to meet these children on one Sunday. They yelled at him, swore and insulted him, but Raikes remained calm and began distributing the sweets slowly.

Gradually the children began to gather around him, thus he succeeded in calming them down and obtaining their attention. He began to tell them stories and through the stories exhorted them to start learning. After consulting his friend Rev. Thomas Stock, he organized a Sunday school for the children in 1780. The first class was held inside the large kitchen of Mrs. Meredith, in a place called 'Sooty Alley'. Mrs. Meredith was the first Sunday school teacher. Raikes paid her a salary of a shilling per week. She taught children from the age of 6 up to fourteen. Gradually the number of children began to increase. On realizing that the classes were effective and would empower their wards, the parents also encouraged the children to attend it regularly. Initially the children were so wild that some of them had to be bound in chains, for the smooth conduct of the classes. The classes began at 9 in the morning on Sunday and went up to 5 in the evening. In between worship session was also conducted for the students. The children were taught the Bible and along with it the basic skills of reading, writing and instructions on maintaining good

health were given. As the number of students started increasing, four more women were employed as 'teachers'.

The details of this Sunday school was first published in an elaborate article in 1783 in a German magazine called 'Gentleman's Magazine'. Raikes received different kinds of reactions to his effort. There were a few objections from the government, but many people came forward with encouragement. One such person was the founder of the Methodist Movement – John Wesley. He called Sunday school as the 'nursery school for believers'. In addition to Wesley many other prominent people like William Fox came forward to help the Sunday Schools. In 1783 on August 30th the 'Sunday School Society' was formed. Different units of the Sunday school came into being, throughout England. By the time of Raikes' demise in 1811, the Sunday School Society had nearly four lakh students. As per the statistics of 1831, twelve and a half lakh students were learning the Word of God through Sunday School. In 1811, Sunday School classes were organized for the adults as well, and was known as the 'senior class'. Later on, the Sunday school evolved into an organized structure with one junior class and a senior class together forming a unit. The Sunday School Jubilee was celebrated in 1853. In 1862, a convention was organized in London only for Sunday School workers. In 1783, all the churches in England joined hands and contributed for a huge building in Stockport- which is the first building of the inter-denominational Sunday school society. Nearly a thousand students were taught the Bible here on a regular basis.

### **International Sunday school**

Sunday Schools slowly became widespread in different nations including the United States of America. One of the special features of the Sunday school in America was the discussion-meetings. In 1832, a huge convention was held for all the teachers and workers of the Sunday School. Until 1859, such meetings were conducted annually and teachers from all parts of the country attended. The year 1872 is a landmark in the history of Sunday school. It was in the meeting held in that year that a unified curriculum came into being. This led to the elevation of Sunday school as in international organization. In 1907, the Sunday School headquarters was setup in Chicago.

### **Sunday School- In India**

The First Sunday School in India is believed to be the one begun by missionaries William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward at Serampore, in Calcutta. There were 40 students attending classes

at the commencement of the Sunday School. The medium of instruction was Bengali and English. Children were taught to read and write along with learning Christian truths. Gradually this movement began to grow into different parts of India. The efforts of the Baptist Church in Lal Bazaar, Calcutta in 1819 led to the beginning of Sunday School in many places throughout Calcutta. In Kerala, the Sunday school was begun by the CMS missionaries.

### **India Sunday School Union (ISSU)**

A convention of all Sunday School workers was held in Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh), in 1876. Nearly 77 people belonging to eight different denominations participated in this meeting. They decided to unite the Sunday School activities in India for its further development and this led to the formation of the India Sunday School Union. A president and a secretary were selected to aid the initial activities of this organization. A second convention was held in Kanpur in 1888. Following the request of the workers, the London Sunday School Society in 1890 sent Dr. J. L. Philips to India as a field secretary for the India Sunday School Union. Before he passed away in 1895, Mr. Philip was successful in expanding the Sunday School to different states in India and in the effective conducting of the various activities of the Sunday school. In 1926, a 'Training Center' was setup in Connoorin Tamil Nadu, for Sunday School teachers called 'St. Andrew Teachers Training Center'.

### **Questions:**

1. Explain in detail about the origin of the Sunday school?
2. Write a note on the 'India Sunday School Union (ISSU)'?
3. In not less than half a page, write a note on Robert Raikes.

## LESSON - 5

# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

**Memory Verse:** Psalms. 119:11

**Introduction:** The Vacation Bible School (VBS) is an effective medium of Christian learning, similar to the Sunday school. Almost all Christian denominations give importance to VBS. This ministry is an offshoot of the Sunday School. There are lakhs of students who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour, after learning the Word of God through VBS.

### VBS – The Origin

Mrs. Eliza Hawes and her husband Dr. Walkner Aylett Hawes reached New York in America in 1898 to practice medicine. Mrs Eliza noticed the children in the neighbourhood who were always running around making noise and throwing stones at each other, as it was vacation time at school. People labelled them as 'mischievous kids', but Eliza reacted differently. She decided to teach the children to do good works. She called the children over to her home taught them some songs and gave them snacks and juice. Mrs Eliza was surprised at the children's query whether they could come back again the next day to learn more songs. Realising the children's aptitude to learn songs, she lovingly invited them the next day as well. She made a time table for the next day. This continued for a few days and they called it 'Vacation Church School'.

The vicar of the nearby Epiphany Baptist Church, Rev. Howard Lee Jones took interest in these classes and in 1899 he started teaching the Bible following a curriculum and called the program 'Vacation Bible School'. These classes gained much popularity in the whole of America. A pastor's wife and teacher from a Methodist Church in Illinois called C.G. Miles had already started a Christian Training



Programme for her students, during their vacations. Dr. Robert G. Boville who was the secretary of the Baptist Mission Society in New York was instrumental in giving efficient leadership to conduct VBS and he is credited with organising the VBS into a systematic structure. In 1901 four schools commenced under his leadership. The VBS had worship sessions, reading, learning Scriptures, games and various activities. As per records in 1949 there were 62,161 registered VBS groups. The International Council for Religious Education helps to manage these organisations.

### **VBS In India**

In the Year 1952, a missionary lady named Mrs. Mary E. Hamilton organised a VBS according to the vision she received from the Lord, at Kovilpatti in Tamil Nadu. That was the first VBS conducted in India. 75 students and 8 teachers participated in the programme. Following suit many places in Tamil Nadu hosted VBS programmes. Some of the significant contributors to the VBS were Sam Kamalesan, Theodore Williams and Mrs. Edith Morgan. They trained youngsters who were interested in the VBS. Later the training developed in to an academic curriculum at the South India Biblical Seminary situated in Bengarapet, Karanataka. Mrs. Mary Hamilton also travelled to many places in the states of Kerala and Andhra Pradesh training people to conduct VBS programs.

### **VBS in Kerala**

Mr. K.C. Cherian from Mallappally and three others who had finished their theological studies from the South India Biblical Seminary returned to Kerala with all the necessary materials to conduct a VBS. Thus the first VBS was conducted in Mallappally in 1956 with a participation of 600 students and 50 teachers for aduration of 15 days. Esser Holkner from the South India Biblical Seminary also participated in this event. This programme became a milestone in the Vacation Bible School ministry in Kerala.

### **VBS at Present**

It is estimated that more than 20 lakh students hear the Word of God through VBS each year. VBS books are available in Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Nepali, Odiya, Tamil, Telugu and other languages. More than thirteen mission agencies are effectively involved in this ministry. VBS Ministries with its head office at Bangalore, is one of the most important mission agency involved in this ministry. More than thirty full time workers are dedicated

to various services. Organisations like Kerala United VBS, Children's Fest, Seva Bharathi VBS, Children's Gospel Club, CSI VBS etc. have also played a significant role in the development of VBS in Kerala. Most churches including the Brethren Assembly had a syllabus of their own, but the Pentecostal Churches realized its importance only recently. At present, the Pentecostal Churches have also developed a Biblical academic curriculum and are organising classes for the students. Timothy Institute, Excel VBS Ministries etc. are the most important organisations working in this arena.

### **VBS Resources**

One of the highlights of the VBS is the songs which are all related to the common theme chosen for the year. Some of these are action songs. Another characteristic feature of the VBS is the 'students work book' designed to achieve creative excellence for children of all ages. Literature to help the directors and the teachers are also available. The students' badges and crown lend more colours to the celebration. The VBS books from India are used in countries all over the world. The VBS curriculum in India is followed by countries like Africa, Australia, Bhutan, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore, Sri Lanka and the Middle East nations. From the year 1986, VBS training camps are held regularly at the national level. Even before this many national training camps were held in different states in India. Over 800 people from Kerala participate in these training programmes.

About 40% of Indian population are below the age of fourteen. Hence this ministry has a good chance of being fruitful in spreading the gospel. Any church, irrespective of its financial situation can organise a VBS. More than talents or skill the imperative requirement for VBS ministry is dedicated service. Hence the educational background of a person willing to be a part of this ministry is not of much importance.

### **Questions:**

1. Narrate the beginning of the VBS.
2. Explain the origin and growth of the VBS in India.

## LESSON - 6

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# MEDIUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - I

*Memory Verse:* 2 Timothy 3:16,17

*Introduction:* Where should Christian learning be imparted? From whom should a person receive such an education? What are the methods to provide Christian Education? These are commonly asked questions. Different media can be used to impart Christian Education. Some of the effective media are the home, the church and other gospel works.

### **Learning at Home**

The family plays a very important role in imparting Christian education. A child begins a formal education when he goes to school at the age of five or six. But the foundation for his life is laid much before that. Horace Bushnell opines that the importance of the first three years in an individual's life in the formation of character and acquiring learning is much greater than all the rest of his life combined. The life at home forms the corner stone of education and in almost all cases the ethical and spiritual state of a human being can be predicted by observing the first eight years of his life with his parents at home, says Dr. Edward Littleton.

Just as a child receives the physical requirements of water, food, air, light, clothing, exercise and rest from his home, so should home be a place where his mental and emotional needs are taken care of. The home is the best place to fulfil a child's need for acceptance, love, security, new experiences, pride in achievements, freedom, recognition and sense of belonging.

The home forms the background and the basis for his latter education. A child explicitly learns many things from his relationship

and cooperation with the elders at home. The parents also exert a considerable influence on a child's growth. Some of the qualities a child can imbibe, if he is brought up in a conducive atmosphere at home are given below:

**1. Values:** The family exerts a great influence on the character formation of a child. A child observes the behaviour, communication and life style of his parents and imbibes the values he receives from them. When a child sees his family members treat each other with respect and love each other, the child will also learn to behave in a loving manner to others. If the parents are faithful in everything they do, children will also grow up to be faithful and sincere. If a father cannot keep a word he has given to his child, he destroys the faith and trust the child has placed in him.

**2. Confidence:** The family should help a child to acquire self-confidence during his growing stages. If a child has to understand that he is precious, the parents and elders at home must behave accordingly to him. The parents should see to it that nothing at home hampers the personality of a child. Only if a child has confidence, will he be able to believe in himself and in his capacity to achieve great heights. To develop confidence, parents should entrust children with minor responsibilities, as much as they can handle. Instead of blaming children for their failures, encouraging them will go a long way in building their confidence.

**3. Spiritual Training:** Children learn spiritual values from their home. A true Christian family should provide the necessary atmosphere at home to build up a strong faith in God. Practises like giving thanks before food, praying together etc., will help to increase the children's fervour towards worship and devotion. The devoted attitude towards family prayer and worship by the parents will instil godliness in the children. If a child is not properly brought up and given adequate training at home bringing him to Christ later on in life would be extremely difficult.

## **Learning at Church**

It is the responsibility of the church to make the Christian Learning that the child acquires more fruitful. The church can impart spiritual knowledge using different media. Some of them are:

### **1. Sunday School**

The aim of the Sunday school is to teach the Word of God to children and bring them closer to Christ. Hence the church should

never trivialize or diminish this venture aimed at acquiring Christian learning. The importance of Sunday school increases manifold due to the fact that many great men and women of the world accepted Christ as their personal saviour due to the prolific contribution of this ministry among children.

**Aims of Sunday School:** Sunday school has three important goals. The first and foremost is that the students should accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Secondly, these students should grow in Christ and be made perfect in Him or begin to have the mind of Christ. Thirdly, the students should be trained effectively in order to be able to bear witness of Christ. Sunday school should be taught with these three aims in mind.

**Qualities of a Teacher:** Teachers should be healthy, energetic and pleasant. The success of the learning process lies mainly on the teachers. A teacher should be a zealous person with a good character and should also possess the qualities of compassion, kindness, justice, righteousness, honesty and integrity. Only a teacher who finds joy in teaching and happiness in his/her students can instil a passion for learning in students. Lady teachers have proven to be more effective in handling the lower classes in Sunday schools. A Sunday school teacher should understand the fact that he/she is engaged in protecting the students that God has entrusted to him/her from the great danger of forgetting God. Teachers should ensure that through them, the students can hear the voice of God Himself. The requisites of a worthy teacher are being prayerful, having complete trust in God and leading a life of example.

## 2. Vacation Bible School (VBS)

The VBS is another medium, after the Sunday school to provide Christian learning to students. It offers short term courses of ten or twelve days duration. The VBS includes singing sessions, craft making classes, competitions, rallies, games and so on which makes it very attractive to the students. The VBS also exerts a good influence on students from different religious faiths and different denominations. The fact that in the separated churches of today, 85% of the total believers accepted the Lord in their lives, under the age of 14, stresses the effectiveness of the evangelization carried out by these ministries.

### *Questions:*

1. Analyse the role of the home as a medium of Christian learning?
2. Describe the role played by the Church in offering Christian learning?
3. What are the qualities of a good teacher?

## LESSON - 7

# MEDIUM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION - II

**Memory Verse:** Romans 12:1

**Introduction:** In the previous lesson, we learnt about the medium of Christian learning: the home and the church. Another important medium is worship. Worship gives us more knowledge about God and about oneself. This lesson explains the above facts.

## Worship

One of the main purposes of the church is 'worship'. Fundamentally the church is a group of worshippers. Every member of the church should understand the importance of worship and also partake in it. Numerous definitions have been given to the term 'worship'. Some of them are "The humble adoration of man, when he comes to the presence of a glorious and unfathomable God", "The rhythm of the heart which recognises God as the heavenly father and provider, the son as the Saviour and the Holy Ghost as the constant guest in worship", "Worship is the overflowing of a thankful heart in remembrances of divine grace" and so on. These definitions throw light on the true meaning of 'Worship'.

The English word 'worship' has its origin in the Anglo Saxon word 'weorthshipe'. It means 'to make worthy', 'to honour' etc. In the New Testament, three words have been used to denote the term 'worship': 'Proskuneo', 'Sebomar' and 'Latreuo'. These words mean 'to fall down and salute', 'to bow down with devotion and honour' and 'lead a life of worship', successively. All these words denote kneeling before God in devotion and giving Him honour. In short worship is the true realization of God's glory and devotedly giving Him all honour and gratitude. The Bible defines worship as reasonable and living sacrifice (Romans 12:2), Spiritual sacrifice (I Peter 2:2), and to be offered in spirit and truth (1 John 4:24).

## Why should we Worship?

We worship God not because we fear punishment or because He is greedy for our worship. On the contrary, there are many factors which motivate us to worship God. Understanding important facts about God causes us to worship Him.

## Comprehend the Glory of God

Worship is the recognition and acceptance of the glory of God. The realisation that God is Incomparable, Most High and Full of Glory motivates us to give all honour to Him. The book of Psalms describes the most about 'worship' and 'praise'. It is clear that the realization of the omniscience and omnipotence of God, inspired the psalmist to worship Him. The understanding that the 'Lord is a great God', 'the great king above all gods' (Psalms 95:3). "He is to be feared above all gods" (Psalms 96:4), "He is the Most High" (Psalms 92:1), "He is worthy to be revered by all the people of the world" (Psalms 33:8) etc. motivated them to offer worship. It is impossible for anyone who fails to comprehend the qualities of God, to worship Him.

## Comprehend His goodness

When we apprehend the glory of God, we also realize what He has done for us. The knowledge that this great God, Creator of the whole Universe, loves us and cares for us makes us worship Him. Thus the emotions of a grateful heart get transformed into worship. The Psalmist says "Praise the Lord all my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Psalms: 103:2). The attitude of a person determines whether or not, he is grateful. Only a humble heart can be grateful. Pride does not permit a person to be thankful to anyone. Moreover, only a person who considers everything he possesses to be gifts from God, can be thankful to Him. Both these factors humility and gratitude are very crucial in worship.

## Components of Worship

There are certain components essential to worship. The acronym "ACTS" will help us to remember these easily.

- A – Adoration
- C – Confession
- T – Thanksgiving
- S – Supplication

**Adoration:** As has been mentioned earlier, worship can be defined as "the glory given to God". Along with offering praise and worship, we also sing during worship. Hymns are an effective way of expressing

spiritual joy and happiness paralleling the experiences in our life (Colo. 3:16; Eph. 5:19). The first song chosen for worship sessions are always those which praise God and declare His glory and goodness.

**Confession:** Another important component of worship is the confession of sins. When we fully comprehend the Holiness of God, we also realise our unworthiness. Isaiah's vision of the most Holy God seated on a high and exalted throne enabled him to understand how unholy he himself was (Isa: 6: 1 – 15). It is the duty of a worshipper to accept the mistakes made by him in his day to day life, confess them and obtain forgiveness from God.

**Thanksgiving:** We have already learnt about being grateful. The knowledge that whatever we are, and whatever we have received is due to the abundant grace of God, prompts us to give thanks to God. David's realisation made him give thanks to God, "Apart from you, I have no good thing" (Psalms 16:2).

**Prayer:** Prayer is of utmost importance in worship. It is our responsibility to pray not only for ourselves, but for others and their needs. The early church had a time set apart for intercessory prayer during their worship. They took time to pray for the authorities and their co believers (I Timothy 2: 1-3).

### **How to Worship?**

Worship should come out of the devotion to God. David says in Psalms 5:7, "But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house, in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple". Religiosity is the fear of the Lord, it is not the fear which stems out of seeing something fearful. On the contrary it is honour and respect arising out of awe.

When a worshipper understands the perfect Holiness of God and His omnipotence, he bows down in reverence to Him. This is true devotion. As has been stated earlier in the lesson, the different meanings devoted to the word 'worship' denote this kind of worship.

Worship has its own fruits. A renowned thinker A. P. Gibbs opines that in worship we give God glory and in turn must receive deliverance, blessings, spiritual growth of the church and the repentance of the sinners.

### **Questions:**

1. Explain what is meant by worship?
2. Why should we worship God?
3. What are the components of worship?



## LESSON - 8

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# JESUS CHRIST- ROLE MODEL FOR TEACHERS

**Memory Verse:** Luke 2:47

**Introduction:** Of all the famous teachers in the world, Jesus Christ undoubtedly occupies the most prominent position. Gandhi's statement, "Jesus Christ is the teacher of teachers" is apt and true. Most of Jesus' messages were taught. His methods of teaching were so striking that it captured the hearts of the audience.

### **Jesus- The Worthy Teacher**

In the four gospels we find the words 'Teacher', 'Lord', and 'Rabbi' being used to address Jesus. The root word used in the original language to denote these terms is noteworthy. The word 'didaskalos' has been used numerous times for Jesus. The word 'didaskalos' means 'teacher' or 'guru'. This word can be found forty times in the Gospel. In the Gospel of Luke, the word 'epistates' has been frequently used (Luke 5:5; 8:24; 9:49; 17:13). The meaning of the word is 'first/head teacher' and has been translated as 'Lord'. The Aramic word 'Rabbi' has also been used occasionally. The literal meaning of the word is 'my great one' and it is used to denote the class of famous teachers.

All these three words have been translated as 'teacher'. Throughout the New Testament words meaning 'teacher' have been used nearly sixty times to address Jesus Christ.

The Public ministry of Jesus is often classified into three: 'Public preaching', 'Teaching' and 'Healing'. In the older Biblical translations the word used for teaching is 'advising' but in the newer versions in English the word 'teach' is retained. In the four Gospels (Mathew, Mark, Luke and John) this word has been used 47 times. An effective medium used by Jesus to complete his mission on earth was 'teaching'.

Jesus possessed all the good qualities needed to be a good teacher both in his lifestyle and in his teachings. A few of them are discussed below:

### **1. Observation**

Jesus was a keen observer. From his parables it is evident that he observed the happenings in nature and in the surroundings. The eternal truths in his sayings from nature like “birds of the sky”, “two sparrows sold for two coins and five sold for four coins”, “nests of birds” vultures gathering where there is a carcass”, “clouds”, “rain”, “southern wind”, “weather” etc. and from the agricultural arena like “weeds in the harvest of wheat”, “sorting the grain”, “workers in the vineyard”, “lily of the fields”, “systematic growth of the seed”, “Mustard seed growing into a huge tree”, “treasure hidden in a field” etc. facts related to the home like “salt”, “leavened dough”, “old wine in new bottles”; “old patch of cloth sewed onto a new”, “lamp on the stand”, “dogs under the table”; facts like “sheep and the shepherd”, “hen and its little ones”, “widow who put in the greatest offering in the Temple”, and so on are the results of his keen observation and cognizance.

### **2. Authority**

Jesus teachings’ were filled with power and authority. His hearers often testified to this and it can be found in the New Testament. “The people were amazed at his teachings, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as teachers of the Law” (Mark 1:22). “Where did this man get these things? What is this wisdom that has been given him that he even does miracles!” (Mark 6:2). The comments made about Peter and John who were not educationally or otherwise elite: “these men had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13) stress the importance and authority that even his opponents would credit him with.

There was a special authority that abounded in the teachings of Jesus and that could not be found in any rabbi of that time. It was this realization that prompted the common man to react as given above. It was this very authority that angered the Jews and made them want to kill him. More than the content of what was being taught, it was his style of delivery that angered them the most.

### **3. Dialogue**

Dialogue is a very effective component in teaching. We can find that Jesus the teacher incorporated this technique in his teachings. Conversations that Jesus had with Nicodemus (John 3), Samaritan

woman (John 4), Rich Jewish young man (Luke 18) etc. are noteworthy. These conversations begin with topics that the hearer is familiar with and then the discourse is slowly steered towards the topic of repentance and being born again which are very important in life.

#### **4. Understanding the grasping power of the hearers**

Jesus gave his speeches after understanding his audience and their grasping power (Mark 4:33). It was due to the fact that Jesus adopted storytelling (which is endearing to all irrespective of age) as a narrative technique that we have today the renowned allegories of Jesus. The Parables were instruments to simplify extraordinary truths into simple concepts. The narratives like that of 'The prodigal son' which exemplified the love of the heavenly Father, 'The Good Samaritan' which exhorted to love your neighbour, 'The Pharisee and the Tax-collector' which taught the correct attitude in prayer, were amply sufficient to appeal to any section of society and aided them in grasping heavenly truths.

#### **5. Question- Answer style**

The method of asking questions and receiving answers is inevitable in an effective teaching strategy, and Jesus followed this pattern in his teachings too. When decision making was involved, it is common in the Gospels to find Jesus asking questions to his disciples or hearers and deriving solutions, based on their replies. Some instances of this are the question asked by Jesus to the sick person "Do you desire to be healed?", and to his disciples "Who do you say I am?" There are also instances where Jesus was asked questions by his opponents and he replied to them either by posing a counter question or through allegorical representations. To the question "By what authority do you teach" posed by the Pharisees, Jesus replies by asking another question "Was the baptism of John from heaven or from earth?"

#### **6. Discourses apt for the occasion**

Jesus did not teach pre-planned or pre-rehearsed lessons, but all his discourses were according to the needs of the people and going by the current situation. We find Jesus conveying to his hearers the truths about God's kingdom as per the occasion and relating to the people needs, and not in a pre- structured lesson plan. Once when Jesus was speaking and was informed that his mother and brothers had come to see him, Jesus taught his principle of brotherhood by declaring that anyone who obeyed God's word and followed it was

his mother and brothers. When someone comes to Jesus asking him to tell his brother to divide his inheritance with him, Jesus teaches him the truth that, "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

### **7. Capturing attention**

In the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus, like other Jewish rabbis taught in the Synagogues. But the opposition of the orthodox Jews closed the doors of the Synagogue to him. Later his places of teaching were the streets, the mountains, the seashores etc. If teaching and sermons in open places had to be effective, it was imperative to attract the attention of the hearers. Teaching in a class or preaching in a church is directed at a specific audience, who cannot leave the place, but are bound to listen. When speaking in an open place, it is necessary to attract the attention of the passers-by and also to hold their attention, and keep them from walking away. For this the speeches have to be interesting and appealing to the mind. This quality can be found in the discourses made by Jesus.

#### ***Questions:***

1. 'Jesus was a keen observer'. Validate.
2. How can we understand the authority in Jesus' teachings?
3. Give reasons why Jesus is called an excellent teacher.

## LESSON - 9

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# ADOLESCENCE – FEATURES AND PROBLEMS

**Memory Verse:** Luke 2:52

**Introduction:** Adolescence is a stage of beginning of transformation in the life of a person. Beyond the physical changes in the body which can be seen outwardly, adolescence is a time when growth and transformation happens mentally, sexually, morally and socially. Because of this, the 'adolescence' stage of life will be problematic for boys and girls. Going through this stage of life can be very difficult in many people's lives. Some people while going through adolescence might stumble and fall in their life and lose focus on their goals.

### What is adolescence?

A person goes through many stages in life from birth to death. They are infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. Among these, adolescence is the stage between childhood and adulthood. Even though 13 to 20 years is considered as adolescence period for boys and 12 to 18 years for girls, in general we can consider 13-19 years as the adolescence period. Because the number associated with adolescence ends with 'teen' (thirteen- nineteen), this stage in life is also termed as 'teen'-age.

Adolescence is derived from the Latin word 'Adolescere'. The meaning of this Latin term is 'grow', 'develop' and 'mature'. Therefore we can consider adolescence as a time of growth, personal development and maturity.

### Importance of Adolescence

More than the stages of infancy and childhood, adolescence has much more importance and it is different from other phases. We can

also say that adolescence is the most important time of a person's life. This is because most of the problems in a person's life will arise during this time and if he is not careful, he will deviate from his goal and life can become a disaster. Therefore we should deal with the adolescence stage with lot of care and importance.

Adolescence is also the most important time of physical and mental growth. Quick physical growth and bodily changes, creates lot of confusion in children and can make them scared and thereby lead to unnatural behaviors. This is why this age is discussed with so much importance.

The reason for physical and psychological changes in adolescents is due to increased activity of endocrine glands and hormones. We can divide the changes in adolescence into two – external changes and internal changes. During this age, boys grow taller, start having facial and body hair and their voice starts breaking i.e changing to a male voice. Girls grow at a faster pace. They develop a female voice and have bodily changes and they grow to become a woman.

The changes happening in adolescents affect them psychologically, emotionally and practically. In this phase they will have to face some important problems. These are:

### **1) Identity**

In the childhood phase, children try to imitate the identity of their parents, but in adolescence they try to develop an identity of their own. “Who am I?” “What are my surroundings?” “What should I become in life?” These questions keep repeating in the minds of adolescents. Their behavior during this phase depends on the answer they get for the above questions. Finding satisfying answers to these questions is the duty of adolescents. They should have a sure opinion about themselves and a definite goal about the future.

Those who cannot find correct answers to these questions cannot find an identity of their own. Such people try to discover their identities through experiments. They try to attract the attention of others and try to do brave things like dangerous driving, trying to use drugs to prove that they are adults, get trapped in love affairs as they misunderstand it to be true love, dress up in an improper way, boys grow long hair etc. These are some examples of how adolescents try to attract the attention of others.

Adolescents should understand that God and their parents have lot of expectations from them. They should also know that they are

travelling a journey towards a wonderful goal and that they have an important role in the society. Therefore in the excitement during adolescence period, they should not misuse their lives. We can see this in the life of Jesus also. At the age of 12, Jesus asked his parents “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” (Luke 2:49). This question came from the identity of Jesus. Knowing who he was, who his father was, and his goal in life was the knowledge of His identity.

## **2) Conflict with parents**

This is another problem which adolescents face. During Infancy and childhood, they are under the love and control of their parents, but when they reach adolescence, they think that they are grown up and they want to come out of the control of parents. They try to have relationships with people of their own age than to have a strong relationship with their parents. They give more importance to the opinions of friends than to that of their parents. This can also be seen as an attempt at establishing one’s identity.

Parents also find it difficult to accept this changed behavior of their children who were very close to them until then. To tackle this, some parents try to put more control on the children and try to behave strictly with them. This results in the adolescents getting provoked to continue the same behaviour. Instead of obeying the rules of the home, they try to find ways to disobey them. This creates lot of problems in the relationship between adolescents and parents.

Adolescents should realize that parents are well experienced and have a lot of knowledge about life. The instructions that they give are essential for a disciplined life. Parents desire the well-being and good future of their children more than anyone else, and that is the reason they try to control their children. Many times parents might be ignorant of the physical and psychological changes happening in their child. Adolescents should understand these types of conflicts and instead of withdrawing from parents; they should love their parents more and try to make them understand that their children are growing from childhood to adolescence.

## **3) Sexual thoughts**

In adolescence there are two important problems associated with sexuality. First, at the age of 13 or 14 even though their bodies mature, their mind is not equally mature. They look curiously at the changes in their body and its working. It is easy to misguide such people who do not have a complete knowledge about sexuality. Realizing this,

some people take advantage of them by offering gifts etc. to lure such immature youngsters. Adolescents should learn to recognize such people who come to them acting in a loving manner and try to exploit them or behave in a wrong manner towards them. Youngsters should see to it that such people be avoided and not be encouraged in any manner.

The second is that in the overall development of boys and girls, sexual growth deserves lot of importance. Problems related to this like confusions, misunderstandings and doubts about sexuality keep affecting them. Friends who misunderstand sexuality and who read dirty magazines might influence adolescents to have a wrong view about sexuality by giving them wrong information. Some adolescents think too much about sexuality and try to experiment with it, whereas some are guilty and try to forget about it.

We should understand that, in the process of growth, it is natural to have sexual thoughts once in a while. In this modern world, the ads in TV and other TV programs, improper dressing, exposing body parts etc. only make matters worse. But adolescents should understand that sexuality is given by God only for family life after marriage. Any experiments before marriage related to sexuality is a sin. Not only that, instead of getting misleading information from friends regarding this, youngsters should read books written by medical doctors which are informative to them.

We have discussed only some features and problems of adolescence here. We should realize that adolescence is a time when we should overcome challenges and progress forward and take steps with care and maturity. Only then will our life be successful.

***Question:***

- 1) What is adolescence? Explain.
- 2) What is identity? Explain.
- 3) What are the main problems faced by adolescents?



## LESSON - 10

# ADOLESCENCE AND USAGE OF INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES

**Memory Verse:** 1 Corinthians 3: 16,17

**Introduction:** Austin O'Malley once said "A drunkard and a beer bottle are similar; both of these have a neck and a stomach, but not a head". In these days, there are many people who get into the habit of drinking without thinking about its ill effects and in doing so, spoil their life. This chapter talks about intoxicating substances and the dangerous consequences of those substances.

### **Shocking Statistics**

In India, Kerala has the highest number of liquor consumers. Punjab comes next to Kerala. 18 % of the population of Kerala is addicted to drinking alcohol. Among youth, 60% are addicted to drinking. The statistics about children who use intoxicating substances is also shocking. In a survey conducted by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), in Kerala 73.9% of students are addicted to smoking and 60.5% use alcohol.

### **What is alcohol (or liquor?)**

Chemically, alcohol is a composition of Carbon, oxygen and hydrogen. Ethanol or Ethyl alcohol is the chemical in liquor. Alcohol is extracted from vegetation like corn, barley, rice and fruits. Alcohol is colorless and inflammable. Many other chemicals are added to it, to impart color and flavor to it.

The same effects of alcohol is gained from using other substances like cocaine, ganja, etc. which are intoxicating substances.

### **Different types of intoxicating substances**

Intoxicating substances are available in different types and names. We can divide them into 3 types.

1) **Stimulants:** Stimulants are used to stimulate and accelerate the Central Nervous system. Drugs like Nicotine (Cigarette, Beedi etc.), Cocaine, and amphetamine come in this category. Even though those who use it feel energetic in the beginning, during long term use, they are prone to physical and mental diseases like loss of appetite, high blood pressure, lack of sleep, anxiety, anger, skin diseases etc.

2) **Depressants:** Alcoholic drinks like Brandy, Whisky, Beer, Rum, Wine and Toddy come under this category. People start taking it for a temporary thrill-like feeling but gradually these drinks weaken and depress the body and mind. That is why these substances are called as depressants.

3) **Narcotics:** This category of substances lead to unconsciousness and weakness. Drugs like Brown Sugar, Heroin, Morphine, Pethadine, Methadone etc. come under this category. Hunger, painlessness, problems with the respiratory system, dilating of pupils etc. are the effects of these drugs.

### **Reasons why adolescents are lead to drug usage**

There are many reasons why adolescents start using intoxicating substances. We can categorize them as social and psychological.

#### **1) Social causes**

Many temptations from the society can lead people to start drug abuse. Some of these are mentioned below:

##### **a) *Peer pressure:***

There are many adolescents who start using intoxicating substances as a result of submitting to pressure from their friends. This problem happens to adolescents who cannot say 'no' to their friends when they insist and ask them to do things which are unacceptable to them. They are afraid that their friends might stop talking to them if they refuse. To avoid that situation, they accept what their friends tell them.

**Solution:** When adolescents face these kinds of temptations from friends, they should have the courage to say a strong 'no' just like Daniel. They should not be afraid about what their friends would think, but rather should be afraid of whether God will accept their actions.

##### **b) *Influence of media:***

Another factor which leads adolescents to drug abuse is influence from the media. Many television programs portray use of intoxicating

substances as a sign of manhood because of which adolescents are easily attracted to drug usage. Things which happen in normal life are exaggerated and shown in these TV programs. But adolescents blindly believe these things to be true.

**Solution:** Realize that acting in TV programs and real life are completely different. Remember that our life should not be wasted by trying to imitate others.

### c) *Home environment*

Children who do not get enough love and emotional security from home tend to start using intoxicating substances. Constant fights between parents, Inability of parents to spend enough time with children, bad character of parents etc. can be a reason for this.

**Remember:** The Solution to the above problem is not to spoil our lives by trying to defeat our parents, but rather we should live a good life and be an example to such parents.

## 2) **Psychological reasons**

Psychological reasons can lead to drug abuse. Some of them are mentioned below:

a) ***Inferiority Complex:*** Some of the signs of inferiority complex are - Lack of satisfaction in one's body or beauty, always feeling that others do not accept them, thinking that they do not have any value in the eyes of others etc. These feelings can be a reason for experimenting with intoxicating substances.

**Remember:** Every person is unique and is created with unique abilities by God. Positive thoughts and trust in God will help youngsters to overcome inferiority complex.

b) ***Distorted views about identity:*** Some people use intoxicating substances to prove their identity to others. In a survey conducted on children addicted to drinking by Social Development Foundation, it was found out that 46% of students started drinking to show that they were grownups. A distorted view about one's identity is the reason for such incidents.

## **Some ill effects of using Intoxicating Substances**

Using intoxicating substances during adolescence (the growing stage of life) will affect a person physically and mentally. Liver diseases, cancer, Respiratory diseases etc. will soon attack the person. There is also a very high risk of different types of psychological disorders, Liver cirrhosis, Kidney diseases, Heart attack, stomach

ulcers etc.. Another major problem is that the person will not be able to take good decisions in life.

### **Usage of Intoxicating Substances: What the Bible Says**

Using intoxicating substances is a result of going away from God and losing one's goal in life. The Bible talks about drinking as a sin and strongly opposes it. The Word of God also strictly warns that "Drunkards will not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cori 6:10; Gal 5:21), "Drinking leads to fights" (Proverbs 20:1), "Will bring sorrow, strife and complaints" (Proverbs 23:29-31). Other references in the Bible that tell us about the ill effects of drinking are: Romans 13:13; 1 Cori 5:11; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Peter 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 5:7-8.

### **Tobacco usage**

Tobacco usage is another dangerous habit like alcoholism. One in 5 people of the world's population i.e. 120 crore people are addicted to smoking. Among these, 12 crore smokers are from India. Cigarette, Beedi, Rolls, Pan Parag etc. are different forms of tobacco. Due to the use of tobacco the number of people being affected by cancer of the cheeks, lips, mouth, food pipe, respiratory tract, pancreas, urinary bladder etc. has risen very high. Constant use of tobacco leads to heart attacks and paralysis. It decreases the blood flow towards legs. In every 8 seconds, there is one death in the world due to ill effects of smoking. At this rate 50 lakh people die every day due to smoking. A person's life decreases by 8 minutes due to smoking a single cigarette.

### **Conclusion**

We have seen the ill effects of alcohol, drugs and tobacco. A child of God should avoid all these and protect his own body. Because our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and if a person destroys his body, God will destroy him (1 Cori 3:16,17). Mostly, it is circumstances that lead a person to alcoholism. So we should avoid such situations and lead life carefully.

### **Questions:**

- 1) Why are adolescents led to using intoxicating substances?
- 2) Write about ill effects of intoxicating substance use?
- 3) What does the Bible say about intoxicating substance use?

## LESSON - 11

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# MARRIAGE : BIBLICAL VIEWS

*Memory Verse:* Ephesians 5: 31, 32

*Introduction:* Marriage is an institution made by God for the sustenance of Human life. The great thinker and orator Fulton Sheen said "Marriage is the foundation of the society. If that foundation is broken, the society will be destroyed." These words are very relevant in these days. This chapter is a study about issues like "What is family"?, "Why was family life given to man?"

### **Importance of Marriage**

Marriage is the establishment through which a man and woman who grew up in different circumstances and families make a vow to live together throughout their life. Through this vow a man and woman become husband and wife. The Bible says that God is the author of marriage. We can see about marriage in the book of Genesis which marks the beginning of everything. After God created man and then saw that it was not good for man to be alone, He instituted marriage. We can understand that God created marriage as He was the one who created Eve out of Adam and made them one.

For this reason, the Bible views marriage and family life with lot of importance and honor (Hebrews 13:4). Likewise, in the New Testament, in Matthew 9:3-8, Jesus teaches about the purity of marriage. Paul equates the relationship between husband and wife to that of Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:22-32). The Bible also ends with the promise of a marriage (Rev 19:7).

### **Purpose of marriage**

God had a definite purpose in mind when he established marriage. There are three important motives behind this. Family life becomes

fruitful only when we realize these motives and live according to God's purposes.

They are:

1) *Sustain genealogy*: God blessed Adam and Eve thus: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (Gen 1:28). That is, those who enter marriage will give birth to children and hence preserve the human race. This is one of the reasons God allowed marriage. Along with this, husband and wife also have the responsibility to bring up their children in a good way physically and spiritually and make them live useful lives for God and the society.

2) *Keep one's life holy*: Sexuality is one of the physical needs of a human being. It was given by God for husband and wife to lead a satisfied family life and for procreation. These needs should be fulfilled as required. At the same time a person's life should also be kept holy. For this reason God ordained a decree that each man should have one wife and each woman should have one husband. In I Corinthians 7:2, 3 Paul says: But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. "Fulfill their marital duty" means the sexual relationship between the husband and wife. Marriage is the only capacity where God has approved sexuality for human beings. All sexual activity outside family is considered as sin by God. Bible makes it clear that any sexual activity before marriage is adultery, fornication and will be judged by God (Hebrews 13:4).

3. *To be a suitable partner*: The Bible clarifies why God created marriage in Genesis 2:18 "The LORD God said, it is not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him". Through marriage a man and woman come together to become a partner to each other. This is the most important reason why God instituted marriage. Becoming a partner means helping each other in their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.

### **The roles of a partner**

To become a suitable partner means having certain responsibilities towards each other. The important responsibilities are listed below:

#### **Protection**

A person's body, mind and spirit - all of these need to be protected equally. This is mainly received from the home. Protecting the partner's health is the responsibility of both the husband and wife. Equally

important is emotional protection. When a person faces failure, is self-condemned and hopeless, he/ she comes to his/her partner for consolation. In this situation the other partner should not increase their pains but should be able to comfort, pacify and encourage the partner who needs help. Only this mutual care and concern can ensure an emotional security for the couple.

### **Acceptance**

Man is a social being and only when he feels that he is an integral part of the society can he live with confidence and enjoy success in life. For this to be made possible each individual needs acceptance. Everyone knows that each person is created with different abilities. More than anyone else it is the life partner who can identify and accept these abilities. Being accepted at home makes a person confident and helps him to use his/her abilities in a better way for the society. There are many people who initially felt they have no talents or abilities but because of the encouragement received from their homes, they could bring out their latent talents and make a mark for themselves in society. Those who have many abilities also become nothing because they do not have acceptance and encouragement from home.

### **Encouragement**

Many people around us may not have mental strength to face the difficulties in life with courage. Especially when unexpected and new problems come, those who are not so strong may be filled with fear and suffer a break down. In such situations if a person can identify and encourage them pointing out their positive traits, then they are strengthened and equipped to face any situation courageously and may be emboldened to take up any risks. This is the true meaning of encouragement. Through this one can overcome problems and become victorious. Encouragement can be given in the most effective way by a life partner. Where encouragement is received, a person will not become a failure.

### **Love**

Everyone has a desire to love and to be loved. Love should most importantly be received from within the family. When a person does not receive love from the family, there is a tendency to distance themselves from home and get trapped in other love relationships. Due to such hidden dangers, we should make sure that the home and the family is a place of loving each other.

In short, only when we find the purpose of marriage and try to inculcate its values, we can have a small image of heaven on earth. Such families offer blessed children as gifts to the world.

***Questions:***

- 1) Explain the importance of marriage along with Bible references.
- 2) What are the purposes of marriage? Explain.
- 3) What are the roles of a life partner?



## LESSON - 12

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# PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE

*Memory Verse:* Galatians 4:1

*Introduction:* One of the most important things needed for persons who enter into marriage is maturity. In many families, problems arise due to behaviors resulting out of lack of maturity. Maturity in a person is the courage to face problems in life with calmness and depicting wise behavior by taking good decisions at the right time.

### **How does maturity develop in a person?**

In life, every person goes through stages like infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. Every stage has its own challenges and problems. People should face these problems and grow up spiritually, physically and emotionally. Growth in these three areas in a healthy manner leads people to maturity. But if psychological or emotional growth does not occur simultaneous to physical growth it leads to immaturity.

We can clarify this through an example. In childhood, every child is habituated to being fed by the mother. After few years, the child is able to eat food on its own. When a child tries to eat on its own it will face many problems. It may spill the food, make its body dirty and make the table dirty. To avoid these problems, some parents, will continue to feed their children like they used to, in their childhood. But in reality, if the above problem is not solved, the child is unable to take care of itself and is not able to eat food on its own like other children of its age and tends to rely on the mother each time. This will affect their mental growth in a negative way. If mental growth does not occur along with physical growth, the person becomes immature. Such people become a burden both for themselves and for others.

Such people cannot take up responsibilities or live a victorious life. This is very important for the success of family life.

## **Signs of Maturity**

In plant and animal life maturity or completeness is identified by ability to produce seed or to reproduce. The same is not true for human beings. Even though physical maturity is important, maturity is also the ability to handle other areas of life in a wise manner. Along with being able to reproduce physically, it is also important to have maturity in intelligence, emotions, and maturity in daily duties.

### **1. Maturity in Intelligence**

This is a quality that has to be attained by an individual in one's youth. In accordance with the increase in knowledge, a person's should also gain ability to use the knowledge properly and understand the concepts of life. Formulation of clear ideas, ability to voice sound opinions, spirit of critical enquiry etc. are signs of maturity in intelligence. Those who have maturity in intelligence know when to speak and what to speak in a good manner. Moreover, they know how to handle things without depending on their parents or others and can make their own decisions. This doesn't imply that one should not listen to the opinions of their parents. Some families try to blindly follow the opinions of their parents without thinking about anything else. In such families we can hear complaints from life partners like, "she does only what her mother says" or "he does only what his father says". In such situations, along with honoring the opinions of parents, ability to take a wise decision is the sign of maturity in intelligence.

### **2. Emotional Maturity**

We react mainly in two ways to the situations of life. One, through emotions and the other through wisdom. Reactions which stem out of emotions always gives rise to problems. In any situation if we take hasty decisions based on our emotions then the emotions inhibit our will power and make our minds blind to the consequences of those decisions. People driven by emotions create huge problems not only in family life but also in the society.

The second reaction is one arising out of wisdom. Wisdom is not just knowledge about facts; it is the combination of knowledge and maturity. Those who have wisdom have the ability to control their emotions. They can bring forbidden emotions such as hate, Anger, fear, revenge, jealousy, pride under control. They accept the realities in life and reject those things which are to be rejected. Controlling emotions with wisdom is called emotional maturity.

### 3. Mental maturity

One of the main signs of mental maturity is to behave in accordance to one's age. Some people even though they are grown up, still exhibit childish behaviors. For example, most of the youth try to dress up well and try to be an attraction in front of others. This is acceptable to a certain extent. But, even after marriage trying to attract the attention of others foolishly, is a sign of immaturity. Similarly, even after growing up, some people try to hide behind their mothers and some are very shy. Some, even after the age of being able to sleep alone, want to sleep with their parents, and others desire to be pampered by parents all the time. Such behaviors are the signs of mental immaturity.

Another sign of mental maturity is to accept both happiness and sorrow with an uncomplaining attitude. A balanced attitude in all situations of life is a sign of maturity. In happiness being too excited or overwhelmed by joy and in sadness being deeply hurt are signs of immaturity.

Accepting a mistake as a mistake is the third sign of maturity. There is none who has not committed a mistake, but trying to cover up the mistakes is the danger. When men and women who are brought up in different families and situations are united together in the institution of marriage, problems arising out of these differences might emerge. There might come a situation where they start fighting with each other and pointing out each other's mistakes. One person tries to cover up his mistakes which are very obvious, while the other person tries to point out those mistakes with greater stubbornness. This leads to needless talk among the couple. On the other hand, if the couple is ready to accept their mistakes when they occur and if the partners are ready to forgive those mistakes, love between the couple increases. This is possible only among people with mental maturity.

### 4. Maturity in fulfilling duties

Maturity in fulfilling duties towards each other is an important factor for a marriage to last. A man after he gets married should have the ability and worthiness to lead a family happily. On the other hand a woman has to take up the responsibilities in a family with interest and dutifulness. This involves sacrifice, and patience. For a man, entering into marriage without finding a job, and depending only on parents will lead to family fights and other problems. For women, entering into marriage without knowing how to cook, will lead to unnecessary clashes and the peace of family life might be lost.

In short, only those who have attained maturity in all the above mentioned spheres of life can lead a good family life. We can bring this lesson to a close with the definition that someone has given for maturity. "Maturity is the ability to adjust with the things that cannot be changed, the courage to change the things that can be changed, and the knowledge to differentiate between these two."

*Questions:*

1. How does maturity develop in people?
2. What are the signs of mental maturity?
3. What do we mean by maturity in intelligence?

## LESSON - 13

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# HOW TO CHOOSE A LIFE PARTNER

*Memory Verse:* Jeremiah 29:11

*Introduction:* Marriage is a life-long commitment between two partners. Marriage is also a process by which two families become relatives and through them many other families become relatives. Because of this, choosing a life partner is a very important part of life. Many factors need to be taken into consideration before a man and woman who were brought up in different families and situations contemplate marriage. This lesson brings to our notice certain important facts about choosing life partners.

### **Prayer- The most important requisite**

Entering into marriage affects a person in all areas of his life. As we have studied earlier, marriage can make a person's life successful or it can also make it a failure. In addition to this, it also influences the next generation which is to be born. Because of this, choosing a partner who will live with us for a lifetime should be only according to the will and counsel of God.

God cares for everything that is a part of our lives (Psalms 40: 5, 17). He cares about us more than anybody else. He is there to provide the best in everything to his children (1 Peter 5:7; Isaiah 55:9; Jeremiah 29:11). Only God knows who is a perfect match for us in all aspects of our life, because He knows the end in the beginning. We should get definite confirmation from God about the one whom God has chosen as best for us. Knowing for sure the one whom God has provided for us, and marrying that person is the most important thing. For getting such definite guidance, prayer is very important. Prayer should not start when a person starts getting marriage proposals. Instead, to find

at the right time the one God has chosen for us, we should start praying a long time before we are ready for marriage.

### **Factors to pay attention to when choosing a life partner**

As we discussed earlier, there is a need for partners to be compatible in many aspects. Some important factors are discussed below.

**1. Age:** According to the Indian Constitution, at the time of marriage the man should have completed 21 years and the woman, 18 years of age. Having said that, just because a person has crossed the age of marriage, the plan of getting married is not right. This is because maturity is a very important factor in life. Similarly, when considering marriage, partners should take into account the age difference between them. If the man is very much older than the woman, their levels of maturity, views about life etc. will be different and this can lead to problems in daily life. The reverse will also create lot of problems. Therefore experts say that, a man should be older to the woman by one to three years. This doesn't necessarily mean that those who are of equal age and get married will have problems or that age difference will be a reason for failure in married life, because married life does not become successful due to any certain 'age' but it is the couple who make it successful.

**2. Character:** Most importantly, we should inquire and know about the character of the person. The truth is that many people do not give enough importance to this. About women Paul says; "to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no-one will malign the word of God" (Titus 2:5).

**3. Beauty:** This is also significant when considering marriage. That doesn't mean we should look for people who are winners in beauty contests. It only implies that on comparison of a husband and wife, there shouldn't be anything odd or uneasy. If one person is more beautiful and the other is less beautiful, then it can lead to inferiority complex in any of the partners. There is another thing we should look for in beauty. More than outer beauty, inner beauty or the beauty of the mind is of more value and qualities such as good character and good conduct are more important.

**4. Education and Financial Background:** While considering marriage, it is better to look for a partner with similar educational status. If there is a huge difference in educational levels it can lead to inferiority complex and other problems. In the financial status of the

persons involved, the same principle applies. Both the partners should be to a certain extent, financially at equal levels. On the other hand if one person is from an extremely rich or poor family, they will have difficulty in leaving their own lifestyle in which they grew up. In this situation, getting along with the partner's family environment and character will be difficult. Not only this, apart from the couple, it can also disturb the relationship between the two families. This is only a general view and it is not necessary that all relationships be similar.

**5. Family:** Compatibility among the families of those who are entering into marriage is also very important. Family background, culture, relationship between the family members, social status etc. should be considered.

**6. Dowry:** If the bride's father divides his inheritance and gives a part of it to his daughter it is not wrong on the bridegroom's part to accept whatever is given cheerfully. But bargaining for dowry or abandoning a marriage proposal only because of differences of opinion on dowry is not a godly practice. In olden days when women were not much educated and when a bride was sent off through marriage to live with her husband, her father used to give a part of his inheritance to his daughter. In those days only men were working hard and taking care of the women and children in the family. Even today though primarily it is the duty of men to support the family, women also contribute in the successful running of the home. Parents spend huge amounts of money to educate their girl children. Such changes which have happened in our generation should be taken into consideration and traditional practices like dowry in the older generations should not be demanded.

**7. Faith in God:** More than anything else, knowing whether a partner is a true child of God is very important. Only after this should anything else be considered. Even if wealth or education is not up to expectations, if God is with us, there is a solution to everything. On the other hand, even if one possesses all the great things of the world, in the absence of God, it will all be turned worthless and life may end up being a failure.

### **How to find God's will?**

God's will in marriage is very important in the life of a believer, even as we consider the things mentioned above. Man's ability to choose – the motives, priorities are all incomplete and need not be good always. But God's will is always good, acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2). Four ways of knowing God's will are discussed below.

1. **Through the Word of God:** First of all, God reveals his will through His Word. God's word is a lamp unto our feet and light unto our path. (Ps 119:105). When we pray for Gods will, the words which we read, the messages which we hear from Gods word - these will help us to recognize God's will.

2. **Through the inner voice:** God wants to reveals his will through another medium - through the inner voice of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God lives in us. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit will teach us all things (John 14:26). Only people who are full of the Spirit and who have a good prayer life can experience hearing the inner voice and prompting of the Holy Spirit. When godly proposals come, a believer can recognize that this has come from the Lord, because the Spirit reveals God's plan in his heart.

3. **Through situations:** We can identify Gods will through situations which are favorable for us. We should be careful not take situations alone as a sign from God but should also wait for the inspiration of the Spirit and other things discussed above. If the decisions which we take prayerfully are according to the will of God, He will prepare situations which are favorable for us.

4. **Through God fearing people:** God reveals his will to us through God fearing people. We should take their advice but also consider all the above things to be assured that it is truly God's will.

The things that we spend money to buy can be replaced; else, we can abandon them if we don't like them. But God has not allowed a person to change or put away his/her partner whom he/she received through marriage. This makes marriage a very important decision in our life and therefore we should select a life partner and enter into marriage with lot of prayer and care.

### ***Questions:***

1. What are the things we should pay attention to when choosing a life partner?
2. How can we recognize the will of God?
3. Why is prayer most important in choosing a partner?



## LESSON - 14

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# BIBLICAL VIEWS ON DIVORCE

**Memory Verse:** Matthew 19:6

**Introduction:** One of the major problems faced by society today is the break-up of families. Divorce was once heard of mostly in the Western countries but today the rate of divorce is increasing in India as well. Out of 10 marriages in Kerala, 3 are a failure as per a study carried out by the State Women's Commission. Each day approximately 70 divorce cases are filed in the 17 family courts in Kerala. This chapter describes about divorce and its consequences in the light of the Holy Bible.

### **Divorce in Biblical Terms**

The Bible views the institution of marriage as significant and holy. As we learned earlier, Jehovah our Lord and God is the founder of marriage. Not only that, when God's children get married it is He Himself who joins the husband and wife in marriage. Hence divorce is not permissible according to the Bible. God commands a man to leave his father and his mother, to be one with his wife not as a temporary arrangement but till they are separated by death. The oath taken during marriage by the couples is that they will live together till death. The Bible teaches us that there should not be any change in this promise as long as both of them are alive.

In Romans 7:2-3 for example, a married woman by law is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man I Cori 7: 3-9.

## **Reasons for divorce not being permissible**

### **1. What God has joined together let man should not separate.**

Pharisees asked Jesus “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason”? Jesus replied, “They are no longer two, but one therefore what God has joined together let man not separate (Matt. 19:3-6). Jesus gave this as a strict commandment. In addition to this Paul also strongly objects to divorce (1 Cori 7:11-13).

Couples should model their lives on Jesus who forgives and restores us to Him even if we commit a mistake or sin. Between husband and wife, whoever has committed the mistake one person should take a step forward and forgive the other instead of waiting for the other partner to come and ask for forgiveness. By forgiving and patching up, all will be well again and issues like divorce will not crop up.

### **2. Negative influences in the growth of children**

The conflicts and tensions between parents leading to divorce affect children the most. Children suffer a lot for no fault of theirs. Children should love and be loved by their parents, and issues like divorce are the greatest cruelty parents can inflict on them. Most of the times, the children are blamed and insulted by others all through their lives. They lose self-esteem and end up becoming depressed because of the taunts from their relatives and neighbours. This affects their self-confidence and the development of their personality. Childhood which is a time of happiness and laughter becomes filled with hatred and animosity and they are plagued by insecurity. Studies show that such children who grow up with hatred towards society end up in anti-social activities. They may also get addicted to alcohol and drugs.

### **3. Creates problems in the personality of the couple**

Divorce mainly affects the personality of the couples. Most of them may be relegated to loneliness and may have to lead a life aloof from others in society. Studies show that even a remarriage won't brighten their prospects as they have been divorced once. Remarrying multiple times may lead to unending sufferings, sorrows and mental disturbances rather than finding happiness in marital life. Some people may be affected by heart and other critical diseases. Studies also show that divorcees have less immunity power.

Divorce affects the spiritual sphere as well. As the Bible does not permit divorce, divorcees are disobeying God and the Bible. The

result is that individuals may be affected by guilt feelings and spiritual lethargy. In short, divorce will affect a person physically, mentally and spiritually.

## **Love and Marriage**

The Young generation of today may be unclear on whether love marriage is permissible. Is love marriage right? Won't loving and knowing each other before marriage help to understand the other in a better way? Such questions are relevant in this discussion about love and marriage.

### **What is Love?**

'Love' at teenage is just an attraction for the members of the opposite sex and it is natural. Initially teenagers tend to like everyone in the opposite sex. Around the age of 15-16 these feelings of attraction gradually start being centred on a particular person. They long for a sense of belonging and eagerly wait to spend time with him or her and wish to talk more to that particular person. What is called 'love' is merely a longing of the teenagers to love and be loved.

### **Reasons for 'falling in love'**

It is common for all youngsters to feel an attraction towards the opposite gender but it is noteworthy that not all will fall in love. Having a healthy relationship between friends is very important too. When youngsters turn incapable of maintaining healthy relationships, they end up falling in love. Studies prove that there are many reasons for such unhealthy relationships: not getting adequate love and acceptance from home, lack of confidence about one's body and personality, desire to experiment with sex, peer pressures etc.

### **Are love marriages successful?**

Most love marriages end up as failures. There are many reasons for this and some of the main reasons are:

1. Love at teenage is just an attraction to the opposite gender. It is just an outcome of their emotional insecurity. Teenagers don't have enough maturity to select a wife or husband at this age.
2. There is a common saying that 'love is blind'. Love at teenage is just falling into a trap without second thoughts, without taking into consideration the opinion of parents and issues like class, religion or educational qualifications. But once they get married, they start experiencing the bare realities of life. When problems arise they realise the consequences of their deeds and the outcome of not listening to the advice of parents and elders.

3. Everyone has their own weakness and habits which are not pleasing to others. But most of the time such personality traits remain undisclosed till marriage. The fear of losing the loved one makes people hide their original behaviour. It is only after marriage that such problems come to light. When individuals see the true faces of their partners one of them is bound to comment, "This is not the same person who was in love with me and pestering me to marry".
4. The marriages which are carried out against the will of parents, who gave them life and took pains to bring them up, end up being unsuccessful in most cases. The blessings and prayers of parents and elders are of utmost importance in issues like marriage.
5. Real love cannot be attained by having 'love affairs'. Slow steps lead to the height of attaining true love and involve acceptance, forgiveness, patient dealings and good and bad experiences. To attain this kind of perfect love it is essential that mature persons be involved. Teenagers do not possess the maturity or patience to undergo this gradual process of attaining perfection in love.

To summarise, since Marriage is a lifelong relationship, rather than choosing a life partner in the immaturity of teenage, it is better to wait till emotional and mental maturity is achieved and to take decisions with prayer, considering the opinions and advices of parents.

### ***Questions:***

1. What is the perspective of the Word of God on divorce?
2. Why is divorce considered non permissible for believers?
3. What are the reasons for the failure of love marriages?

## LESSON - 15

# INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON ADOLESCENCE - I

*Memory Verse:* 3 John 11

*Introduction:* Television, computer, mobile phone are all parts of our current lifestyle. The current generation could be considered as addicts to these technological innovations. Existence without the company of these tech-gadgets is incomprehensible to the present generation. The aforesaid innovations have positive and negative influences on the society. In this chapter, we are going to engage in a discussion about these aspects.

## I. Television

Currently television is one among the most influential media. In 1924 British scientists first broadcasted images using this technology. However it was American scientists who developed television into the kind that we are currently familiar with. In India, broadcasting was initiated from Delhi on 15th September 1959. Initially programs of one hour duration were aired twice a week. The objective of this endeavour was all-round development of a community which was at that time, educationally and developmentally backward. Television made its entry into Kerala on 19th November 1982 by the broadcasting of the inaugural ceremony of the Asian Games, which was being conducted in Delhi. In Kerala, Doordarshan Kendra was inaugurated on 1st January of 1985 at Trivandrum. TV soon gained wider acceptance and popularity in the field of communication beyond other media competitors of the time. The number of television channels in India has reached figures above ten thousand.

### Advantages of Television

There is no doubt that television is an amazing and admirable invention. Through this gadget we are now able to see events that

take place in different parts of the globe, live with all its realness. One main feature of this technology is that the world is becoming smaller and it is being brought to our homes. Television helps to effectively communicate the advances, innovations and developments which are of interest to the humanity; which in-turn are spread over diverse fields such as: Science, Culture, Arts, Education, Medicine and Sports. TV brings us many knowledge based channels like Discovery Channel, Animal Planet etc. Many aspects of modern scientific inventions and innovations, their relevance and importance are all communicated to us through channels like the Discovery Channel. Channels like the animal planet on the other hand helps us to gain understanding about our ecosystem, bio-diversity and life histories of many organisms. In addition to these, there are many Christian channels that are being brought to our homes through television. These channels help in spreading gospel throughout the world.

### **Disadvantages of Television**

Even though television is advantageous in many aspects, it can become a dangerous thing if it is not utilized in proper ways or without discretion. There is no exaggeration in thinking that it is television that governs the lifestyle of the current generation. TV has gained control over many aspects of our life like: our thought processes, decisions, dress code, rest, reading, sleep, work, time, prayer, communication between members of the family and interactions with neighbours and friends. These kinds of influences tend to weigh more upon children and the adolescents. Let us examine how this occurs.

#### **1. Increases Boredom**

In the past, provisions for killing time was meagre and people depended upon radio, dailies, weekly magazines and books for the same. However, with the advent of modern media, it is generally thought that boredom has been reduced and life has been made more interesting but the reality is far from it. There are many adolescents who spend time carelessly and lazily before the TV, switching channels. This kind of aimless and lazy behaviour could be considered as an indicator and manifestation of boredom. After watching TV in this way, for long periods of time, one would feel loss of interest towards almost anything.

#### **2. Loss of creativity**

Adolescents who indiscriminately spend time switching from one source of entertainment to another in an attempt to fulfil their inner urges rarely get time or frame-of-mind to focus on their future. Why

would one think about the future when it is possible to spend time enjoying the pleasures of the present. The result of this is the loss of will power and opportunities to think and act creatively.

### **3. Changes the cultural perspective**

Television helps to build a broad mind-set by enabling us to understand, evaluate and comprehend other cultures and viewpoints. However our belief systems, traditions, culture and values are affected simultaneously. Especially the western lifestyle portrayed by this media appears more appealing to the adolescents and children and these aspects are imbibed without critical evaluation. To have babies without marriage and to pursue divorces are often depicted as normal and acceptable through TV. It instigates the adolescents to question, rebel against and rewrite the existing value system.

### **4. Impact on quality of learning**

Children who watch TV daily, for more than two hours have been reported to face loss of long-term memory and the ability to concentrate. This affects the learning ability and eventually would invite academic inefficiencies and failures.

### **5. Increased Criminal Behaviour**

Adolescents watch violent scenes in many TV programmes and this could inculcate destructive behaviour. Programmes which foster such deviant behavioural patterns are on the rise. Constant exposure to such violent scenes portrayed in TV causes loss of fear or repulsion towards such acts of crime. This would in turn increase the possibility of adolescents to engage in such acts of violence and destruction.

### **6. Obesity**

Dinner time used to be an opportunity for communion of all the family members. It used to be a meaningful time when family members shared their daily experiences along with food. It has now become a trend to get the food served while watching TV. People fail to register what food and how much of it they are consuming while they watch TV programmes, a behaviour which ultimately causes obesity. Children who spend a lot of time watching programmes fail to get adequate physical exercise. The only physical exercise one would ever get from this sort of lifestyle would be the pressing of buttons on the remote control of the TV. This also affects the health and well-being of children.

### **7. Inappropriate Sexuality**

Many programmes that are targeted for Adolescents contain too much sexual imageries. Even the advertisements that pop up during

news broadcast fall in this category. This influences the adolescents to a great extent. When many of the things that we consider as 'wrong' and 'sinful' are presented as otherwise, adolescents and children find it difficult to decipher 'the good' and 'the bad'. In nutshell, television which was invented to be a great boon for the humanity is as dangerous too. However if we approach it with wisdom and caution we can utilize it as an effective media. What is required at this juncture is the willpower to do so.

### **Helpful tips to make television a fruitful and effective media**

#### **1. Spend your time wisely**

Students should give more priority to learning. TV should not encroach into the time allocated for learning. When this priority of learning is toppled, it would cause loss of academic performance and would affect the future. Therefore learning should be treated as top priority and time may be judiciously allotted for such activities like watching TV.

#### **2. Selective on programmes to watch**

Choosing the good aspects from TV is a matter of importance. Avoid those programmes that diverts us from our goals and objectives, turns us away from God, and inspires us to sin. On the other hand try to watch those which help us to learn and to acquire knowledge.

#### **3. Give due priority to reading.**

Reading is important for the proper development of a person. TV often encroaches into times allocated for reading. Therefore we should have the wisdom to give due priority to reading.

#### ***Questions:***

1. Television could be considered as a blessing to humanity. Why?
2. Describe the disadvantages of television.
3. Enumerate methods to make television helpful.



## LESSON - 16

# INFLUENCE OF MEDIA ON ADOLESCENCE - II

*Memory Verse* : 1 John 2: 15,16

*Introduction:* We discussed about the pros and cons of television in the last chapter. Similar to TV, other media that influences the adolescents are internet and mobile phone. Though the fair use of these inventions are meant to be for the benefit of humanity, their misuse could be disastrous; ethically, morally and spiritually.

### 1. Internet and Adolescents

Influence of internet on children is powerful. According to statistics published in 2013, the use of the internet is abnormally high in about 1.5 - 18 percent of children worldwide. Major share of these internet users fall within the age group of 13 and 19. American Psychiatrist Association has enlisted internet addiction along with psychological disorders. According to them, addiction to the internet is technically called 'Internet gaming disorder'.

### Possibilities of Internet

A single massive book, in print form containing detailed and comprehensive history of the whole world is an idea which is beyond our imagination. Imagining about the size of such a book would itself be flabbergasting. Internet is the solution that the technology has provided us with, to overcome the hurdle of getting such a project done physically. There is no other media that can provide us with apt information regardless of time and place. The moment we throw a query into a search engine, the power of internet would be unleashed so as to bring us all relevant information about the topic of our interest; amassed from the nook and corner of this world.

Internet could be defined in simple terms as a network of networks. It simply means that internet is a network of computers

linked worldwide. This technology was at first designed by 'Advanced Research Projects Agency Network', which is an undertaking of the American Department of Defence.

The objective was to construct a network that was secure, robust and resilient to handle exchange of information in a war setting. However the network grew in size and splendour. Eventually many educational institutions and researchers began to utilize its power. The first program which was meant to send emails through this vast network was first developed in 1971. Tens of millions of computers related to national security, law enforcement, business, education and governmental administration were all connected to internet subsequently. All these entities join hands to bring us entertaining and informative content through this network. Not only that, it also helps us to amass detailed and relevant information related to our education and execution of diverse projects. Even as we appreciate the beneficial aspects of internet we should acknowledge the presence of lurking dangers.

### **Dangers associated with the use of internet**

There are a number of hidden traps in internet which could devastate children. If one is not careful enough, it could spoil their entire life. The major dangers associated with the use of internet are discussed below.

#### **1. Internet and the Spread of Obscenity**

One of the major threat that internet poses is that, it brings hardcore obscenity before children privately and with ease. One out of seven adolescent users of internet are regular visitors to websites containing obscene content. When an adolescent makes his or her entry into the world of internet, they might get intrigued at pictures depicting obscenity. Those who follow these habits eventually end up as addicts to these types of contents. These kinds of websites tend to side track the gentle hearts of adolescents and instigates them to think and act in deviant ways. The kind of inspiration they get from these kinds of websites might tempt them to try them out which could eventually lead to extreme acts of crime like sexual abuse or even murders.

#### **2. Internet a guide to crimes**

Children who become addicts to internet are prone to become introverts and psychologically ill. Therefore they tend develop a habit of remaining aloof from the society; a society, which in their sight appears not to know how to respond and interact appropriately.

Moreover studies reveal that it is the unholy and unethical interactions over the internet that leads children to commit extreme acts of crime. With the help of video footages and detailed descriptions, adolescents learn from websites about how to commit suicide, perform murders with ease or rob banks which are under high security surveillance.

### **3. Dangers of cyber relationships**

Even as we admire the exemplary role played by social networking sites like 'Facebook' and 'Orkut' in building a friendship in general, usually many online relationships become dangerous. Major share of people who are in online relationships either do not disclose or tend to lie about personal details like age, physical appearance, profession, marital status and behaviour. In many cases such kind of deceptions are brought to light only when they are encountered in real life.

### **4. Cause of shattered social interactions and interrelationships.**

Over use of internet leads to shattered social interactions and inter-relationships. Just as a person becomes over-conscious and concerned about maintaining online acquaintances through Facebook, email and chatting, the losing grip on the family ties with parents, siblings and relatives, is often left unperceived. This disruption of close knit family ties would eventually lead to formation of distorted personalities in adolescents.

## **2. Mobile Phone**

The invention of the mobile phone was an amazing and revolutionary event, in the field of information and communication technology. As soon as it was released, it became an essential commodity for common man and it can now be regarded as a highly popular gadget with profound influence on adolescents and children.

Martin Cooper is known as the father of the mobile phone. In 1973 Motorola company released the first mobile phone built by Cooper. In India mobile phone services began in 1995 in New Delhi. Later the mobile phone created a massive revolution in the field of telecommunication. Mobile phone are so popular because it lets the user contact others, regardless of his location or time. Currently it is possible to listen to music, take and store photos and videos using mobile phone. Internet is also available through mobile phone. Even though these are the benefits of mobile phone, indiscriminate use of this device could be harmful. Some of the major disadvantages of indiscriminate use of mobile phone are discussed below.

### 1. Health Related Issues

It was Dr. Henry Lai, BioEngineering professor from the University of Washington who brought to light some astounding facts about mobile phones. According to him, the radiation emitted from mobile phone is capable of causing damages to the nerve cells of the brain. The research output of Dr. Lai reveals that if a person uses mobile phone at the rate of two hours per day, continuously over a period of 10 years it would cause serious health issues like Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease and Cancer to the user.

### 2. Pitfalls

Cell phone could cause formation of unwanted and illicit relationships and might later on cause adolescents to be victims of cheating. Sometimes a relationship that starts with a missed call might lead children into pitfalls and traps from which there could be no escape. If we examine many instances of present day 'love' relationships, absconding and suicides, mobile phone reveals itself as the main entity playing pivotal roles.

### 3. Affects learning

Use of mobile phone while being a student, reduces attention span and concentration. A student who is engrossed in the technological sophistication of the mobile phone rarely gets time to focus on studies. Use of mobile phones during 'study times' affects the effectiveness of learning experience.

Internet and mobile phone if used with care and caution is a great blessing for us. However indiscriminate use of these have caused many to lose their life. The important aspects that are to be taken care of while using such gadgets are discussed below.

1. Use the internet and mobile phones only when it is required. It is advisable not to use them to kill time or when one is completely free. Instead of that, the time could be spend for reading or such other useful tasks.
2. Do not click on obscene pictures that might pop-up while using the internet. These could be dangerous and may even undermine the viewpoints and outlook toward life.
3. Do not attempt to call back if you happen to receive missed calls from unknown numbers. This is specially to be followed, in the case of girls. If the caller is absolutely in need to contact you for some serious matter they will attempt again. It is wise to remember

that it could be a simple phone call that might affect the entire life.

4. Do not hand over your mobile phone to strangers. Do not pose for strangers to take your photographs on their mobile phones.
5. Be cautious when sharing your phones with others.

***Questions:***

1. What are the dangers of using internet?
2. Write notes on the possibilities of using internet.
3. Describe the damages that mobile phones could cause.

## LESSON - 17

# BIBLICAL VIEWS ON CERTAIN SOCIAL ISSUES

**Memory Verse:** Isaiah 33:15,16

**Introduction:** Importance for values is on the decline these days. Corruption, Bribes and Exploitation are plaguing problems in the present society. Man stoops to any level and does not hesitate to do anything- to becoming rich. This lesson deals with some social evils and Biblical perspectives on these issues.

### 1. Taking Interest upon Money

The verse “He that putteth not out his money to interest...” (Psalms 15:5) has been interpreted wrongly and there are teachings that it is not wrong to accept interest for your money. But the Bible gives us clear views on the issue of accepting interest for money.

Financial organizations or banks usually trade in money and give or take interest on money. Banks which are recognised by the Government and function according to its norms usually serve the common people taking into consideration the public good. Banks mainly serve two purposes. One, they accept money from the depositors, trade it in various enterprises and give a portion of the profit to the depositor along with his principal sum. Secondly, they give loans for those who are in need of money, for a period of time, and take a certain amount as their fee. The profit money made by banks out of such financial dealings is called as ‘Interest’. Recognized banks give and take interest as per government norms, and in a just manner. Therefore accepting interest on money deposits from these banks is not wrong.

### Interest upon Money: A Sinful Practice

There are two kinds of interest commonly found today. ‘Normal Interest’ rates and ‘Excessive interest’ (or usury). Normal Interest rates

are as per the Laws of the country whereas Usury is against the Law. Private financial enterprises or some individuals may charge exorbitant rates of interest. When the poor or those in urgent need for money approach them, they charge excessive rates of interest without any compassion or human consideration. This kind of exorbitant rates of interest is wrong and a sin, as it is against the Law.

### **Biblical Perspectives**

References to taking interest upon money are mostly found in the Old Testament. This proves that even from ancient times, the practice of taking interest existed. God gave the Israelites two main instructions regarding this. "Unto a foreigner thou mayest lend upon interest; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon interest"(Deuteronomy 23:20). God permitted the Israelites to take money from a foreigner, but never from a brother (a fellow Israelite).

#### ***Other verses in this regard are:***

1. "If thou lend money to any of my people with thee that is poor, thou shalt not be to him as a creditor" (or as an usurer); "neither shall ye lay upon him interest" (Exodus 22:25).
2. "And if thy brother be waxed poor, and his hand fail with thee; then thou shalt uphold him: as a stranger and a sojourner shall he live with thee. Take thou no interest of him, or increase (Leviticus 25: 35,36).
3. "Thou shalt not lend upon interest to thy brother, interest of money, interest of victuals, interest of anything that is lent.." (Deut. 23:19,20).
4. "... Thou hast taken interest and increase, and thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by oppression and hast forgotten me..." (Ezekiel 22:12).

### **Conclusion**

In the New Testament we do not find many references to the practice of taking interest upon money. In the Parable of Talents told by Jesus, there is a mention about trading money (Matt. 25: 14-30). It is not wrong to deposit money in the bank, do business or trade with it, but it is definitely sinful to exploit the poor and needy and oppress them in their times of need by demanding interest.

## **2. Bribes**

Another serious problem affecting our society today is the practice of Bribery. The gifts or money given to a person to get anything

‘unlawful’ or wrongly done is called a bribe. In other words, bribes are usually given as rewards to persons to get things forcefully done by them. Accepting rewards for doing something that is lawful and just can also be called bribery.

### **Different forms of Bribes**

Bribes are given and taken in different forms. They are:

#### **1. Money**

Most people, who accept bribes, do so in the form of money. Man is most influenced by ‘the love of money’. Bribes are an easy and fast way of making money. The Bible condemns the practice of bribery. Jesus says, “Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages” (Luke 3:14).

#### **2. Gifts**

‘Gifts’ are given to please people, from whom a favour is required, and are afraid or hesitant to take money as a bribe. Gifts are given taking into consideration the attitudes, ‘likes and dislikes’, ‘weakness’ of the person concerned. Some examples of gifts are imported clothes, ornaments, home appliances, alcohol, party or feasts etc. People who accept gifts become forced to do what they are asked to, just as in the case of bribes. What they are asked to do in return might mostly be unlawful, and will be accounted as a sin in the sight of God. To learn more about the harm caused by accepting such gifts, read: Exodus 23:8; Deuteronomy 16:19; Proverbs 17: 8.

#### **3. Flattery**

The trick used on people who do not accept money or gifts is flattery. Some people enjoy listening to others praise them. To get things done by such persons, sometimes people resort to ‘flattery’ and ‘sweet words’. Doing this is also a sin. The purpose behind every word spoken by us is very important. To learn more about the fate of those who indulge in flattery read Psalms 37:7; Proverbs 26: 28; 29:5; I Thessalonians 2:5.

### **Biblical view on Bribes**

The Bible forewarns about the harm in giving and taking bribes. “Surely extortion maketh the wise man foolish; and a bribe destroyeth understanding” (Ecc 7:7). Isaiah describing the qualities of people, who will live with God, says, “He that despiseth the gain of oppressions that shaketh his hands from taking a bribe...” (Isaiah 33:15). David says, “... He that taketh not reward against the innocent..” (Psalms



15:5) and Job affirms "... Fire shall consume the tents of bribery..." (Job 15:34). In Amos we hear the voice of the Lord, "For I know how manifold are your transgressions, and how mighty are your sins- ye that afflict the just, that take a bribe, and that turn aside the needy in the gate from their right"(Amos 5:12).

### **Conclusion**

Accepting any form of bribe is a sin according to The Bible. If wealth is amassed by accepting bribes, it will only turn into a curse. The person, who gathers wealth through bribes, will never be able to enjoy it in peace. Even if it be little, if our money is gained through justice, God is faithful to multiply it and bless His children manifold.

### **Questions:**

1. When does taking interest upon money become wrong and sinful?
2. What are the different forms of bribes?
3. Explain the Biblical perspective on taking bribes.

## LESSON - 18

# CHRISTIAN MISSION: DEFINITION AND PERSPECTIVES

*Memory Verse:* Matthew 28: 18-20

*Introduction:* Christian mission is a subject of contemporary relevance. The church is a missionary institution or group. Hence it is very important to know and understand the duty of those who are sent on a mission. This lesson explicitly throws light on the mission of those sent.

## Mission

The concept 'mission' has been formed from the Greek word for apostles which is 'Apostolos'. It means 'to be sent'. We find this word 123 times in the gospel and in the book of Acts and also 12 times in other books. Thus this word is found 135 times in total in the New Testament.

The word 'mission' holds several deep meanings. 'A person who is being sent with the purpose of someone else's need' (Matt. 10:40), 'To be sent to a particular place', (Matt. 20:2; Luke 1:26, 27) 'to spread the religious beliefs of one society to another' and so on.

In both the New Testament and the Old Testament we find the Lord our God assigning and sending many with the command to 'go'. Abraham was asked to leave his father's house and go to Canaan. Jonah was directed to go to Nineveh, Moses was asked to go to Egypt, and the prophets were entrusted duties and sent. Many similar examples can be found in the Bible. For instance in the book of Isaiah we find the question "Who shall go for me?" and the prophet's answer "Send me, O Lord".

The reference in the New Testament which says There was a man sent from God, whose name was John receives much attention.

Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit have been literally 'sent' to fulfil God's mission in the world. The book of Acts beautifully elucidates instances of God's selection, calling and mission.

### **Christian Mission: Different Dimensions**

Different levels of meaning can be accorded to the term 'Christian mission'. The traditional view confines it only to the spreading of the gospel. Another view much accepted in the modern times is that God's mission is one that cannot be confined only to the spreading of the gospel. The theologians of the modern times are of the opinion that Christian mission is one which raises its voice against the social evils such as slavery, differentiation on the basis of caste and creed, inequality, dowry etc. Luke 4:18,19 also known as the 'Lord's Nazareth Manifesto' describes the above mentioned social purpose. God wants to establish on earth equality and prosperity. The Lord's prayer 'Let your will be done on earth as it is in heaven' demonstrates this.

### **The Core of the Church Mission**

The Word of God clearly specifies what the mission of the church is. "As you sent me into the world I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18) is the foundation of the church's mission. The gospel is the good news to the whole world as God was reconciled to the world through Christ (2 Corinth 5:19). The Church's calling is to bear witness for this gospel. The definitions of 'mission' by a few theologians have been given below to make the word more clear.

"The church's mission is to make known through the children of God, the redemption which God established through Jesus Christ" (W. D. Carver).

"The Christian mission is to make disciples of all those who are unsaved by obeying Christ's command" (R. H. Glover).

Analysing these definitions, we find that the Christian mission is to make known to the world the saving plan of Christ and thus leading the whole of humanity to Christ, thereby establishing God's kingdom on earth. In a broader perspective, proclaiming the Word of God by sharing the gospel, humanitarian works such as providing education, charity work and other social services with the aim of bringing people to Christ can be termed as mission. In short the Christian mission includes both proclamation of the gospel and social work. Spreading of the gospel by neglecting one's social obligation as well as only having social and charitable works without gospel sharing are both contradictory to the idea of mission. Both are mutually complementary.

and the ideal way is to use social work as a platform for sharing the gospel. Christian mission has been formed from the Great Commission whereby Christ asked us to make disciples of all gentiles (Mt 28 :18-20).

## God and Mission

The God which the Bible reveals is a missionary god. God had a mission every time. In other words, mission is God's. God shares it with man and brings it to pass. To make it more clear: God had a mission and for the completion of this glorious mission He used different people at different periods of time. It is from the year 1952 at the Missionary Council of Willington conference that the concept, Mission is God's (Missio-Dei) has been strengthened. Mission has formed from the character of God himself. According to Stanley Samardha“, the church's mission has been formed from God's divine plan of salvation for man”.

The Central idea of the Christian mission is Christ himself. This revolves around Christ coming to the world as a man, his crucifixion and resurrection. Christ came from heaven to earth with the objective of not wanting the people whom He created to perish, but instead wanted them to have eternal life as He loved the world. This is the essence of the Christian mission. The church's real mission is to be partners with God by working with him in his divine plan of salvation and proclaiming the salvation that was brought to us the cross of Calvary and making equal all people in Christ.

## The Basics of Christian Mission

The following verses in the New Testament can be considered as the foundation for Christian mission

### *1. Make Disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:20)*

Mission emphasizes bringing unto the influence of God's kingdom all people through spreading of the gospel and a Christ centred life. The aim of the Christian mission is not only to increase the members in the church but also to make an impact upon the social, economic political and spiritual trends of the world.

### *2. To be Witnesses to the ends of the earth (Act 1:8)*

To be witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria to the end of the earth means to bring about the presence of Christ in the world. This teaches the church not only to be witnesses of the gospel to others but also to experience and practice the presence of Christ in all fields our daily life.

### ***3. As the father has sent me, I also send you (Jn20:21)***

Both, the Father who loved the world and gave his only begotten son and Christ who sent his disciples to the world saying “As the father has sent me, I also send you” empower mission. John makes it clear that the future of this world is through the redemption through Christ and it is made possible by sharing God’s love which is the basis of mission.

The three perspectives given above are not just three different duties of a missionary but they are all complementary to each other. The foundation of mission is to make disciples, be witnesses and redeeming the world through Christ’s love.

### **Conclusion**

The existence of the church is related to its being called with an aim. The meaning of church is a group of people called for a specific purpose. The church is not an institution which fulfills the material and social needs of its members and protects their rights instead it has been called to perform certain duties in this world. If the church separates itself from its mission it becomes just any other social organization. The existence of the church itself is for the completion of this mission. This is what differentiates the church from other organizations.

### **Questions:**

1. What do you mean by mission?
2. Explain the relation between God and Mission?
3. Write about the foundation of mission.

## LESSON - 19

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# MISSION AND EVANGELIZATION

**Memory Verse:** 2 Timothy 2: 8, 9

**Introduction:** Spreading of the gospel is evangelisation. It is the duty of every saved Christian to share the gospel. The most important and primary aim of the mission is the spreading of the gospel. We learn the importance of evangelization in this lesson.

### **What is the Good News or Gospel?**

The word gospel has come from the Greek word 'Euangelion'. In Syrian language the word used is 'Avangelion'. These words mean good news. We find these usages 77 times in the New Testament.

The Bible clearly defines gospel. Paul clearly emphasizes on this, "I declare to you the gospel..., that which you have believed..., the gospel by which you are saved. That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that he rose again the third day" (1 Cori 15:1-5). "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my Gospel..." (2 Tim 2:8). Both These verses show that Jesus is the gospel, i.e., the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

God the father has delivered all people (those who believe in Christ) from the punishment of sins that is eternal death and made them partners and sons in heaven by giving His only begotten son to die the cruel death of crucifixion for the sins of humanity. Believing that Christ Jesus will come again to gather all those who are in Christ wholly i.e., in his death and resurrection and have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour and live a life acceptable to God. This is the gospel in a broader perspective. In Short, Jesus himself is the gospel as he is the only way to God's kingdom.

## **Evangelization**

Proclaiming to the world that Jesus is the good news is evangelization. This is the central truth of Christian mission. Evangelization is the process of connecting to God's eternal fellowship those who have gone astray from the divine fellowship neglecting eternal life through Christ. Evangelization is a word which suggests completion. It cannot be combined only to sharing- the gospel. Evangelization has four steps:

1. Proclaiming the gospel: To explain the gospel in a way that others may understand.
2. To help those who understand the gospel make a decision. There is only one decision for those who have understood the gospel which is to surrender their life to Christ and to accept Christ in your heart.
3. To help those who have accepted Christ to grow. A person you who has just accepted Christ is like a new born baby. They need food, drink and fellowship. They should grow up by drinking the pure milk of the word. They have to be members of the local churches.
4. Those who grow up should bear fruits. It is their duty to bring others to Christ just as they accepted Christ in the beginning. Evangelization happens only when these four steps are completed.

## **Christ's Example**

Christ during his days on the earth preached about repentance. (Mark 1:14, 15). Christ gave importance to the fact that man who was separated from God should believe in the gospel and enter the kingdom of God. Jesus Christ gave importance to preaching and teaching even though in his mission we find miracles, signs and wonders, equality, healing the sick and the concern towards the poor. Everything also was done in accordance with preaching the word. The Primary responsibility in mission is to spread the gospel. All charity and good work are just supplementary.

## **Great mission in Christian mission**

### **1) Preach the Gospel**

The primary and most important responsibility of the church is to introduce Christ to the world. Even though preaching is done by word of mouth, the essence of preaching the gospel is to introduce Christ in one way or another. The church of God is responsible to preach the

gospel of Christ in every way possible. During the birth of Jesus, God sent angels to tell the good news that Christ was born. But today God has called us to introduce the gospel of Christ to the world.

## **2) To Baptize those who Believe**

The second responsibility of the Christian mission is to baptize those who believe in the gospel. Baptism is yardstick to join with Christ. Among the two important doctrines of the church, Baptism comes first. Those who are not baptized are not allowed to be partners of the Lords Table. Many think that baptism is very shameful. But the church should teach and make people understand that baptism has been shown by Christ himself and it is a privileged to join with Christ, and not a sacrifice that we do for Christ or something shameful that we face in the society. In short the official beginning of salvation in a person who has accepted and believed Jesus Christ happens with baptism. The second duty of Christian mission is accomplished only when a person who has heard and believed that gospel takes immersion baptism.

## **3) To make Disciples of All Nations**

A person growth in the kingdom of God as a citizen begins from the time he becomes Christ's disciple. A Disciple is one who teaches or in other word obeys his masters completely. To raise one to the level of being a true disciple of Christ is the responsibility of Christian mission. When one hears and believes the gospel and gets baptized he becomes a believer. Only when this person is raised from the level of a believer to a disciple and when he has been enabled for evangelization by giving him the necessary requirements to grow up to the master, is the Christian mission in regard to this person accomplished. This is the example shown by Christ.

### ***Questions:***

1. Explain what is gospel?
2. What are the four steps of evangelization?
3. What are the most important aspects of Christian mission?



## LESSON - 20

# MISSION: BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES

*Memory Verse* : Mark 1:14,15

*Introduction* : Bible is a mission book, as we can find different ways of God's mission demonstrated in it. We find God the father in His godly mission in the Old Testament while the New Testament displays how God completed the mission through Jesus and how Jesus in turn entrusted the completion of the mission to his disciples.

## Old Testament

The Old Testament gives us views about mission on creation, Salvation, Israel, prophets etc.

### Creation and Mission

God's mission on the earth begins from Gen 1:1 which says God created the heavens and the earth. Creation and its completion are the personal intervention of the divine mission. The Lord who created this universe and the earth so aesthetically wanted nature and everything in it to be in harmony with man. God wished that they would coexist on a mutual give and take relationship, thus completing the divine purpose of creation. God's divine purpose behind creation was that His Creation should worship Him and declare His glory and that His will would be done on the earth. Not only during creation but even today God continues to fulfil this mission by providing for His creation. Being the crown of creation, God made man to be partakers of this glorious mission. God wanted man to work with him by sharing His mission of taking care of the garden and working in it.

### Salvation and Mission

God took upon himself the mission of saving the lost man. This is evident from Gen 3:8-21 where God himself went in search of Adam

and Eve and made tunics of skin to clothe them. Here we find the beginning of God's divine mission to save humanity. From the different incidents recorded we find God pursuing this mission throughout the Bible.

God chose Abraham and Noah for the salvation of all the people in that contemporary period. The divine purpose behind this predestination was that they would remain as God's own people and fulfil His mission in this world. God made a covenant with them and gave them certain Laws through these covenants. God wanted them to be an example in the society where they lived and consequently to bring the Gentiles to know God by the way they followed those laws and lead a life of separation. They were commanded to follow the divine principles of holiness, righteousness, mercy, and generosity with this very purpose. Moreover God wanted to show that he loved man impartially and it was his desire that through these covenants His love be proclaimed in the world. The nutshell of the Noahic covenant was that God would never destroy the earth again by a flood. Through the Abrahamic covenant God's purpose was to bless all the families of the earth. We can find God's provision for all humanity through these covenants. This can be considered as God's divine mission for the salvation of man.

### **Israel and Mission**

God wants His glory to be manifest in the whole universe. God desires that salvation should be made possible for all and not only for the Jews (Isa 19:24, 25). It is His desire to shine His light upon all and to bless everyone. God's universal plan for salvation through this divine desire is evident here.

God chose Israel with this specific aim of salvation. God continued His mission by choosing them. God made Israelites the partakers of the completion His divine mission that all should know the glory of God. This can be summed up in the statement that the chosen Israel had a mission to complete. It was God's purpose, not to reject the Gentiles, but that they come to know Him through his chosen people. God made them a light to the Gentiles in the darkness of this world.

God gave Israel certain laws and statutes. God wanted them to be an example to all Gentiles by obeying these statutes and keeping themselves away from worshipping idols. The virtues of righteousness and Holiness which would be reflected from their lifestyle should be such that it would help the Gentiles to come to God's presence. God wanted them to be a challenge to others in their concern for each

other and brotherhood. But in reality more than being exemplary the Israelites themselves got influenced by the Gentiles and followed their ways of worship. Then God used the gentiles to punish the Israelites (Isa 10:24,25).

### **Prophets and Mission**

The prophets were chosen to continue God's mission on the earth. They understood God's divine universal vision. God send his prophets to the earth and the people rejected them. The prophets urged the people to stop oppression and unrighteousness and follow righteousness and justice in the society. This was a divine mission entrusted to them.

### **The New Testament**

The important sources of mission views can be found in the gospels, the Book of Acts and Paul's epistles. The aim of Christian mission is to proclaim the good news (Mk 1:14,15; Lk.4:16). The teachings of Jesus and the transformation caused through Jesus is the good news, for which the call for repentance is given. In the views of Biblical thinkers, the Old Testament asked people to go and seek the Lord whereas in the New Testament we find Jesus who went in search of people.

### **Gospels and Mission**

The book of Mark describes mission as 'leading people to Christ' after teaching them about the life of Jesus, His crucifixion and resurrection. At the same time the book of Mathew centres on the Jews (10: 5, 6). At the end of the gospel of Mathew we see the Great Commission to go to all nations (28:18-20). The essence of the gospel according to Luke is an all-round transformation (4:16-21). The service of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37), Healing of the centurion's servant (Luke 7), raising the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7) are all examples where we can see Jesus compassion for the non-Jews.

The central theme of John's Gospel is the incarnation of God as a man. John explains the fact that God showed this eternal love for mankind through the specific mission of Christ Jesus. John also stresses the fact that just as Christ Jesus was sent by God with a mission in the same way, the disciples are also sent with a specific mission (John 20:21).

### **The Book of Acts and Mission**

The Book of Acts is an official record of the mission work carried out by the apostles and the early church. It gives the call to receive power and be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends

of the earth (Acts 1:8). The apostles took upon themselves the task of making known to the world the Christ whom they knew and to spread in all Jerusalem His gospel and teachings(5:28) and also to bring a drastic change to the world with these doctrines(17:6). These were the goals related to their mission. The core of the apostles' teaching was the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus (2:23; 24:29-33; 3:14-19; 4:9-12). They proclaimed to the world the good news and exhorted people to confess their sins, to believe in Christ Jesus and to lead lives pleasing to God.

### **Paul's Epistles (Pauline Epistles)**

We can see Paul's mission through the epistles. Through mission, Paul views the redemption of the whole world. This includes the redemption of both man and the earth that God created. Christ was the central truth of Paul's mission (Gal 11:4-16). Paul emphasizes that if sin and its consequences came through Adam the first man then redemption and justification came through Jesus Christ (Rom 5:18-21). According to Paul, God is the God of all (Rom 3:29, 30) and taught that salvation is necessary for all as everyone has sinned (Rom. 3:21,24).

In conclusion, the Bible explains the mission of God and man's role in this mission. Our responsibility is to be partners of this mission of saving mankind which God had ordained through Christ. Let us try to carry out this responsibility faithfully.

### ***Questions:***

1. How is God's mission inculcated in creation?
2. Explain Israel and mission.
3. Explain the views of New Testament on mission.

## LESSON - 21

# JESUS CHRIST AND MISSION

**Memory Verse :** Luke 4 :18,19

**Introduction :** Jesus Christ came to this earth with a particular mission. Christ ensured that He completed this mission through this life and deeds. Christ's mission was rendering to man freedom in all aspects of his life such as social, spiritual and physical.

Jesus in His proclamation at Nazareth, commonly called the Nazareth Manifesto clearly explains the purpose behind him being sent to the earth by the Father (Luke 4:16-21). This includes preaching the Gospel to the poor, preaching deliverance to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. This proclamation includes both a spiritual and a social transformation. This is the complete gospel.

### **Jesus' Mission and Social Deliverance**

The deliverance given by Christ includes an overall transformation of the society. Jesus envisaged a society without inequality and oppression but based on justice and peace. Jesus taught his followers to accept the poor and the needy and those rejected by the society, to take care of their needs thus giving them self-confidence and a place in the society. While on this earth Jesus also attempted to establish a fair social order by criticising forces of inequality, and advocating the cause of those in various needs.

Even though the Jews held dear their teachings of charity and helping the poor and the orphans, the Jewish leaders during the time of Jesus did not give any importance to such things as loving and caring for the sick the poor. They were more interested in oppressing

them and exploiting the poor. Putting aside the values of love and mercy, they gave more importance to laws like the Sabbath. Righteousness and justice did not have any place in their thoughts (John 5:1-15).

This is where Jesus stands out with a difference and the significance of Jesus' mission becomes distinct. Christ continued his mission without any indifference towards anyone. When Jesus taught the story of the good Samaritan he wanted to make it clear that everyone is valuable in the sight of God, especially the Samaritans who were neglected by the Jews. When the Samaritan women told Jesus it was unlawful for the Jews to have any dealings with the Samaritans, Jesus pointed out to her that all were created in God's own image. Christ showed us an example by loving and granting deliverance to everyone irrespective of their colour or creed. The Roman Centurion and the Syrophenician woman are all examples to validate the above fact.

Jesus criticized the wrong social practices prevalent during His time. He stood firmly against injustice. The cleaning of the Jerusalem Temple can be cited as an example for this. Christ stood against the injustice of the Jewish priests and money changers doing business at the temple and oppressing the poor. By cleaning the temple, Jesus was bringing about a change in such social practices (Mat 21: 12, 13). Jesus never encouraged selfishness and oppression. Jesus warned the rich against using their wealth selfishly. That is why he told them to sell whatever they had and to give it to the poor.

In short, Jesus' mission was to bring about a social structure where peace and righteousness reigned. His life and ministry was an attempt at establishing such a society.

Jesus' mission is of great significance even in the present world. Poverty is a never ending curse even today. Evils like corruption, oppression, are still on the rise. The number of sick, oppressed and needy people is increasing day by day. It is here that Christ's mission of establishing a society based on equality comes into significance. We should be well aware of the social responsibility that God has endowed on us and also have an obligation to fulfil it. Only then can we be partakers of the ministry of Christ and the overall deliverance of society.

### **Crucifixion and Mission**

The most important mission of Christ was the sacrifice on the cross. Jesus clearly understood the existing social conditions and the

influence of sin in man. He took upon Himself the great mission of delivering man and putting an end to all sins and curses which ruled over mankind. He gave His life for the accomplishment of this mission. By accepting death on the cross, He opened up a way for an overall deliverance for the earth and for man. The church's mission is the proclamation of this good news.

### **Disciples and Mission**

The disciples were asked to continue Christ's mission of salvation for all people, which Jesus had completed on the cross. They received a calling to lead people to Christ through the vision which they themselves received from Christ. When Jesus handed over this mission to his disciples he wanted them to be engaged in a fruitful ministry (John 15:16). They were to be known as Christ disciples by the fact that they would bear fruit (John 15:8).

Christ had a specific purpose behind selecting these disciples. Then He appointed the twelve that they might be with him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to cast out demons (Mark 3:14, 15). Jesus does not choose anyone without any purpose. The disciples received the mission of giving to the world what they had learned by sitting at the feet of their master.

### **The Great Commission**

The command in Matthew 28:19-20 is known as the Great Commission of Christ. Christ clearly reveals as to what is the mission of the Christian church. The disciples group or the church has been sent to the ends of the world with the great vision of making all nations Disciples of Christ. There are no limits with regard to a particular place, the command given is to go to the whole world to fulfil this mission. To go, to baptize, to teach and to make disciples are all included in this mission. Jesus also gives us the assurance of the presence of the Lord who has authority over heaven and earth and all in it.

The church should always be aware of the mission which has been entrusted through the Great Commission. The world is like a building that is on fire. A Christian's mission is to save it as early as possible before it is completely destroyed. The world is on the verge of destruction and there is no peace anywhere. More over the coming of Christ is at hand. Therefore at this juncture the church should not be silent and relaxed but should always be on the move.

The prominent message of the Kingdom of God is the call for repentance (Mark 1:14,15). When we consider the message at Nazareth along with this, we get a clear picture of the mission given



## LESSON - 22

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# APOSTLES AND MISSION

**Memory Verse :** Acts 4: 32,33

**Introduction:** The Apostles were the group of people who had successfully fulfilled the mission work entrusted to them by Jesus Christ. The style of presentation of the gospel by the apostles and their life style played an important role in the mission work. Both the Jews and non-Jews could understand Jesus in a clear manner owing to the way in which the apostles preached; by including the background and prophecies related to the birth of Jesus.

### **The Preparation of the Apostles**

One of the most important aims in the life of a disciple was the spreading of the gospel. They were always ready for this at any time or in any situation. We also see that they carried out this task, irrespective of the fact whether the situation was favourable or unfavourable. They had also evolved a particular style and method to preach the gospel. Mostly they adopted the style of preaching. They were ready to preach anywhere about Christ who was crucified. They also took care to ensure that the gospel was preached both to the upper and lower classes (Acts 26:22).

### **The Content in the Speeches of the Apostles**

The main content in the speeches of the apostles was the message of the crucified Christ. They declared the fact that the death and resurrection of Christ were for the salvation of entire mankind. In all their speeches, they included three main points:

#### **1. Events of the Gospel**

Certain incidents occurred in Jerusalem (Luke 24:14,18)- Jesus died, was buried and he resurrected on the third day. These events



to Christian disciples. Mission not only includes man's spiritual redemption but also a social redemption. Only when we continue the Christian mission with an aim of social transformation being a part of it, can we impart the significance of the kingdom of God to the world. At the same time priority should be given to proclaiming the gospel.

***Questions:***

1. Explain Jesus' views on social deliverance.
2. What was the mission which Christ accomplished through the cross?
3. Write about the earthly mission of Christ's disciples.

were a topic of discussion in Palestine. The disciples explained to the people that these events were not just of historical importance, but that they were related to the salvation of mankind

## **2. Witness of the Gospel**

To establish the authority of the gospel, the disciples pointed out two witnesses. First was the Old Testament in the Bible. Paul stresses the fact that “Jesus died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, was buried and according to the Scriptures rose again on the third day (1Cori.15:3,4) “Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning me”. And he opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things” (Luke 24:44,48). The apostles pointed out these and other similar verses to prove what they were preaching.

Secondly, the apostles own witnessing of the events, established the authority of the gospel. They had seen with their own eyes the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus. This witnessing was one of the main reasons for their preaching.

## **3. Promise of the Gospel**

On the day of Pentecost, in his speech, Peter expressed the promise of the Gospel. Peter explained the two promises that God gave: Forgiveness of sin and the Holy Spirit (Acts.2:38).

In his later speeches also, Paul repeats these promises of God (Acts 3:19; Acts 10:43). The apostles preached about Jesus who had promised forgiveness not only of sins committed in the past, but through the new birth made possible by the Holy Ghost, a new fullness of life in the present.

The apostles used a very simple and lucid manner of presentation to portray Christ. They took efforts to understand the situation involved fully, before they began to share the gospel. When they were talking to the Jews, they took care to explain the concept of salvation that Jesus brought to them by quoting from the Law and Jewish principles. To the Greeks, they used facts pertaining to Grecian tradition to explain the concept of salvation. In his speech at the Areopagus, Paul talks to

the people of Athens about an inscription in one of their temples stated “to an unknown God”. He appreciates their faith in God, and then explains to them that Jesus is the God, who was ‘unknown’ to them. Thus, he adopted a context-oriented method of presenting the gospel. Paul used even the sayings by poets to explain his point (Acts.17:22-34).

### **The method of communication of the Apostles**

The method in which the apostles communicated can be understood by studying their speeches and their letters. They presented the Christian message of salvation by basing it on the social, cultural, political and religious background of that time. In all their letters they have attempted to prove that the Christ in the Old Testament is Jesus. They have taught in a systematic manner about the birth, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ.

In the synoptic gospels, (Mathew, Mark, Luke) the Jewish background can be clearly seen, and they have portrayed Christ as a Messiah whereas John has made use, of a Greek background. The Greeks believed that ‘Logos’ was the power that created and controlled the world, John proved to them that ‘Logos’ was Christ who had taken the form of flesh. By doing this, he was presenting Christ to them using the most solid foundations of Greek tradition.

In Pauls’ speeches and epistles the influence of the Greek and Roman philosophy and hermeneutics are evident. More over Paul has tried to portray the gospel in a very simple manner, with the reader’s context in mind and by refuting the claims of the Jews and by challenging the false doctrines of Epicureanism and Stoicism. The apostles have also made use of ‘dialogue’ and ‘debate’ to clarify all arguments and present the gospel in a powerful way.

### **The lifestyle of the Apostles**

The apostles believed and taught that their life should always boldly bear witness to the gospel. They understood that only by living a life pleasing to God, can one bear true witness for the gospel. They also taught about ethical values and ensured that they practiced what they taught. In all their discourses and epistles they also gave importance to creating an ethical vision.

They boldly taught what they believed, wherever they got an opportunity to do so. They never feared persecution. They spoke about the gospel truths to anyone irrespective of whether they belonged to the upper or lower class. Everyone from the common people to the ruling authorities listened to their teachings.

In arguments pertaining to principles, they strove to find out solutions related to the contexts. They gave strict rules about eating food sacrificed to idols (1 Cori.8:1ff.) and marriage (1Cori.7:1ff.). They also instructed to expel from the church, anyone who was sexually unlawful. But they also taught to accept him if he repented and came back. The apostles devised a critical method to study every problem and give solutions for it.

The method apostles followed to fulfill their duty is one of example for us. They understood the content and creatively designed ways to express undiluted gospel to the people. We can also be fruitful fulfillers of the Christian mission if we present the gospel by relating it to today's world and avoiding any vain disputes.

***Questions:***

1. What are the basic tenets of apostolic teaching?
2. Write a note on the 'style of presentation' of the gospel, which followed by the apostles.
3. Describe the lifestyle of the apostles.

## LESSON - 23

# HOLY SPIRIT: THE TRUE MISSIONARY

*Memory Verse:* John 14:16

*Introduction:* The Holy Spirit was sent to the earth with a particular mission. Holy Spirit who is a caretaker, mediator and comforter was sent to renew all things and to continue the mission of the son. Hence, he can be called 'The true missionary'. In addition, the Holy Spirit is also the inspiring force for the church which attempts at fulfilling the duty entrusted to it by God.

### **The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament**

In the OT, we find many references to the 'Spirit' but the word 'Holy Spirit' can be found only in Isaiah 63:10,11 and Psalms 51:11. But the word 'Ruah' (Spirit) can be found 378 times. The Holy Spirit as a personality was not revealed to the OT writers. Hence they have used terms like 'Spirit of the Lord,' 'Spirit of Jehovah', 'Spirit of Holiness' etc.

The works of the Holy Spirit can be found from the book of Genesis itself. Throughout history, we find the presence of the spirit beginning from its participation in the creation.

### **Holy Spirit: The Giver of Life**

Genesis-1:2 says "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" Here we find the redemptive power of the Holy Spirit which transforms a waste and void earth into a place fit to live in. Similarly, it is the spirit of God which is the source of life in man. God created man out of the dust and breathed his life into him, and thus he became a living being (Genesis 2:7) Job says, "But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding" (32:8) the verse "The spirit of God created me, the breath of the Almighty gave

me life" elucidates the role of the Holy Spirit in creation. In short, in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit can be found as a life-giving spirit.

### **The Holy Spirit: the Giver of Strength**

The Old Testament saints yearned for the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord. The prayer of David "Thy spirit is good, Lead me in the land of uprightness" (Ps 143:10) reveals that the guidance of the Spirit was essential to lead a life according to the will of God. The Holy Spirit is pictured as a symbol of strength in the Old Testament. We find in Numbers 11:25 that when the spirit on Moses was taken and put upon the seventy elders, they prophesied, ie. the spirit of the Lord enabled them to prophesy.

When Moses laid his hands on Joshua, the spirit came upon him, and the glory of Moses came upon Joshua and the people began to obey Joshua who became a wise leader.

Elisha received a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. In all these examples, we find the spirit of the Lord portrayed as an empowering spirit fulfilling its ministry.

Even in all the instances mentioned above one cannot find a complete revelation of the Holy Spirit as portrayed in the New Testament. The world recognized the personality and the ministering of the Holy spirit through the fulfilment of the prophecy, on the day of the Pentecost, in Joel 2:28, "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will power out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy".

### **The Holy Spirit in Jesus**

The life and ministry of Jesus Christ was aided by the Holy Spirit. When angel Gabriel told Mary "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will shadow you" (Luke 1:35), the word took the form of flesh. In the gospel of Mathew it is stated that "for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy spirit" (1:20).

Even today, Jesus is born in the hearts of people only by the help of the missionary, The Holy Spirit. I Corinthians 12:3 says, "No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit". In the life and ministry of Jesus, we find the guidance of the Holy Spirit at all times. As soon as he came out of the water, after receiving baptism, the spirit of the Lord descended and came upon Him (Mat 3:16), "Then Jesus was led up of the spirit in to the wilderness (Mathew 4:1) are some of the incidents which prove the fact. When the son of God, Jesus, began

his public ministry he first read out the prophetic portion “The spirit of the Lord is upon me...”

To summarise, the Holy Spirit played an important role in the fulfilment of Jesus’ mission on earth.

### **The duties of the Holy spirit – in the life of a believer**

From Chapters 14 to 16 of the Gospel of John, we can learn about the role of the Holy Spirit, in the life of a Christian believer. They can be divided into seven heads for easy understanding.

1. He may be with you forever (14:16)
2. He shall teach you all things (14:26)
3. He will convict the world in Respect of sin and of righteousness and of judgment (16:8)
4. He shall guide you into all truth (16:13)
5. He shall glorify the son (14:26)
6. Bring to remembrance all that Jesus taught us (14:26)
7. He shall testify about the son (15:26)

In all these things, it is the Holy Spirit that works in us and through us.

The Acts of the Apostles can be described as the acts of the Holy Spirit; The reason being, the fact that all the works of the apostles were actually those of the Holy Spirit.

The early church waited for the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the promise of God, before it began its mission work. The Acts of the Apostles describes the history of how they became witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the ends of the earth, after they received the Promise.

From chapter 1 to 7 the church bore witness in Jerusalem and Judea and from Chapter 8 the Church succeeds in spreading the gospel to different parts of Samaria. In chapter 13, we find the evidence of how the gospel was taken forward to different parts of the earth. The introduction to this chapter which talks about a missionary journey is noteworthy, it reads, “And they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy spirit said, separate me, Barnabas and Saul for the work I have called them”(13:1). “They being sent forth by the Holy spirit, went down to Seleucia” (13:8). From this, it is evident that it is the Holy Spirit which guides and gives motivation for mission work.

Even now, the Holy Spirit sends forth and strengthens, those who fast, pray and prepare themselves to go for mission work, and thus carries forward His duty in the believer and in the church.

In all the mission activities of the early church we can find the presence of the Holy Spirit always as a guide and as an inspiration. On the day of Pentecost, Peter full of the Holy spirit, continues to preach filled with the spirit" (Acts 4:8) the Holy spirit also helped them to determine where to go with the gospel, as can be seen from the following examples.

The Holy Spirit also gives the gifts of the Spirit in accordance to its needs in fulfilling its evangelization mission. The gifts of the spirit are out lined in Romans 12, I Corinthians 12 and other portions of the Bible. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given for the growth of the Church and for the spiritual growth of the saints. The gifts of the Spirit include knowledge, wisdom, faith, healing, prophecy, ministering, teaching preaching, giving, mercy, diverse tongues, and interpretation of tongues. While we exercise the gifts, it is the Holy spirit that enables us to produce the fruits of the spirit (Gal. 5.22).

The Holy Spirit functions to give the calling and provide the strength needed for taking up the gospel mission, and also in individuals it helps to grow spiritually and refine the character of the believers.

The Holy Spirit is the true missionary which fulfils the heavenly mission, and he also inspires the church to go forward with its duties. Christianity cannot grow without the Holy Spirit.

So let us be a part of the gospel mission, fully understanding that only the anointing and the guidance of the Holy spirit in any mission endeavour can bring positive results.

### **Questions:**

1. What was the role of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament?
2. How did the Holy Spirit work in Jesus?
3. "The Holy Spirit is an inevitable factor in the fulfilment of the Church's' duties". Elucidate.



## LESSON - 24

# PAUL: THE MISSIONARY MODEL

*Memory Verse:* 1 Corinthians 9:16,17

*Introduction:* Paul is the greatest missionary that the world has ever seen. He travelled to Europe and West Asia to all the populated places and preached the gospel of Jesus Christ boldly and established churches thus becoming the best missionary model. The character and the determination he showed in carrying out his duty to spread the gospel is an example for all to follow.

### **Birth and Education**

He was a native of Tarsus, the capital city in the Roman province of Cilicia situated 400 miles from Jerusalem, situated on the north-east shores of the Mediterranean Sea and the most influential city in Asia Minor. Tarsus was a prominent sea port, one of the largest trade centers on the Mediterranean coast and was renowned for its university, one in which students could receive a superior education.

It is estimated that Paul was born in 10 A.D. His father was a Pharisee (Acts 23:6) of the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5). It can be noticed that he hasn't given importance to his family background and it is not mentioned about much in the 14 letters (epistles) or in many of his sermons recorded in the Bible. He was also known as Saul. It's a popular misconception that his named was changed to Paul after his conversion. The fact is that he was known by both the names (Acts 13:9). It was a common practice among the Jews to have two names. The name Saul was derived from Hebrew while Paul was derived from Greek. The meaning of the name Paul is Small or Humble.

Being a Jew he was well versed in Hebrew. Because of his Greek upbringing he handled Greek very well. Being a Roman citizen he

might have also been familiar with Latin. As it was customary in those times among the Hebrew boys, Paul also got his religious education from the synagogue, until he reached the age of 12. He continued to receive his education at the school of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3), one of the most noted rabbis in history and earned proficiency in the Law of the fathers (Acts 22:3). Young Saul learned how to make the mohair with which tents were made. (Acts 18:1-3).

### **Paul's Repentance**

The conversion of Paul is mentioned thrice in the book of Acts (Act 9:1-19; 22:3-16; 26:10-18). It was Saul who was taking care of the clothes of those who stoned Stephen to death (Acts 7:58). The courage and hope Stephen demonstrated because of his consistent faith in Jesus must have been noticed by Paul. His zeal for the traditions of Judaism made him obtain a letter of authority from the chief priests to kill all the Christians during which he had an encounter with Christ in a vision (Acts 9:1 -19).

Thereafter he surrendered his life to Jesus and became a believer of Jesus Christ. The courage demonstrated by Stephen (Acts 7:54-60), the hospitality he received of Judas, the love shone on him by Ananias a disciple from Damascus (Acts 9:15-19), the trust that Barnabas had on Paul (Acts 9:26, 27), were all helpful in the repentance of Paul and in his Christian life. It is widely believed that the repentance of Paul happened in A.D.32.

### **Missionary Journeys**

Paul has mainly carried out three missionary journeys. The journey which starts in Acts 13 ends in Acts 28. The main motives of these journeys were preaching the Gospel, strengthening and encouraging the believers and planting churches. Barnabas, John who was also called Mark, Silas, and Timothy accompanied him on his journeys at different stages. His journeys helped in spreading the gospel to the Asian and the European subcontinents.

### **Places of Visit**

#### **First Missionary Journey (AD 47,48 refer Acts 13:1-14,20)**

Accompanied by Barnabas' cousin John Mark he set out from Antioch for Cyprus, visiting Salamis and Paphos. They then crossed to the mainland (modern Turkey), landing at the Mediterranean port of Attalia. From there they proceeded inland to the cities along the military road in southern Asia Minor. At Perge, for unknown reasons,

John Mark left them to return to Jerusalem. Saul and Barnabas then stopped at Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, all in the Roman province of Galatia, before retracing their steps to revisit the congregations they had founded earlier. Then it was back to Perge, where this time they preached the gospel, and Attalia. But, instead of returning to Cyprus, they sailed directly back to Antioch, Syria where they began their odyssey.

### **Second Missionary Journey (AD 49 -52 refer Acts 15:35-18:22)**

Paul chose a new partner, Silas or Silvanus, and embarked on a journey that began by revisiting the places Paul had worked on his 1st journey. They worked in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and the regions of Phrygia and Galatia, then on to Troas, where Paul received a vision calling him to Macedonia. Paul headed west through Philippi, Berea and Thessaloniki to Achaia and worked in Athens. From Athens he went to work in Corinth where he met Aquila and Priscilla. From Corinth Paul went to Ephesus via Cenchrea. He took a ship to Caesarea, then back to Antioch in Syria.

### **Third Missionary Journey (AD 52-58 refer Acts 18:23-20:19)**

After resting several months in Antioch in Syria, Paul traveled to the regions of Galatia and Phrygia. Eventually he arrived in Ephesus and remained 2 years and 3 months (or possibly 3 years). He then journeyed to Macedonia and Achaia (Greece today) and spent the winter months in Corinth. Paul went back through Achaia and Macedonia to Troas, Assos and Miletus. He continued on to Rhodes, Patara and Caesarea, before concluding the journey in Jerusalem.

### **Paul's Model in his Mission**

Paul called as the Apostle of the Gentiles carried out his missionary journeys using various styles and methods. Unlike these days, transportation facilities were limited and there was no communication or media yet he was successful in his mission because of his determination, trust in God and his method of working. Some of his traits are:

#### **1) Presence of the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit directed each step of Paul who had embarked on his mission to the world for the Gospel (I Thessalonians 1:5). It was the Holy Spirit that led the apostle in deciding on his travels, facing adversities and establishing Gospel centers. Paul firmly claims that his sermons and works were carried out only by the power of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 2:5; Rom 15:18). He never once believed

that he had any power of his own. This realization helped him to trust completely in the Holy Spirit. He knew and proclaimed that it was the power of the Holy Spirit that helped him to spread the gospel and did the miracles through him. In short Paul's realization that it was the Holy Spirit that contributed fully to the success of his ministry led him to give importance to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

## 2) Main centers

It is the provinces that Paul considered as the central part of all his mission activities. Provinces were the centers of the governing body of the Roman Empire. He recognized the fact that if he can establish a ministry in the central location of the province then it will become easier to spread the light of the gospel to the surrounding areas since people from different parts of the country came and lived in the provinces. When people in the provinces accept Jesus it would lead to the spreading of the gospel to the surrounding areas: this was the strategy that Paul chose to carry out. In this way he could conquer the whole province for Christ, which was the mission he had undertaken.

Paul mainly carried out his mission work within the boundaries of the Roman Empire. Thessalonica, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus were some of the main towns where he focused much of his mission work. He utilized the protection that he had under the Roman government being a Roman citizen and the flourish of language to a great extent in preaching the gospel. He lifted the banner of the gospel high in the Economic and the Social centers.

## 3) Acceptance

"To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some (I Corinthians 9:20-22). This verse shows the philosophy he followed in life to carry out the missions. While he was with the Jews he respected the customs of the Jewish traditions. Without deviating from the very purpose of the gospel he accepted the Jewish customs. He did not reject his religious and social upbringing which he had inherited. At the same time in order to win the Gentiles he also respected them and treated their views with

tolerance. When he said he became “as without law” he didn’t mean being without the law of God instead it implies that he was unlike the other Jews who had a different view of the Gentiles. He tried to understand the Gentiles from their point of view. He advocated for the converted Gentiles many a times (Gal 2:5). He strongly argued that there was no need for the Gentiles to follow the customs and traditions of the Jews. In Galatians chapter 2 we can clearly see Paul’s attitude towards the Jewish customs like circumcision and so on. “I have become all things to all men” exhorts us to show our deep love, affection and care equally to different kinds of people.

#### **4) Finance**

He took uttermost care in financial matters. Paul never aimed at making money through his mission work. He did not want the ‘love of money’ to have any role in his life. The apostle followed two policies in his life. (1) He never asked for money for his personal needs. (2) He never looked into the financial accounts of the local churches.

At the beginning of his ministry, Paul made a living by making tents (Acts 18:3). Later when the churches became self-sufficient, Paul accepted the gifts given by the believers with love (Phil.4:16). He never used any kind of praising or flattery to earn money (I Thess 2:5). He was not willing to compromise doctrinal truths with money. His only aim was to please God. He served God for a lifetime and the only possessions he chose to have were scrolls and parchments (II Timothy 4:13).

#### **Methods adapted by Paul to fulfill the Christian Mission**

It will be useful to be familiar with a few practical methods for evangelization that Paul used in his ministry. They include: visiting houses, follow up meetings, teaching, signs and wonders, pastoral care (Acts 15:36), establishing churches, financial aid (Acts 20:33-35), training the younger generation, public meetings, Jail Ministry, ministering through literature like pamphlets, building up the church and personal evangelization.

#### **Questions:**

1. Write a note on the life and education of Paul.
2. Describe the missionary journeys undertaken by Paul.
3. What are the examples set by Paul in Mission work?

## LESSON - 25

# ATTRIBUTES OF A MISSIONARY

### ***Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 4:5***

***Introduction:*** For any profession to be successful certain basic qualifications have to be met and training has to be given. Mission work cannot be called a profession, yet it is a service that has to be carried out with responsibility. The mission has to be fruitful as the 'person who is sent' is accountable both to God and to the society. Therefore, a missionary must possess certain qualities of the mind and of character. Let us think about some of the basic qualities a missionary should possess.

### **1. Should be sure He/she is called by God**

A missionary should always have the assurance that he has been called by God. Jesus chose his disciples according to His will. "... and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him" (Mark 3:13). The apostles could carry out their mission successfully because they were sure of their calling. If a person is sent to a particular place to take up the mission work there, and he works very hard there it is not always possible for fruits be seen as soon as expected. The situations may be unfavourable or he may even have to face opposition. But in all such situations a missionary should be sure of his calling and should have the assurance that "because he wanted me, he summoned me". This hope will go a long way in strengthening the missionary to believe that there is a reward for any hard work and will encourage him to continue in His service over long periods of time.

### **2. Attitude of Dedication**

A missionary should possess an attitude of dedication. Only a dedicated worker can produce results. A missionary should be dedicated in at least four spheres.

***a. Dedicated to Jesus Christ***

The knowledge about whose work is being done by him and for whom will encourage the missionary to carry out his mission in a sincere manner. A missionary should always be conscious of the fact that he is not serving a church or an organization, but the Almighty Lord.

***b. Dedicated to the Church***

The Holy Spirit sends individuals as missionaries through the Church (Acts 13: 1ff). Therefore a missionary must always maintain good relations with the church/organization from where he was sent as he is indebted to them. A missionary is accountable both to God and to the church which sent him on his mission.

***c. Dedicated to Mission Work***

Paul was guided by the feeling, "I am under compulsion", in his mission (I Cori 9: 16). A missionary is entrusted with a mission not by human beings but by God. He may have been sent by a church or an organization, but the mission is the Lords'. Hence every missionary is under compulsion to fulfil his mission in a sincere and faithful manner. He should also have an eagerness to complete the task entrusted to him in as little time as possible. Just as a medical representative labours day and night to complete his work, a man of God should be willing to work hard to achieve his goal.

***d. Dedicated to his Area of work***

A missionary should be able to love unconditionally the place/society where he works. The people might not respond to his love initially. But the desire that these people should come to the Lord should govern the missionary. There will be no complaints and murmurings when everything is covered in love. Such people can accept the society as it is and they will also devise plans to make their mission more effective.

**3. Sense of Purpose**

In accomplishing a mission the most important factor is having a sense of purpose. It is dangerous to work forgetting the sense of purpose. The purpose behind all actions is to uplift the cross of Christ. The influencing force behind this purpose is the ultimate sacrifice by Jesus and the aim is the salvation of people.

**4. Preparedness**

Some people think mission work does not require any educational qualifications. But it is a fact that without being educated it is difficult

to reach out to the qualified people. Having no educational qualification is not an impediment to mission work but a good knowledge base and necessary training will go a long way in making the mission victorious. Furthermore, if educationally qualified people minister among the educationally elite class of people, their ministering would be more effective.

### **5. Exemplary Life**

It is essential to combine purpose with practice in mission work. After preaching about a loving and compassionate Jesus who cared for all, if a missionary cannot love the poor and lowly people around him, a missionary would be failing in his purpose. A missionary should lead a life of example, so that everyone may speak well of him. Jesus said "...After you receive power, you will be my witnesses..." The words 'being a witness and', 'bearing witness', should be clearly understood. Being witnesses means to lead a life of example according to what is being preached.

### **6. Sense of Partnership**

It is the responsibility of a missionary to be a part of God's plan over the ages for the world. The feeling that, "We are co-workers with God..." should always govern the missionary. There are many areas where a missionary should exercise partnership with God.

#### ***a. Social Partnership***

The thought that Jesus Christ has taken us out of the world and sent us to the world inspires us to carry out our mission with true indebtedness to Him. Social factors combined with true spirituality must work together to fulfil God's plan for the world. A missionary can work for the building of a new society combatting the darkness of existing social evils by spreading the glorious radiance of the gospel. He should also fulfil his duty towards his society by envisioning new and useful projects for the betterment of society.

#### ***b. Cultural Partnership***

A missionary is responsible for saving people leading uncivilised and filthy existences by bringing them into the influence of the gospel. This can be achieved to a certain extent by organising awareness programmes and motivating them to get educated.

#### ***c. Ethical Partnership***

A missionary must be able to reach out to people who are leading immoral lives, people addicted to alcohol or drugs or those suffering



any form of exploitation. He should be able to transform their lives by sharing the Gospel with them this can be achieved by a loving and caring attitude and by using wise strategies.

### **7. Acceptance**

A missionary should be able to accept and respect with tolerance other societies and their cultures wherever he is positioned. Without compromising on Christian doctrines, it would be advisable to accept their way of dressing, food habits etc. If he doesn't try to be one among them he may have to face seclusion and loneliness. A missionary should avoid the superiority feeling over one's own culture and attempt to respect other cultures too. He should also be able to correct anything in it that is against Christian Principles and show them the true way.

Wherever mission work has been a success missionaries have been working with dedication and selfless service. The lifestyle and goals of a missionary determine the success of a mission he undertakes. May God enable us to imbibe the qualities of a good missionary and implement the above factors in our daily life.

#### ***Questions:***

1. In what areas of life does a missionary need to be dedicated? Explain.
2. What are the qualities a missionary should possess?

## LESSON - 26

# CHRISTIAN MISSION THROUGH OUT HISTORY

*Memory verse* : Acts 28: 30,31

*Introduction* : For the past two thousand years, the church has been continuing its mission. In the first country, the apostles gave leadership to it, and over the years God used many people to continue the work. In this lesson there will be a review of the work done over the past centuries.

### World Mission

The greatest challenge the church faced in the second century was countering the heretical teaching of the 'knowledge' based philosophers called as 'Gnostics' and defeating them. Therefore the main task of the teachings of church fathers was to negate this wrong teaching. One of the oldest scholars in this field, Church father Oregon mentions in one of his writings that even the ordinary believers worked hard to counter false doctrines spread the gospel. They also held on strongly to their faith.

The church faced severe opposition from AD 200 to 313 and this hastened the growth of the church. One by tenth of the Roman population accepted Christ during this time. The church expanded in to many more places like Edessa, Armenia, Ethiopia, Asia minor and Egypt wherever the church faced opposition, it grew more strongly. But the year AD 312 remains as a black chapter in the history of the church, as it was then that Constantine, known as the first Christian emperor, attacked and defeated Maxentius and came to power. On the right before the war, he saw a dream in which there was the symbol of the cross and an inscription conquer with this. Thus he marched to war with a flag carrying the symbol of the cross and came back successful.

Thereafter in 313 he issued a royal order called 'The Edict of Milan' declaring Christianity as the official religion of Rome. As a result, ninety percent of the population in the Roman Empire, accepted Christianity without any change in their heart. The Christian way of living degraded to become a religion and the church gradually slipped in to the worldliness.

Following this, came the mission of Reformation. Reformative leaders took up the task of bringing the church back to the Word of God along with it, they also undertook the task of bringing gentiles to Christ. The first reformist group called as the 'Waldenses' took up many mission journeys from 1210 to the fifteenth century. (Waldenses was a reformist group which originated in Southern France after 1170. It was established by business man from Lyons named Waldo) Church history has recorded that this small group undertook great mission projects.

The 'Franciscan order' established by Francis of Assisi has contributed significantly to mission work. The Franciscan missionary Raymont Lull (1232-1316) is attributed to be the first missionary who carried out mission work in a foreign language. He learnt Arabic and worked among the Muslims.

The Protestant Reformation Movement started in 1517 by Martin Luther undertook the translation of the Bible into German and distributed it among the people. This was an important milestone in the history of mission work. The first Protestant missionary to attempt a foreign mission was Hadrianus Saravia (1531-1613). He tried to persuade Queen Elizabeth to undertake a mission work in Netherlands but failed, because it was not accepted. But in South India the 'Danish Mission' had begun missionary work in Tranquebar by 1706. This was the first foreign mission work by the Protestant churches. The protestant churches began their international mission work mostly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Some missionary organizations like Baptist Missionary Society (established in 1792), London Missionary Society (1795), Netherlands Mission Society (1797), Basel Mission (1815), Wesleyan Mission (1818), China Inland mission (1865), the Salvation Army of William Booth (1878), the Church Army under the leadership of Wilson Carlile (1882), worked in places like Africa, Asia, Oceania etc, and established many churches as a result of their sacrificial hard work.

The nineteenth century is known as the Great Century of Mission. It was during this period that many schools, colleges and hospitals started functioning under the leadership of missionaries, all over the world with an aim to aid in the evangelization mission. 'International Missionary conference' was held in 1910 at Edinburgh. The 'International Missionary Council' was formed in 1921.

### Indian Mission

Christians traditionally believe that Jesus' disciple Thomas came to India in AD 52 to a place called 'Kodungalloor and was martyred in AD 72 at Mylapore and during the cause of his mission work he established churches at Kodungallor, Paloor, Paravur, Kothamangalam, Chayal, Niranam and Kollam. The immigrants who came under the leadership of Knai Thoma in AD 345 also contributed a great and strengthened the mission work in India.

Others who can never be forgotten in the history of mission work in India are Roberto De Nobili and William Carey. Jesuit Missionary Roberto De Nobili came to India in 1605. He accepted Indian culture and took up the dress and lifestyle of a 'monk'. He stayed at Madurai in Tamil Nadu, and taught the gospel in a rationalistic manner to the Brahmins there. He tried to formulate Christian theology, understanding the importance of words like 'Vedas' and 'incarnation' in India. He learnt Sanskrit— the Vedic language of the Hindus, and authored a few books in Sanskrit. He also published two books in Tamil 'Jnanaupadesham (Instructions of knowledge) including all Christian doctrine and 'punarjanma akshepam' on the concept of Re-Birth. He gave importance to the gospel work among the Brahmins. He assigned priests according to each of their castes, for the people. He led hundreds of people to Christ. He could not break the barriers of caste and unite them with the gospel, yet his contribution as the premier missionary of India cannot be neglected.

In 1706, the Lutheran missionaries Ziegenbalg and Plutschau were sent to Tranquebar in Tamil Nadu. This ministry was called 'mission' and they fought severely against the caste system, teaching that Caste was against Christian teachings. They gave much importance to the lower and the suppressed classes. Ziegenbalg worked hard and succeeded in translating the Bible into Tamil. The first Protestant Mission in India was the Tranquebar Mission.

William Carey came to Bengal in 1793 with the mission of spreading gospel in India. He aimed at translating the Bible into different languages. He translated a part or the whole Bible into thirty

different languages. He planted schools to educate the native people, and learned and taught Indian customs, language, culture and religions. He joined hands with social reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy to eradicate evils like Sati, Caste system, infanticide and child marriage from society. They encouraged widow remarriage and inter-caste marriages. They toiled night and day for social issues like the upliftment of women and establishing schools. The Serampore school-started by William Carey has now risen to the level of a university. He spent a lifetime in India, giving leadership to the mission activities here and has been rightly called, 'Father of modern mission'.

Alexander Duff was a missionary from Scotland who was sent to India in 1829. He served in India participating in various mission programmes for more than thirty years. He raised his voice against social evils and superstitions and spread awareness among the people.

Herman Gundert, who was sent by the Basel Mission and CMS missionary Benjamin Bailey in their times, played a significant role in translating the Bible into Malayalam. Organisations like London Missionary Society, Church Missionary Society and Basel Mission have contributed at large to the various mission programmes in India and especially Kerala.

The culturally, economically and spiritually advanced society that we are a part of today, has been shaped by the hard work of various missionaries who have toiled hard and even sacrificed their lives to eradicate evils like marriage, infanticide and human killing. Many of the famous schools, colleges, hospitals, seminaries and social work organizations that exist today in Kerala and the country are mission contributions.

### ***Questions:***

1. Write a note about the different time periods in the history of World Missions.
2. Describe the mission activities of Roberto De. Nobili.

## LESSON - 27

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# MISSION IN INDIA TODAY

*Memory Verse:* Psalms 24: 1

*Introduction:* India, the country we that live in, is a kaleidoscope of different castes, religions and cultures. In this vast country there are crores of people who are not aware of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have been entrusted the task of taking the gospel to them. To take up this responsibility it is essential to know about India and the situation of the Christian population here at present.

### **Our India**

India holds the seventh place in the largest countries of the world and is also the second most populated country in the world. India has a length of 3214 km from the north to the south and a breadth of 2933km from the east to the west. There are twenty nine states and seven Union territories in India. According to the 2001 census, there are 29 languages in India spoken by ten lakh or more people and 122 languages spoken by ten thousand or more people. The number of dialects is much more and as per the statistics of 1981 number at least 1652.

The Indian population as per the latest records is 121.5 crores. (The population of the world is 690.8 crores and China has the largest population of 134. 41 crores) 68.8% of the total population of India live in villages and 31.2% live in towns. More money is spent on education and medical facilities in the towns than in villages.

Of India's total population, 80.5% are Hindus, 13.4% Muslims, 2.3 % Christians, 1.9% Sikhs, 0.8%Buddhists and 0.4% believers of Jainism.

## **Population Groups**

As per a recent anthropological survey, there are 4635 groups of people in India. 953 groups have a population of more than ten thousand, 165 groups have a population of more than ten lakhs. A group here is defined as a collective class of people who speak the same language, have the same culture and marry within the community. The people of India are primarily divided into four groups: the Forward Class, The Backward Class, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

## **Religions**

India is known to be a Secular country. It has devotees of different religions coexisting in it. Even before the Aryans came to India, the indigenous people were religious. The main religions in India are Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity. 'The Constitution of India' guarantees freedom of religion to all Indians. An Indian citizen can believe, preach and practice any religion of his choice.

## **Christians in India**

It is commonly believed that Apostle Thomas came to India in the first century and began to preach the gospel. Still, the population of Christians today is less than three per cent. Christianity reached Mongolia, Philippines, North America, South America and many European countries only in the 10- 15 centuries, yet the population of Christians there is very high. The situation of India in this context is very poor. Comparatively there are more number of Christians in the states of Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Goa and Kerala.

Christianity strengthened its roots in India only during the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries after the arrival of the Europeans. The English, Dutch, German missionaries who came to India along with the East India Company took up the task of evangelisation. Gradually, Christian faith spread in India. The people were attracted by the selfless service of the missionaries and the education and other facilities they offered. This caused the spread and growth of the gospel in India.

## **The urgent need for Evangelisation**

The Postal Department of India has divided India into small geographical parts called Postal Index Number (PIN). Approximately 30,000 people live in each of these parts. Depending upon the density of the population in each area, this number may vary. Each PIN code area may be approximately in a radius of 20 – 25 km. This is the distance feasible to be covered by a postman in one day.

The statistics compiled by India Mission Association shows that there are 18316 PIN code areas where not even a single evangelist has ever reached. Out of the total 27,149 PIN code areas in India 7892 pin code areas have at least five missionaries and 941 PIN code areas have more than five missionaries (These statistics were compiled fifteen years ago and slight differences may have taken place). If at least one missionary or evangelist reaches a PIN code area, gospel can be brought to that area over a period of time.

The stark reality is that in the six lakh villages in India nearly five lakh villages are yet to see the light of the gospel. Out of the three thousand and above caste divisions at least two thousand and five hundred castes and sub-castes are yet to hear the Gospel of Christ. Out of the 1500 languages existing in India, the complete Bible has been translated into only 60 languages. New Testament is available in 61 languages and translation is underway in over 100 languages. Old Testament translation is still in process in 29 languages. Translation and distribution of the Bible is an urgent need in at least 180 languages. The above numbers depict the urgency of the situation relating to the evangelisation of India. God has entrusted to each one of us the responsibility to take up the task of spreading the gospel in India.

### **Our Contribution**

We can contribute in various ways to raise the banner of the gospel high in India.

#### **1. Be a Missionary**

One of the best services to do in the world is to be a missionary. Missionaries or Evangelists are the people who spread the message of God's kingdom. It is a good thing to be employed in the medical or engineering field. The greatest of all professions is to be engaged in saving the thousands of people who perish without knowing Jesus and bringing them to the saving knowledge of Christ. That would bring us rewards from our Father in heaven through eternity. If serving a worldly government is honourable, how much more honourable is it to be able to serve in the government of the Almighty God who created the whole of the Universe. Who among us would be ready to go to the villages in Northern India filled with people who have never heard the name 'Jesus'? The Lord of the Harvest is waiting for people who are willing to submit themselves for this mission.



## **2. Pray**

Another way in which everyone can contribute towards evangelisation is by praying for it. There are many people who strive to reach the unreached places and suffer lot of hardships for the gospel. We are bound to pray not only for the perishing souls in India but also for those involved in saving them from eternal fire. We can be a part of the evangelisation of India by praying for mission works, growth of the church, organisations which give leadership to evangelisation ministries and the like.

## **3. Financial Contribution**

Lot of money is necessary for the mission work in India. Foreign support and contributions have ceased now and therefore it is necessary to raise the money from India itself. In these circumstances, we can be a part of this ministry by contributing a part of our money for mission work.

It is a hard task to evangelise a country like India which is full of diverse cultures and caste -class divisions. Each believer should attempt to understand God's plan for him/her in the expansion of God's kingdom. If each person has the mind of a missionary, an aim to fulfil his duties and apt training, our nation will undoubtedly be transformed by the gospel.

### ***Questions:***

1. Write a note on India.
2. What are the urgent needs for the evangelisation of India?
3. How did Christianity spread in India?

## LESSON - 28

# MISSION: THE CHALLENGES IN INDIA

**Memory Verse:** Colossians 1:28,29

**Introduction:** India is a country of diversity. It has an abundance of religions, diversity in culture, poverty, illiteracy, superstitions and enmity among religions. There are many categories of religion and castes, hundreds of languages and many rituals. In this kind of a culture, missionary responsibility faces lot of challenges. We will discuss about the major challenges against missions in India and the ways to overcome those challenges.

### Historical Facts

We have read in the previous chapter that the Christian church in India is more than 2000 years old. The spread of gospel in India was possible due to foreign missionaries who visited India. But after India became free from British rule in 1947, according to the rules of the Indian government, the visiting of foreign missionaries to India became less frequent and gradually it came to a stop. In the absence of foreign missionaries, the church in India took care to build up missionaries within the country to continue the missionary work. Because of this, today we have lot of Indian missionaries who are continuing to do the Lord's work.

Among the Christians in India, good proportions are from the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and North Eastern states like Nagaland and Mizoram. In India, majority of the population lives in the central, western and northern states. Among these states, only 20% of the population are Christians. In those states in which Christian population is high, the number of evangelists is also high. Since evangelists are more interested to work in states where there is a high population of

Christians, the gospel is preached only in areas where 20% of our population resides. In northern and central states where 80% of our population resides, there is a scarcity of missionaries. Therefore in order to take the gospel to the northern states so that the people in those states will know the love of Jesus, there is a need for missionaries who will go to such places, learn the language and culture of those places and work among them.

## **Missionary challenges**

### **Communities which are ignored**

In the current missionary work, there are many communities which are ignored. Reports show that among such communities, the missionary work is not very active. We can discuss about few such communities:

**Isolated Communities:** Drunkards, Drug addicts, Aids patients, aged, mentally retarded people, lepers, child labourers, slaves etc. These are some of the isolated groups in India. There are more than 3 crore child labourers and children who are on the streets. There are almost 7.6 crore senior citizens who are above the age of 60. There is an urgent need for the love of Jesus to reach these people.

**Handicapped people:** Among the population of India 10% of people are handicapped. These are the people who are handicapped physically or mentally. There are 120 lakh blind people in India according to statistics. The truth is that Mission works are not very active among these people.

**Children:** Among the population of India, 40% consist of children who are below 15 years of age. Even though programs like VBS are now available to take the gospel to such children, there is lot more work to be done among them. In the secular world, there are television channels only for children. Similarly, there is a need to have television channels and other media with Christian programs which are targeted towards children.

**Youth:** According to statistics in 2011, there are 32987 colleges and 554 universities. In total, there are more than 2 crore students studying in India. There is an urgent need to increase and spread the missionary works among youth and college students.

**Women:** In the population of India, 48% are women. Women uphold religious beliefs and are interested in religious activities. But to evangelize them, the missions in India have to come up with new programs. In the secular world, there are magazines, television

channels and programs especially for women. In the same way for women to be attracted to the gospel, we should come up with programs and activities which are interesting for them.

### **Other challenges in India**

Even though India is free from the British rule, there are other challenges which our country still faces today. It is in these situations that Christian responsibility is to be fulfilled in India. We can now discuss on some important challenges and the Christian responses to them.

#### **Over-spreading of Materialism**

Globalization and the culture of global markets are the challenges in modern society. The Phrase 'Earn or die' is the philosophy of life today. Adopting any means to earn money, not giving any consideration to moral values, finding satisfaction and honour in earning money through any means – these are the bad tendencies which people have today.

Due to the result of economic policies and educational trends in today's world, the rich become richer and the poor become poorer. Because of migration to other countries and the expansion of IT sector financial security and good wages are increased for a minority of people. On the other hand economic anarchy and inflation are ever present in our country. Due to globalization and wrong importing policies, there is unemployment and destruction in plantation and agriculture sectors. Hundreds of people are prone to commit suicide due as they are debt-ridden.

In these situations, the church and its missions should be a change-bringing force by upholding the values of the kingdom of God. The upliftment of the poor, sharing of wealth etc. such should be our goals along with the responsibility of evangelization. By giving education and encouragement to poor children, we can contain poverty to some extent. Those who hold responsible positions of the church cannot act as if they have not seen the difficulties of those who suffer. We should notice that in the ministry of Jesus, along with the messages for salvation for the soul, Jesus also helped in solving the problems of the poor people.

#### **Religious conflicts**

In India we have an abundance of religions. Co-existence among people from different religions is also the mark of our society. But today we can see the painful fact that there are so many fights among

various religions and people turning fanatics who are ready to do anything for their religion. Our responsibility will be fulfilled only when we can love and respect people from all religions. We should be careful not to hurt the religious sentiments of other people and show them the love of Jesus and the joy of salvation. Preaching of gospel and missionary works should not be done by demeaning other religions, but in leading others to the kingdom of God. We should accomplish this by following the lifestyle of Jesus.

### **Abuse of Women**

Abuse of women due to a patriarchal society is on the increase today. There are thousands of women who experience slavery in India because of this. The rights of women are being denied to them and at the same time atrocities against women are also on the increase. According to statistics, in India about 8000 deaths happen every year due to dowry related fights. The missions in the church should see this as a serious problem and should try to solve this through creating awareness in the society.

### **Use of drugs and alcohol**

The number of alcoholics is gradually increasing every day. The product that is sold the most in Kerala is liquor. In the consumption of alcoholic drinks, Kerala has overtaken other states. Because of alcoholism, we have social problems on the increase like families destroyed, financial anarchy, debts, suicides etc. Habits like use of Drugs, Pan Parag, cigarettes etc. are attacking our youth. In this situation, creating awareness and giving counselling to youth should be a part of missions in the church.

For the above problems which we have discussed, the church should give importance to spiritual reformation and come up with such activities to implement in our societies. It is important that we concentrate on the transformation of a man's heart because it is from the heart that a person has to hate evil. Only when Man who is a slave to sin repents and comes to God, can he be delivered from all unrighteousness and evil. Mission works should be practiced with this realization. We should not restrict our responsibility only to charity works like food, shelter, clothing and education but we should give importance to the gospel of Jesus which can deliver and uplift a person and a society in all aspects.

### **Questions:**

1. Describe the communities that are ignored in missionary works.
2. Explain about the responsibility of the church and the challenges against it in India.

## LESSON - 29

# APOSTLE THOMAS AND INDIAN MISSION

**Memory Verse:** John 20: 27, 28

**Introduction:** Nothing much has been said in the Bible about Jesus' disciple Thomas. Yet he was as involved in the missionary work and was as successful as the other disciples. The history of Christianity in India is closely associated with Thomas the Apostle.

### **Didymus Called as Thomas**

Thomas who was also known as Didymus. Thomas was born in Galilee in Palestine. He grew up around the shores of the Galilean sea and was a fisherman by profession. Jesus saw him one day and called him to be his disciple. Thus Thomas became one of the twelve apostles. When he realised Jesus was his Lord and God, Thomas became a different person. Receiving the missionary calling he travelled to Ethiopia, Mesopotamia, Media - Persia, Sri Lanka, China and India and bore witness to the gospel.

### **Gospel in India**

The gospel which was declared in Asia was received with much zeal both in the East and in the West. It is commonly believed that the gospel was preached in India in the first century itself. It is also an accepted belief that Thomas apostle had come to India. Many scholars refute this claim due to lack of any undisputed evidence substantiating this statement. Even when these opposing views stand, it is a general belief that Apostle Thomas came to India and he also planted churches here.

### **Apostle Thomas in India**

Even from ancient times places like Ephesus, Antioch, Babylon, Kodungalloor, Mylapore, Patliputra, and Takshashila were world

renowned for their presence in business and trade. Historical evidences prove that India exported Ivory, peacocks, fragrant spices etc. to places all over the world. Many traders from all over the world travelled to India for its wares. Thomas may have reached India with any such business group. Dr J. N Workuhar scholar in Historical research says , “ Thomas one of the twelve disciples of Jesus reached India in A D 48-49 along with a great businessman of Goodnafer called Hafner by ship from Alexandria to the capital of Indus a place called Takshashila (now Punjab). When the indosythian Cush tribe from China attacked Punjab and its capital, Thomas fled from there and reached Malabar in around AD 51-52.

When we examine the trade relations India had with other countries, we cannot deny the possibility that Apostle Thomas came to India. Not only that the knowledge that many Jews had migrated to Kerala might have inspired him to go there. (Scholars say that many Jews had migrated to India before the first century. Many Jewish families had taken refuge in Kodungalloor in BC 586 and BC 539. In all the major trade centres there were Jewish colonies). Another reason for the strong belief that Thomas did come to India is that no other country has raised any claim that Thomas was martyred there.

According to traditional belief, around AD 48 Thomas worked to spread the gospel in Takshashila (Punjab) and as a result many people accepted Christ. Takshashila was one of the famous centres of trade and commerce then. Other places famous for the same were Kodungalloor in Kerala, Mylapore in Tamil Nadu and Baroch in Gujarat.

In AD 52 Thomas reached Malankara near Kodungalloor in Kerala. Kerala was known as ‘Malankara’ meaning the ‘shore of mountains’. The Christian Church in Kerala is also called the ‘Malankara church’, this might have been so because Thomas began his mission work in Malankara. Thomas shared the gospel with the people of Kerala. It is highly probable that he began to share the gospel firstly with the Jews. He might also have spread the gospel among the common people who included the Dravidians, Brahmans, the Buddhists and Jainists. Many people from different religious beliefs and practices, accepted Christ. They became the first Christian community in Kerala. Thus seven local churches originated in Kodungalloor, Palayur, Paravur, Kothamangalam, Niranam, Chayal (Nilakkal) and Kollam. The Christians in these regions also believe that ministers for the church were selected from the Brahmin families like Shankarapuri, Pakolomattom, Kalli, and Kaliyankal.

The communal churches in Kerala believe that Thomas established churches with the tradition of priesthood and the service was conducted in Syriac. But Thomas who had come to Kerala and preached the gospel here not long after the church in Jerusalem was formed had a clear idea about the church of Christ and its vision, teachings, identity and style. Hence it can be understood without much explanation that the church he established in Kerala would have had the same like his co-workers Peter and John did, and with the same doctrines. If Thomas apostle established a church in Kerala, doubtless, it would be like the church mentioned in The Acts of the Apostles, sound in doctrine, without traditional priesthood, following adult immersion baptism and speaking in various tongues.

### **Death of Thomas the Apostle**

It is believed that from Chayalil (Nilackal) Thomas travelled to Malacha, China etc. and returned to Mylapore in Tamil Nadu, and that his teachings angered the Brahmins there and consequently in AD 72 July 3<sup>rd</sup>, he was stabbed by an opposer of Christianity and thus he was martyred. The tomb where he is believed to have been buried still exists in Mylapore.

### **Conclusion**

The Christian community in Kerala believe that Thomas Apostle came to India but historically it has not been proved yet. Yet it can be estimated that he did come. Whether or not Thomas came to India, there is evidence for the fact that The Church existed in Kerala between the second and fifth centuries.

### **Questions:**

1. Write a short note on apostle Thomas from the Bible.
2. Describe the mission works of Thomas in India.
3. How did Apostle Thomas die?



## LESSON - 30

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# WILLIAM CAREY: FATHER OF MODERN MISSIONS

*Memory Verse :* Romans 8:37-39

*Introduction:* “Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God”. This famous statement was made by William Carey, the famous Bible translator and brave missionary also known as the ‘Father of modern missions’. This lesson tells us about this great man of God who sincerely worked very hard to bring the light of Gospel into India.

### **Birth and family background**

William Carey was born in Northampton, England on August, 17<sup>th</sup>, 1761 into an ordinary family. His parents Edmund Carey and Elizabeth were Anglican believers. They were not financially sound, and William Carey had to undergo lot of difficulties in his childhood. At the age of twelve, he had to drop out from school due to financial constraints. Hence he could only obtain a primary education. Although he could not study further William Carey did not give up reading- his passion from childhood. He could not afford books so he borrowed it from others to read. To earn a livelihood he took up a job as a cobbler at a shoe shop in Northampton at the age of fourteen. He was a member of the choir in the Anglican Church that he attended. Although he was a church goer and a member of the choir, there was no change in his attitude or transformation of the mind. He used to lie, use foul words, swear and even listen to bad stories.

### **Towards Repentance**

A co-worker in the shoe-shop named John Warr, used to constantly tell William about the love of Jesus. He also used to invite William to the Baptist church, of which he was a member. Once William decided

to accept this invitation, and went to attend the Baptist church at Hackleton. It was here that he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour. This transformed his life. Not much later, he got an opportunity to be a minister at a Baptist Church in Moulton. However he continued his profession of mending shoes. He learnt Greek, French, Latin, Italian, Hebrew and Dutch languages out of his sheer hard work. On June 10<sup>th</sup>, 1781 he married a lady named Dorothy.

By 1789, William was promoted to be a full time minister in Baptist Church and authorities sent him Leicester in Harvey lane to take charge in a church. Around this time, William started having a burden for people of other nations and tribes who did not know the love of Christ. On many of the meetings organized for ministers, William Carey, voiced his feelings and concern for the lost people. But no one took it with much seriousness or expressed any concern. Yet he did not give up and started looking out for possibilities to take the gospel to other countries. In 1792 the Baptist Church formed the Baptist Missionary Society and chose William Carey as its first missionary.

### **William Carey – to India**

William Carey, after being chosen as a missionary, spent time in God's presence in prayer, seeking divine guidance in choosing where to go. Around this time William had the opportunity to meet Dr. John Thomas from Bengal in India. He was working as a doctor in the navy in Bengal and had come to visit England. From him, Carey heard about the situation of people in India, and the need to take the gospel to that land. After understanding the scenario in India, William decided to go to India for missionary work.

On hearing, his decision, there was great unrest in the family, church and society, His wife Dorothy started wailing loudly claiming "I will not let this happen". His father said "my son has gone mad". Even the church did not provide him with the necessary encouragement.

A meeting of the church members was called to discuss this, and the comment made by a man of God 'We should not deter him on his mission, but joyfully let him go' set everyone thinking. With tear filled eyes, they agreed to let him go. Although she expressed her resentment in the beginning eventually Dorothy his wife also agreed and prepared herself to go to India.

William and his family, his wife, four children, his wife's sister and Dr. John Thomas started their journey to India by ship and had to travel for many months. Finally they reached Calcutta in Bengal on

11<sup>th</sup> October, 1793. During the course of his journey William Carey learnt Bengali, and after reaching Calcutta he learnt Hindi, Arabic, Marathi and Sanskrit.

By the end of one month's life in Calcutta all the money they had was exhausted. So along with his mission work, Carey started to work as a cobbler. The little money that he made out of this, was not even sufficient to buy food for his family, at times. Because of his evangelization work, William had to move to many places and shift his place of stay. In August 1794, William Carey and his family started gospel work at a place called 'Madnabathi'. Here great tragedies occurred in his life, one after the other. The same year he was attacked by malaria fever. Not long after that his five year old son Peter became sick with fever and diarrhoea, and died, Carey himself had to bury his son, and conduct a funeral service for him. The death of their son shocked Carey and his wife Dorothy and they were mentally wounded. Dorothy never recovered from the shock and she became mentally ill. With the passing years, Dorothy's mental state became more and more worse. She even attempted to kill Carey, twice. Many people advised him to shift her to a mental asylum, but perhaps it was his love for her that prevented him from doing so. Even when his wife was screaming loudly or laughing hysterically in the room next to his, William worked undeterred with an open Bible, attempting to translate it, Dorothy passed away on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 1807.

By the beginning of the 18th century many more missionaries started coming to India from England, they all paid a visit to William Carey who stayed in a small house in Serampore. William Carey started working together with two of those missionaries William Ward and Joshua Marshman. In 1798 Carey started a mission centre with them. They were known as 'Serampore Trio'. They undertake the task of translation and distribution of gospel at the first stage.

After beginning his mission work in India, the first person William Carey baptised was a carpenter named Krishnapal. By 1825, the Almighty strengthened him to baptise more than 700 people.

As Carey realised the importance to get the Bible translated into the Indian languages, he took up the challenge and started the effort. Thus in March, 1801 he translated the New Testament into Bengali, and published it. It took him seven years to complete this task. After that he translated the complete Bible into Bengali, Oriya, Hindi, Sanskrit, Marathi and Assamese.

He also translated the New Testament into nineteen languages. Later he also translated the New Testament and a few books of the

## LESSON - 31

# PASTOR P. J. THOMAS PENTECOST MISSIONARY IN INDIA

*Memory Verse* : Hebrews 13:7

*Introduction* : Pastor P. J Thomas, the founder of an important Pentecostal church "The Sharon Fellowship Church", was one of the well known missionaries in India. The Pentecostal believers in India will remain indebted to Pastor P. J Thomas, a blessed apostle, reputed theologian, orator and an efficient leader of the church, for the varied mission activities he took up. Let us study further about the 'Apostle of Compassion'.

### **Birth and Education**

P. J. Thomas was born in Tiruvalla on April 15, 1915 as the third child of the six children born to Pastor P. V. John (Ayyapilla Sir) of Puthenpurayil, Mavelikkara and Mrs. Sosamma. Ayyapilla sir, was a devout man, who belonged to an upper class Hindu family, and boldly took steps to embrace the Pentecostal faith, when he realized the Truth. He worked as a clerk in the Muncif Court, in the Travancore Government. When he received a heavenly calling he quit his job and took up the gospel work. A godly man, he brought up his son in strict discipline and as a God-fearing person.

Thomas schooling was in different places, as they had to move around in connection with his father's job. He obtained his primary education from Chengannur and continued it in Kayamkulam High School. He completed his schooling from B. H. High School, Mavelikara. He completed his 'Intermediate' level education from St. Berchmans College, Changanacherry. Brought up by Godly parents, Thomas P. J. learnt the Bible truths from his childhood and dedicated his life to God. He accepted the Lord as his Saviour in 1936, and received baptism.

OT into five other languages. Thus the Lord used him to translate full or a part of the Bible into 34 different languages and publish it. Not only that, in 1818 he started a magazine from Serampore called '*Digdarshan*' and a weekly called '*samachar*' to educate people about the social evils.

In 1819, he along with his co-workers started a college at Serampore for Indian Students. The aim behind this was to train young Indians to evangelize India.

### **Social Transformations**

The big role that Willam Carey played in the social ,cultural and spiritual advancement of India is quite commendable. The worked very hard to stop social evils like 'sati'. He gave leadership to the campaign to stop unethical practices along with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. In 1812 he started a hospital for leprosy patients. This may have been the first hospital for leprosy patients in India.

### **Last days**

In the last three years of his life, Carey suffered from physical illness number of times. Two times he suffered a paralytic attack. Yet he overcame these difficulties. In 1834, his health worsened and on June 9<sup>th</sup> he went to be with the Lord at the age of 72. As per his wish his body was buried in Calcutta.

God granted to William Carey the gift of faith. He started his life as a cobbler, but when he surrendered his life into God's hands, God used him mightily in India. He based his life on the motto, "Expect great things from God, and attempt great things for God" and by the power of God, he could convert the impossible things to possible.

Today when we hold the Holy Bible in our hands, it would be good to remember William Carey who helped to translate it into our language.

### **Questions:**

1. Write a note on the family background of William Carey.
2. What were the oppositions that Carey had to face when he planned to come to India as a missionary?
3. Briefly describe the history of Bible translation carried out by William Carey.

## Higher Studies

P. J. Thomas' father had resigned from Government Service, and was working full time for the Lord residing in Mavelikkara. After finishing his collegiate education, P. J. Thomas helped his father in his ministry for a while. He also worked as a missionary in and different parts of Andhra Pradesh (Eluru, Secunderabad etc.). Realizing a heavenly calling on him for gospel work, he decided to take up theological studies. Thus he joined Serampore, in 1941 and obtained a L.Th (Licentiate in theology) followed by a B. D. degree from Bangalore United Theological Seminary. After returning to Kerala, he served as the headmaster in Kumbanad free English Medium School, at the same time he witnessed God in different places.

While he was working as a head master, he married Aleyamma, daughter of Pastor M.K. Kurian (Madathimeprathu, Mallapally) on 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1944. God blessed the couple with two sons - John Thomas and Kurian Thomas.

## International Trips and Education

Thomas met an Australian missionary, named Rev. Coter and with his help he obtained a visa for Australia. Thus, while he was working as a headmaster in July 1946, he joined Sydney Bible institute in Sydney for studying further. After that with the help of a Canadian missionary, he went to Canada and obtained admission in a university there for theological studies.

After completing his education in Canada on January 24, 1948 Pastor P. J. Thomas searched America and gained admission in the famous Whiten University in Illinois. From there he obtained MRE (Master of Religious Education) and M. A. degree. After he finished his education, he started working in the same college as a lecturer. He was promoted to the post of Professor and Head of the Department. He served in the Department of Comparative studies of Eastern Religions.

## Back to India

Even while he was serving as the HOD in Whiten College, he was overcome by a burden for gospel work in India. He planned to India and to open a Seminary to train young people for gospel work, and to contribute his knowledge and experience there. He was awarded an honorary doctorate degree by a university in Pittsburg. He returned to India in 1952. In the course of his journey, he visited European countries the Queen of England awarded him an F.R.G.S Fellowship from the Royal Geographical Society, of which she was the President.

Pastor P. J. Thomas reached Bombay sea-port on Sep 27, 1952 and from there to Kerala Hebron Bible School, Kumbanad as a teacher and continued in the service of the Lord by speaking in various convention meetings.

### **Humble Beginning**

Pastor P. J Thomas wished to buy some land in Kerala and to concentrate his ministry from there. Accordingly in 1953, he purchased some land in Tiruvalla and settled down there with his family.

Pastor P. J. Thomas expressed his desire to start a Bible School to his colleagues, in order to train youngsters to spread the gospel in India. They encouraged him in this venture, and thus a small Bible School began functioning in Thiruvalla, near his home. The first class was held in the portico of the Sharon home. Nine students were enrolled in the first batch. Later classes were shifted to a small classroom with a thatched shed. Soon the Bible school expanded into a small building. God who honoured the small beginning, blessed the Bible school and it grew into a great organization preparing thousands of youngsters for evangelization in India.

### **Formation of the Church**

The same year the Bible School began functioning, a revival meeting was organized in Thiruvalla Sharon. American missionaries Rev. M. A. Davood and his wife ministered in those meetings. The meetings which were first held in the Sharon home were soon shifted to the compound because of the lack of space. God sent a mighty revival in these meetings. Although no publicity was given, many people from all over Kerala, heard about these meetings and came to attend them. In the last week each night meeting was attended by over eighty thousand people. The meeting which went for 23 days witnessed many miracles. The blind saw, and the dumb talked and the deaf heard. Sick people who were brought on stretchers could get up and walk. Newspapers reported of these miraculous healings with pictures. That was one of the greatest revival meetings Kerala had ever witnessed.

Those who had received the zeal to revival during these meetings, began to spread the gospel in different parts of Kerala. When churches began to arise out of their efforts, they contacted Pr. P. J. Thomas. That was the beginning of the formation of the 'Sharon Fellowship Church'.

## The Apostle of Compassion

In the mission work of Pr. P. J. Thomas he included not only evangelization programmes but also charitable works for societal betterment. He became the apostle of the orphans and the destitute. Pr. Thomas and his family provided shelter near their home for the lonely old and unmarried people, widows, orphans and many others who were leading hopeless lives, Thiruvalla Sharon became a place of refuge for these people who received food clothing and shelter free of cost. Pr. P.J. Thomas opened an orphanage in the year 1962, Kiliyanthara in Kannur with the view of help the children from poverty-stricken families by providing them a free education and residential facilities. Once Pr. P.J. Thomas had witnessed a sorrowful incident: a small boy, unable to satiate his hunger, stole sweet potatoes from the field of a farmer and was mercilessly beaten by the farmer. This sound rang in Pr. Thomas' ears and from that moment onwards he had a constant desire to protect and care for hungry children lead to venture of opening an orphanage.

From the time Pr. P.J. Thomas and his family stayed in Sharon, Thiruvalla, they followed a practice of giving food to the destitute and the orphans. They saw to it that move who came hungry to Sharon, went without food. When the bell was rung for the Bible School students for lunch, a long queue of beggars and people who did not have means to buy food, would form in Sharon. Even before the bell was ring, people would and occupy places especially on the small wall in front of Thomas' home. Anyone who was hungry, could come and have a satisfying meal at Sharon. The gates were always left open like an inn.

Even during his student days, Pr. P.J. Thomas cared for others and extended a helping hand to those in need. When he reached home in Mavelikkara on the Weekends from his college in Changanacherry, his father used to give him one rupee towards bus fare. Many times P.J. Thomas waked for kilometers to save the one rupee and gave it to the students who were struggling to pay their fees. By helping people in need, and educating them about how to make a living and other charitable works Pr. P.J. Thomas wanted that they would know the Lord.

The first Bible college for women was established in 1971 by Pr. P.J. Thomas and his wife Aleyamma, with the aim of providing opportunities for women to learn the word of God.



**To the eternal home**

Pr. P.J. Thomas who carried out many missionary activities in India and America, after he became sick in 1992, spent a quiet and retired life in Sharon, Thiruvalla. During this time he served as the President of the church, but over the years his health deteriorated. He left for his eternal home on March 24<sup>th</sup> 1998 at the age of 83. His body was buried at Kuttapuzha Sharon cemetery near Thiruvalla.

**The relevance of the vision of Pr. P.J. Thomas Today**

The Sharon fellowship church has grown into a powerful and strong organization with lakhs of believers and hundreds of pastors. This church takes an active part in the mission work and has churches in almost every state in India and in many countries of the world. Thousands of youngsters have been moulded for evangelization and have gone out to different parts of India with the gospel. Through them many villages and towns have accepted Christ in their lives.

Not only that many have started children's homes, Bible schools and Seminaries of their Own and thus kept alive the vision of Pr. P.J. Thomas.

**Questions:**

1. Write a note on the birth and life of Pr. P.J. Thomas.
2. Explain the origin of the Sharon fellowship church.
3. Elaborate on the mission work of Pr. P.J. Thomas.

## LESSON - 32

# BARTHOLOMAUS ZIGENBALG: INDIA'S FIRST PROTESTANT MISSIONARY

**Memory Verse** : Philippians 3 : 7

**Introduction** : Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg was India's first Protestant missionary. He is indeed a challenge to us Indians, because he did not pay attention to the many sicknesses and limitations that he faced and worked tremendously for the Lord in this humid climate.

### **Birth and family background**

He was born in Pulsnitz in Germany on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1682. His father was a rich grain merchant. Besides him, both his parents and four sisters in his family were victims of various diseases and suffered a lot.

His mother could bring them up in the grace of God as she was a God fearing woman, and hardworking and had the patience and endurance to bear any thing that came on her way. But his mother passed away when he was a very small child itself and her last words were, "My dear children, search the scriptures that have been soaked by my tears, there you shall find treasures". These words were a calling to Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg and he often pondered on these words. Two years after the death of his mother, Ziegenbalg's father and one of his sisters also passed away. The successive deaths in his family pained him a lot, yet he transformed it as an opportunity and decided to study the Bible and Theology.

### **Higher studies**

After completing his primary education in 1694, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg joined a high school at Jorlits. The life at this school helped him very much to grow spiritually. During his vacation he would go home and spend time with his sisters in reading and learning the Bible.

This resulted in reinforcing his decision for evangelization and also developed interest in him to work for the Lord. Zigenbalg also admonished anyone going the wrong way and tried to correct them.

In 1703 after completing his high school education he joined the university of 'Hale'. He used to sit up late at night for his studies many times and this affected his health. He used to suffer from stomach disorder. From his birth he used to be afflicted with numerous diseases and regarding this he would say, "Wherever I am the cross which I love the most will follow me".

Bartholomaeus Zigenbalg realized the need for world evangelization, from the time he accepted Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour during his school life. He tried his best to spread the Gospel. When he was at home after his studies he concentrated on learning from the Bible, sermons etc. and he also found time to teach the Word of God to others.

### **To India**

During this time Frederick IV who ruled Denmark was very interested in spreading missionary activities. He appointed Julius Lyutex to find out people who knew the German languages so that the gospel could be preached among the Germans. Among the many who were selected, Bartholomaeus Zigenbalg was one. According to the royal command, Bartholomaeus Zigenbalg and Hentry Peutchew ordained and sent to India.

They reached India on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1706, after a long voyage of seven months at Tranquebar in Tamil Nadu. There was no one to welcome them in India. This was one of prominent Dutch colonies of India. As the Indian government were hostile towards these missionaries, they were allowed to land on shore only after three days. Even after coming to the shore, they had to wait for a long time in this unknown land like strangers as they did not know the language.

But God had prepared a person well in advance to help them. A Tamilian called Mudaliyappa whom they had got acquainted with during their journey turned out to be a great help to these missionaries. In spite of getting a place to stay in a place in the city, they started learning Tamil with Mudaliyappa.

Feeling pity towards the people who worked as slaves for the Portuguese and the Europeans, Zigenbalg started working amongst them and helping them. He and his friend opened a mission school in the Portuguese language for orphans and the children of the slaves.

In the mean while, Mudaliyappa who was attracted by the teaching and the life style of the missionaries accepted Christianity. Following this, they started selecting young people to teach the German language and the Bible.

Within a short span of eight months Zigenbalg mastered the Tamil language. He started reading, writing and preaching in Tamil. In 1707 on May 12<sup>th</sup> God used these missionaries to baptize five people. In August 1707, he built a church for the Indians to worship. He printed the new Testament and parts of the old testament in Tamil in 1713.

Understanding the need to train different people in Missionary work they started a small Bible School in 1710 at Tranquebar. The institution started off with eight students who had come to Christ through these Men of God. It slowly grew and many missionaries were equipped with the necessary training to take up evangelization. He also saw to it that teachers were given training here. Those who successfully completed the training were given openings in the schools and other ministries of the church.

Even though he started his missionary activities in Dutch colonies, he did not confine his work only there. Instead he went to Gudalloor, Madras etc. He also started Christian missionary activities in Srilanka, when he got an opportunity to visit the German colonies there.

### **Imprisonment**

The Dutch governor Hassius found a great pleasure in tormenting Christian missionaries. He decided to persecute Zigenbalg who was much involved in missionary activities. He was brought before the governor by a company of armed gunmen. The governor ordered Zigenbalg to be put into prison but he did not utter a single word like Jesus during his trial. He was a sincere and innocent man sentenced to be imprisoned.

His prison room was near the palace kitchen and so was always humid and hot. These prison days were his darkest days, as Zigenbalg was always a sickman.

His visitors were not allowed to come anywhere near his room. As things like pen and paper were not allowed inside the prison, all his translation work was put on hold. Bartholomaeus Zigenbalg passed three days and nights praising and glorifying God in spite of being affected physically and mentally. The governor had to release him on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1709 the end of a month term due to the anger of the people who loved him so dearly.

After a decade of his works, in 1715 Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg decided to visit the German Kingdom give a report of his missionary activities in India. Hearing of the difficulties that he had to face, the King gave him a fat sum of money for his missionary activities in India. In December 1715, he married a young woman called Dorothy.

In 1716, the new couple were given a warm welcome by the church and workers at Tranquebar. Later on he built a new church for the believers in Madras. He also formed a music group for those who were interested in music.

### **Last Days**

When the leadership was passed on to the church in Denmark many decisions were taken against the missionaries. They even stopped the funds that Ziegenbalg received from Europe. This created a lot of pain in him. Even though he wished to go to Europe and find a solution to these, his health did not allow him to do so. After two months of severe illness, he lost his eye sight. When he was convinced of the fact that it was time for him to go to his eternal abode, he called his coworkers and believers and urged them to be faithful to the end and that they should be willing to suffer anything for the Lord. On 23 Feb 1719, after handing over all his responsibility to his coworker Grandler, he called his wife and children to his bed side and surrendered them into God's hands and breathed his last. At the young age of 36, he went to be with the Lord.

A person with a strong determination and a sincere devotion to God, Ziegenbalg worked very hard in the hot climate of India. His ministry was characterised by definite goals, sense of dedication, and planned steps. Hence he will always be remembered in history as the person who caused the banner of the gospel to fly high in India.

### **Questions:**

1. Explain the circumstances which led to Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg coming to India as a missionary.
2. What were the mission activities carried out in Tranquebar?
3. Explain the difficulties and Jail term that Ziegenbalg had to undergo?



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