

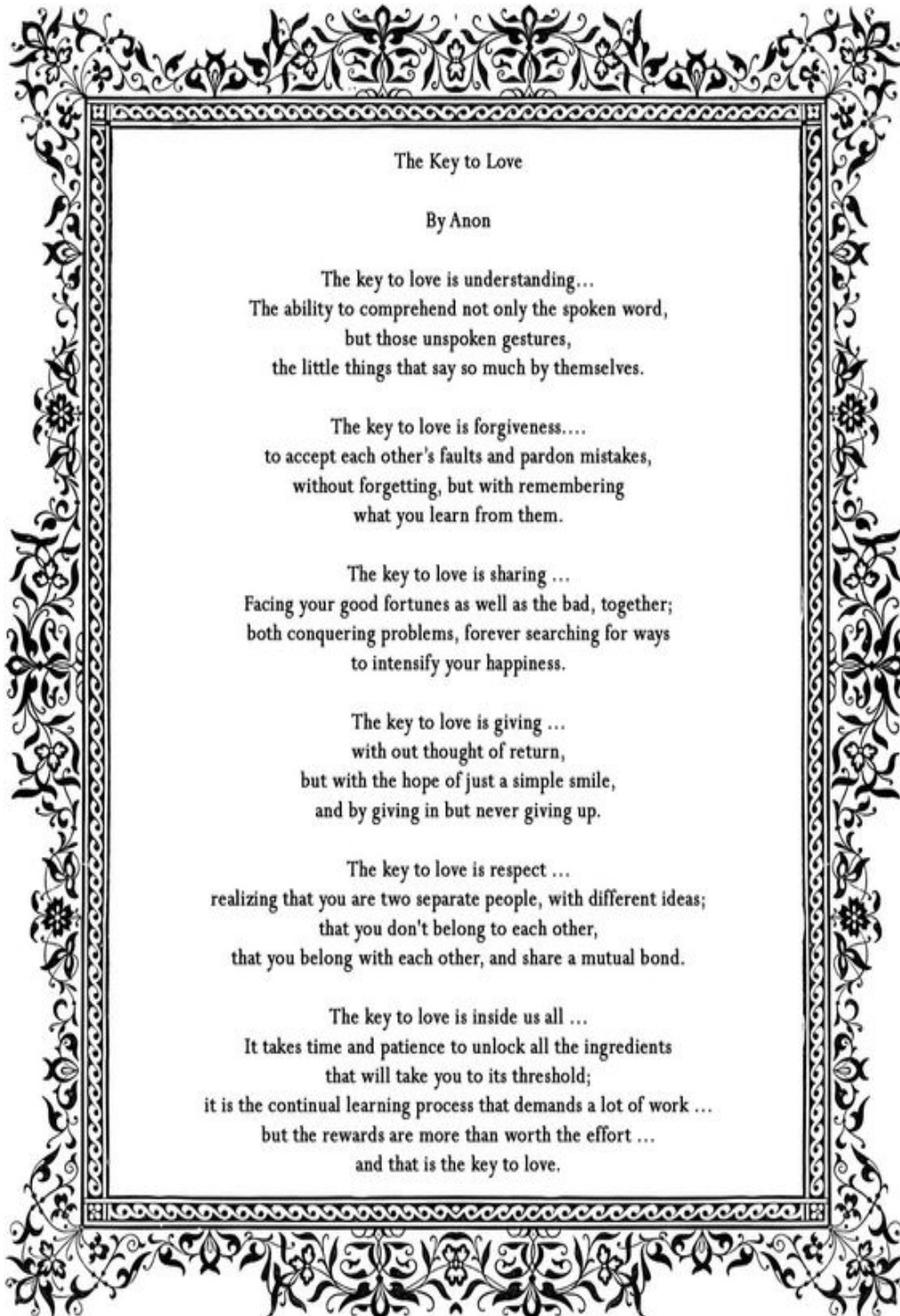
Family Foundation

BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR FAMILIES

Vol: 17 JUL- AUG 2021 No: 4

Rs. 15.00





The Key to Love

By Anon

The key to love is understanding...
The ability to comprehend not only the spoken word,
but those unspoken gestures,
the little things that say so much by themselves.

The key to love is forgiveness....
to accept each other's faults and pardon mistakes,
without forgetting, but with remembering
what you learn from them.

The key to love is sharing ...
Facing your good fortunes as well as the bad, together;
both conquering problems, forever searching for ways
to intensify your happiness.

The key to love is giving ...
with out thought of return,
but with the hope of just a simple smile,
and by giving in but never giving up.

The key to love is respect ...
realizing that you are two separate people, with different ideas;
that you don't belong to each other,
that you belong with each other, and share a mutual bond.

The key to love is inside us all ...
It takes time and patience to unlock all the ingredients
that will take you to its threshold;
it is the continual learning process that demands a lot of work ...
but the rewards are more than worth the effort ...
and that is the key to love.

FAMILY FOUNDATION

Bi-monthly Magazine for Families

Vol 17:

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Theme: **Families involved in Missions**

- Third culture approach, intercultural approach



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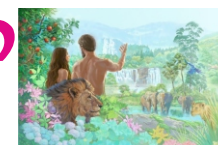
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Subscription : India : One Year - Rs.150/- Life - Rs.2000/-

Overseas : One Year - US \$ 20 Life - US\$ 250 [by Air Mail]

Send your Subscription by: Payment thro' net Banking; Family Foundation A/c no:62552200003218

(Syndicate Bank, Vellore) IFSC Code: SYNB0006255. Inform thro' email.

Am I in the centre of

God's great commission?

Mission, after all, is simply this: "Every heart with Christ is a missionary; every heart without Christ is a mission field." – David Kim

Lots of people think they must be in "full-time Christian work" for their work to have significance to God and His purposes. Following Jesus is more about a heart change than a career change. God could certainly call us to the mission field, but first God wants us to be a missionary right where He has placed us within the network of our relationships and with the people at our work places. When we have this kind of mindset we begin to see opportunities all around us. Most of us are oblivious to our most significant mission field. The impact of faith on our daily lives will be clearly visible to the people with whom we live and work.

Spurgeon understood that "to see the kingdom of our Lord advance" ministry needed to begin at home. Our God by Excellency is a missionary. His desire is to see the Gospel proclaimed to all nations.

"Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked?" declares the Sovereign Lord. "Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?" (Ezekiel 18:23) And again He says, "I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice." (Ezekiel 34:16) So says the Lord.

Jesus exemplifies in the truest sense what it means to be a missionary. Every Christian, like Jesus is a missionary.

We as individuals and families are to be intentional, committed to seeking the lost, discipling the found, and multiplying disciple-makers with the caring love of Christ cross-culturally, cross-linguistically, cross-regionally, cross-generationally, and cross-nationally to God's glory and for the common good!

Esther John happened to live in an apartment complex with a large number of people from Burma. **She's naturally shy, but she decided to invite her neighbours to her family's holiday celebrations.** Esther and her husband shared food and Scripture, which opened the door to spiritual conversations. Esther also started serving her neighbours in practical ways, such as driving them to hospital appointments or doing a bit of shopping for the sick and the elderly. Despite her fears, Esther's neighbours were touched that an Indian family wanted to befriend them. In the meantime, Esther and her family gradually grew comfortable in cross-cultural settings.

Where is your Jerusalem, and who are the people God has called you to influence? Ask God to show you opportunities that you've never seen before.

Families involved in Missions



by Mrs. Beulah Chandrasekar

Approximately there are still 6,500 unreached people groups in the world. That means roughly 2.2 billion have never heard the gospel in their own language and there are less than 2% believing Christians in their community. "The supreme and crying need of this lost world is the Gospel. It is clear that there is a desperate need for people all over the world to be told of God's great love. People's eternity is at stake. How can we say that we have no part in the Great Commission? Shall we not rise at Christ's command to carry the blessed saving news to every perish ing one?"

Ministers of the gospel, to one degree or another, are all cross-

cultural workers. That means we're sent to inhabit and nurture a unique third culture—an alternative society with its own history and language and traditions and homeland and community.

It's not just mother and father that do ministry; their children are an integral part. Together they can model the difference Christ can make in family life. **When it comes to local and global missions, where adults see hurdles, children often see opportunities.** That is why it is so important to connect children with missions from a young age. With even the smallest bit of exposure and guidance, children can shower Christ's love on those who need it.

Encourage children to pray for the lost. When our children say their prayers, let us encourage them to pray for people who don't know Jesus.

We need to regularly teach our kids about spiritual and material poverty. When telling our kids the story of Jesus, make them aware of people till today who haven't heard the Gospel, and that is why God asks His followers to tell other people about Him. We can share stories of missionaries in the New Testament, like Philip (Acts 8), Paul (Acts 13), and Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18). We can also share about how Jesus cared for people in physical need, as well, by healing them, providing food and commanding His followers to take



care of the poor. Talk with kids about why missionaries are needed. It can help to make it personal for children by asking questions such as, *"What would it be like if you didn't know Jesus?"* Ask kids, *"How can we love the poor like Jesus did?"*

When kids come up with certain ideas, to help missionaries or the people missionaries serve, **as parents let us say yes** as much as possible

When kids have an idea!

"Can I sell lemonade and donate the money for buying Bibles for secret Christians?"

"Can I give a toy to my new neighbour who has moved here from a tribal area?"

"Can I write a letter to a missionary kid to let them know I prayed for them?"

Encourage their involvement by saying yes, yes, and yes!

You can even prime the pump by asking kids questions like:

- "What's something you could do to help the kids we saw in that video?"
- "How can you share Jesus with people at your school?"
- "Who is someone we can pray in our family prayer will come to know Jesus?"

We need to make missions tangible if we are sponsoring a child, we can show the kids a picture of the child the family is sponsoring. We can share with our kids a bit of the

background of the sponsored child how the family sometimes struggle to have enough food for all of the kids, and we can make our children aware that in many places there are not many people who know Jesus. There are many creative ways we can make it tangible for your kids and give them the opportunity to participate in missions.

Be exposed to mission work, missionaries and their lives

Christian missionary stories have made a huge impact on our culture's generation today. These people were by no means perfect, fully prepared, or fully equipped for the life they would live. Their faith was tested and tried countless times through endurance and suffering, and many were on the verge of giving up. Yet because of their obedience to God, their stories continue to motivate us today. While it is true that the foundation for missions is based upon scripture, we also recognize that pioneer Christian missionaries have been the first to carry out the Great Commission. Through the impact of their stories, God is raising up another generation who has a burning desire in their hearts for His love to be known by every person on earth. For example the life and story of David Brainerd, born in 1718, one of the first missionaries to translate and carry the good news of Jesus to the Native Americans of New Jersey in their own language until the day of his death in 1747 has motivated so many others to carry the Gospel to unreached people groups. His faith

and passionate pursuit of God's holiness has inspired countless missionaries such as William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and Jim Elliot. His story is still being told today to rekindle the beating heart of missions that every Christian should have: That the love of God would be made known to every lost soul on earth. Their stories reflect that it is God who plants the seed and makes it grow.

William Carey often called the father of the modern missions movement, is known for translating the entire Bible into Bengali and transforming culture through business and education. Hudson Taylor's legacy has inspired countless Christian missionaries to go to the hardest and darkest places on earth. Amy Carmichael's dedication to serving God has inspired many Christians to become missionaries and to remain steadfast in their faith. Jim Elliot as a young man was on fire for God to be known among the unreached and was inspired by several missionaries. In 1956, he and his four friends who were missionaries were martyred by the Auca Indians along the Curry River in Ecuador. Later, Elisabeth Elliot went to live among the tribe that killed her husband and share the gospel with them. Their lives continue to impact countless Christians all over the globe to this day. These missionaries endured through their trials and sufferings because of their love for God and their desire for Him to be known among the nations. They willingly gave their lives to Christ and dedicated all their days to

living for Him. If need be, they were willing to die for Him. Their lives are seeds that went into the ground, multiplying and bearing much fruit. Their commitment to loving Him above all else encourages us to do the same and to follow in their footsteps. **Be on a lookout for full stories of each Christian missionary.** God is still using their stories to change the trajectory of people's lives, and He may use it to change your heart.

When faced with the reality that there are people in need in the world, it is comforting to know there is something we can do about it, no matter our age. Teaching children about the needs of the world, and their ability to help, helps kids grow up with an awareness of God's command to share the Gospel and serve those in need. From praying, to witnessing, to playing with their friends, children have a vital role in church planting.

Some challenges are inherent in transplanting a family into a different culture. While many parents are apprehensive about taking their children to remote areas with various risks of diseases, lack of hygiene and sanitation, transport educational and medical facilities, most families have a very positive experience. Children typically have an easier time learning a different language than their parents because they are not afraid to make mistakes. Children can take part in their parents' ministry as they make friends

and learn the language and culture. They learn a language and pick up on customs quicker than their parents. Many times parents have reported struggling to learn a word or concept only to discover that their children knew it long ago. Children are often ice breakers in new cultural situations. Everyone loves to talk about children!

In remote areas among various people groups, the church is experiencing exponential growth and many people who come to faith have complicated family backgrounds. There is a need for the Christian life to be modelled at practical levels. The presence of a missionary family makes a strong statement and provides a living illustration of how God's transforming power is worked out. Even before they can speak the language, the missionary family is a testimony for Christ. The interaction between family members, their values, and how they treat their neighbours speak volumes to the people of the host culture, and these interpersonal interactions lay a foundation for the future local church. This example is part of a healthy discipleship process which tackles the real issues of life, and is one of the great advantages a family offers to the new believers.

Younger children do not need to be lectured on how to develop coping strategies for transition, they just do it. These life-skills are a valuable resource and prepare children for an increasingly international

and complex world. Countless friendships are developed with neighbours as the children of missionaries play with the children where their parents serve God. Ministry gets enriched because missionaries serve as a family and include their children in every part of their life and activity.

On the mission field, the options available for the schooling of missionary children have expanded greatly in the past decade. Families consider the ages of their children and all the schooling options available to them to make the best decision for their own family. Depending on their location, today's families choose between home schooling, online school, correspondence schools and a variety of day and boarding school. While getting ready to go to remote mission fields, missionary families think of the option of sending their children after a certain age to Christian Boarding schools, but some families find ways to make home-schooling work for awhile.

Rather than try to 'fix' a culture, the missionaries immerse themselves among the local people following an integrated approach. They learn the language, and become learners of the culture by studying the social behaviour of the natives. In doing so, they discover the needs of the people and recognize what is valued in that culture. Often these unreachable people groups do not have script of their own and no books written in their own language, and pioneer

missionaries are slowly able to translate at least part of the Bible into the indigenous language of the people they are with. It takes years to share the full gospel with someone, and see any fruit from their work. Yet these missionaries know how to contextualize the gospel and reach people with the love of Christ and endure through faith in building long-lasting relationships.

They also recognize that the people needed to be equipped with skills and train how to help their own people. Medicine, education, business and disciple-making become their primary focus of teaching. They also introduce Biblical values that shape the culture's social interactions and lifestyle. This has been producing a long-term impact and has brought greater transformation to these cultures today.

Missionary children have faced some unique challenges but there is no doubt that they are richer for their experience. They participate in the ministry of their parents in some way or the other and develop deep ties to the people who become their second family. They may not have always appreciated it, but children's lives are moulded by their challenging upbringing. It is part of who they are.

Love laughter and chicken



by Mrs. Ida Gnanaraj*

The first time I met a missionary at their home was in a remote village in Gujarat Maharashtra border.

I was newly married, and my husband had worked and lived with them before he moved to a bigger hospital nearby. They gave us a standing invitation to a meal at their house after they witnessed my limited cooking skills. Every time we visited they always had a delicious meal with chicken and everything else they could procure locally to put together a typical south Indian meal. The first time we went she felt a great desire to treat us to *rasam*. I followed her to the corner of the room that she had converted into a kitchen. She looked for tamarind, there was none as it was more than 2 years since she had visited her hometown. But she was undeterred. She said tomatoes were just as good as tamarind. She had pepper and cum

in, but she was not able to find any garlic. She was not defeated. She cast her eyes around and her eyes lit up when she saw a jar of pickle. She exclaimed 'there is bound to be a piece of garlic or two in this'. She fished around the jar until she found a small clove of garlic with such joy and cheer.

I have never tasted a more flavourful some *rasam*. Joyce was her name and joy overflowed wherever she went. Since then, she has lost her son, her husband and then her only remaining son. She lives now with her only relative, her grandson, but she still holds on to her Lord and Master Jesus Christ, her source of joy and strength and joyfully shares the salvation offered by Christ to all who will hear her.

Joy abounds in every missionary's life as they are in constant touch with

Him who is love, joy and peace. The desire to serve is inbuilt when they become stewards of God's riches. Wisdom to navigate new territory and situations are theirs, through fasting and prayer. So is innovation which is a splendid by-product of their humble and simple dependence on God. Prayer and innovation were the answer to every problem.

Most people who see this joy and gracious giving in missionaries' houses assume they must have a secret source of income. But few are the people who have seen their regular meals or lack of it. They are so busy tending to the community around them, that very often they do not have time to prepare a meal or eat. Things may not be what they would like it to be, but they knew they could count on The Father to provide the love, laughter and chicken. Visitors are a rare occurrence that they treasured and celebrated with a chicken meal. It is the chicken that gets them in trouble most of the time. Visitors can make incorrect assumptions or judgements. Such as "they must be using the mission money sent sacrificially to eat rich meals every day." Not so!

Among rural missionaries, chicken is the most easily available meat and the least expensive too. They just have to run behind the chicken, catch it, wring its neck, chop it and cook it.

The meat is served because they are honoured that we have chosen to visit them. Most of the missionaries long for people who can spend time with them and listen to them. It is a break from their regular routine. Most missionaries do not get the opportunity to go home often, as the work loses the continuity, and it is expensive to travel.

I love visiting any missionary in their field. I can be sure of lots of laughter, lots of joyous fellowship and lots of chicken. They love to catch up with news from home and other fields. They just want to know that they are in people's thoughts and prayers. It gives them time to sit, take a valid break and talk with people who will listen to them and appreciate what they are doing. They do not need our preaching, our judgement or our opinions. All they need is a loving, prayerful heart and ears that are open to hear about their work. They very rarely see the rewards of their work. (William Cary never saw a single person baptised.) But some people are called to sow, others to reap. The best way we can say thank you to Missionaries is to encourage them, support them, visit them, pray for them, listen to them and stop making judgements about the chicken they serve. Just enjoy it.

* Mrs. Ida Gnanaraj and Dr. Gnanaraj are blessed with three children. Dr. Gnanaraj serves as a missionary doctor in different parts of India.

Prepare to expand God's family



by **Mrs. Beulah Chandrasekar**

Families are missional—that is, they participate in God's work to transform the world. This means God has called all of us—families included—to welcome others into His family. As Ann Dunagan said, **“God's mission for the family is expanding God's family.”** Every Christian, and every Bible-believing Christian family, is called to participate in God's Great Commission to “Go into the entire world and preach the Gospel” (Mark 16:15). **We're all called – 24-7, 365-days-a-year, to be fulltime mission-minded believers.**

What is the biblical relationship between the Great Commission and the institution of the family? Throughout the Scriptures God links His plan for the world with His creation of the family. Following are just a few examples:

God made Adam and Eve and He gave them an instruction in Genesis 1:28: *“Be fruitful and increase in number, fill the Earth and subdue it.”* Right from the beginning God tells us what He wants. He desires to fill the

Earth, and ultimately the New Earth, with people who will love Him, worship Him, and bring Him glory. His plan will take thousands of years to accomplish. It will be a multi-generational mission and will be powered by the blessing of marriage, having children, and generational family discipleship.

In Genesis 18, we find a clear articulation of God's purposes for Abraham. Genesis 18:18, *“Abraham will surely become a great and power*

ful nation, and all the nations on earth will be blessed through him.” But what did God want Abraham to do in response to this global vision? Genesis 18 continues with verse 19, *“For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.”*

In Matthew 22:35-36 Jesus is confronted with a powerful question. A religious leader asks him, “What is the most important commandment in the law?” He answered by quoting from Deuteronomy 6:5; *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”* According to Jesus, nothing is more important than knowing God and loving Him. But what we are supposed to do with this command? Where do we start? How will we obey the Great Commandment today? In the next few verses God gives a specific mission for all those who would seek to love Him.

“These commands that I give to you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children.” – Deuteronomy 6:6-7a.

Those who love God are called first and foremost to do all in their power to lead their children to love Him even more. **At the heart of the Great Commandment is family discipleship and parents being the primary spiritual trainers of their children.** At the heart of the advance of the gospel is the call to parents to impress the hearts of their children with a love for God and for His Word. God calls His people to begin their Kingdom ministry at home. In many places of the world parents have lost the souls of their children, generation after generation. Slowly but surely, we have abandoned the biblical model of family discipleship and delegated the spiritual training of our children to “professionals” at church. Spurgeon understood that “to see the kingdom of our Lord advance” ministry needed to begin at home. If we do not “make disciples” of our own children and grandchildren





AT THE HEART OF THE GREAT COMMANDMENT IS FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP AND PARENTS BEING THE PRIMARY SPIRITUAL TRAINERS OF THEIR CHILDREN.



spiritual decline is inevitable. For those who are parents, the souls of their children are to be their top spiritual priority. Imagine if we win all of our friends to Christ, but lose our children to the world. What happens to the church? When we die, it dies.

But how does this happen? How can I, as a sinful person, pass faith and a love for God to my children? God created the family to shape our hearts and the hearts of our children with a deep and abiding love for Christ and for His word. There are no magic formulas. Where can parents start?

The challenge is **that family life is incredibly mundane**, maybe even *boring*. But it is the daily, boring routines of life that steadily shape us into disciples of Christ—what St.

John Chrysostom called “the liturgy after the liturgy.” Just as the ballet dancer practices her tedious *pliés* and *tendus* until she is able to do *tours jetés* with ease, so also the Christian household practices daily rituals of faithfulness knowing they enable its members to participate in God’s Kingdom now. A household characterized by the following practices will, by the power of the Spirit, facilitate the shaping of disciples for mission:

By talking!

“Talk about these things when you sit at home” (Deuteronomy 6:7b). Let us tell our children all about the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, so that they would tell their children who are not even born yet. The disciples understood that the first action step of the gospel was to impress the hearts of children with a love for God. In Acts 2, God launches His church, and Peter preaches a magnificent evangelistic sermon. He ends it this way in Acts 2:38-39, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” **You, your kids, and the world!** This is the three-fold move of the gospel which we find cover-to-cover in the Scriptures.

We have many well-intentioned Christian men and women who give their heart and soul to helping lead

the programs at church and in the community, and never sit down to read the Scriptures at home with their own children. There are many Christian fathers and mothers who give their heart and soul to pastoral ministry at church or counselling or evangelism, and their children get the scraps. This is an unbiblical and hollow way of Christian life, while at the same time receiving accolades for their public ministry. Many pastors and missionaries have “discipled” hundreds of people, but they have lost the souls of their own children. Some are even told, “Trust your children to the Lord! You need to focus on your ministry.” Nowhere in Scripture does God command parents to abdicate the spiritual training to others so that they can “focus on ministry.” **Instead, God calls His people to begin their Kingdom ministry at home.**

God gives His call specifically to fathers in Ephesians 6:4, “*Fathers do not exasperate your children, instead bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*” Training refers to spiritual exercise—the spiritual practices of the Christian faith. Fathers are to pray with, serve with, and worship with their kids. Instruction refers to the words that dads speak to their children. The words that fathers and husbands speak in the home about spiritual things have tremendous power! Are we eager to see our children rise up to lead with humility, godliness, and sound doctrine? Are we eager to see men and women rise up to impact

their community and world for Christ? If we want to maximize a man’s impact on the world, we must first maximize his impact at home.

Pray together.

Whatever age we begin our walk with Christ, each of us must learn to pray. The Christian life is impossible without it. So, the Christian household must cultivate the discipline of prayer at home. This means, very practically, providing daily opportunities to pray, both individually and as a family.

Read the Bible together.

To practice the presence of God in the world we must see ourselves within God’s story. And the only way to do that is by listening to scripture on a regular basis. When we faithfully expose ourselves to scripture on a regular basis it will, over time, soak into our bones. When God’s story is in our bones, we will be better able to recognize the Spirit’s presence in the



ARE WE EAGER TO SEE MEN AND WOMEN RISE UP TO IMPACT THEIR COMMUNITY AND WORLD FOR CHRIST?



world and intentionally make space for Him to work.

Eat together

Around the table we learn to listen to one another, submit to one another, and be reconciled to one another. Around the table we share joys and sorrows, wise counsel, and words of encouragement. A regular practice of eating together also sets the stage for extending hospitality to those beyond your household. But, just like with prayer, we have to make time for it and be intentional.

Practice reconciliation.

Reconciliation is central to God's work through Christ. So, the family must make the practice of reconciliation central to their daily life. What this entails is simple, but certainly not easy. We must confess our hurt or conflict, listen receptively to one another, come to some kind of an agreement, and then respond in repentance and forgiveness. The process of reconciliation will likely happen every day in a Christian household. Also, we must keep in mind that age is not a determining factor in this work. Adults and children alike must be reconciled to one another as a crucial witness to God's reconciling work in the world. One of the most important things you ever do as a parent may be asking your 8-year-old child to forgive you.

Consume less and give more.

One way to resist consumerism's powerful pull is to say no to things

more often and learn to live with less. With gentle instruction and patience, it is possible to teach children to be content with what they have and be generous by encouraging them give and share with those who have less and are less fortunate.

Eschew busy-ness but embrace presence.

Most Christian families, especially families with children, are very busy. It is vital for Christian families to ruthlessly eliminate unnecessary busy-ness while also choosing to be fully present in the places they're called to serve and play. There is no universal standard for how many activities a family should participate in. But two good questions to ask are: 1) Does our schedule allow us to participate in the practices outlined

**GOD CREATED
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HIS WORD**



above? 2) Does our schedule have enough flexibility to allow us to serve or extend hospitality to others? If the answer to one or both of those questions is no, then you're probably too busy. Christians should seek the flourishing of the place where they live. But in order to do that, we must resist frantic activity and choose to be fully present among our 'neighbours'.

It should come as no surprise, since the Scriptures teach that the spiritual life of the family is directly tied to the Great Commission and filling the earth with worshippers of Christ.

If we are passionate about seeing the advance of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ, let us begin by turning our hearts toward home. Let us ask God to help us begin our ministry in this world by "making disciples" of our family members. Let us passionately and biblically defend God's plan, structure, and purposes for the institution of the family, as well as the institution of the local church. Is it any wonder that the

enemy targets the relationships within the family with such ferocity? May God be glorified in our homes and in our churches, so that He might be worshipped around the world in every tribe and tongue for generations to come!

Under globalisation, families get opportunities to move to different places and get to **befriend people of different races, religions or socioeconomic statuses**, language, culture. They get opportunities to learn how to minister to people struggling through infidelity, poverty and pressure from their old religious leaders. This would help families grow in the skills of listening to others and understanding different perspectives.

Regardless of our current location or occupation, we are all called to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ (II Cor. 5:20) and God's light in a dark world. Our next generation will need godly leaders in every realm of society: in the media, education, government, business, and in ministry—both locally and internationally.





Heart of God



Have you ever wondered about the heart of God? We can know the heart of God by reading His Word and by listening to His voice in prayer. The heart of God is overflowing with love for all of us and especially for the less privileged, the differently abled, the lonely, the lost, the ones who are hurting, the orphans, the widows, the ones whom the world sidelines. So it is important for us to emulate the heart of God and reach out to these people whom God loves.

I was blessed to belong to a school where we were taught to have a heart for the underprivileged and the differently abled. Each month, one class was given the responsibility and we collected money in a dumb box from our fellow students – a few paise from their tuck money. At the end of the month, this money was used to buy rice, dal and vegetables and we took this to the Blind School along with our Tamil teacher, who helped us cook and serve a nourishing meal for the residents.



We also visited the Cerebral Palsy Home, the Cheshire Home and WORTH school for the handicapped. We shared songs and skits with the residents. We learnt a lot by spending time with them and realised we are all part of the same family of God.



In my organisation too we have a special school for the mentally challenged and we support a Trust set up by the parents for the adults who have graduated from this school and need a place where they can come and work together. I am blessed to be involved in these activities. The unconditional love that I receive from the special children and adults overwhelms me. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity



tunity to be part of something meaningful and life-altering.

I always wanted my children also to have a heart for people close to God's heart. When they were little, I took them along to give some of their



clothes in good condition and toys to the children of the home run by the Missionaries of Charity.

As part of her studies, my daughter interned with an NGO that rescues trafficked women and children.



She is now interning with an NGO that takes care of children in distress and provides them a loving home, good schooling and hope for the future. I was happy to see her interact with the girls, sing songs with them, teach them craft and make presentations on useful topics.



It's important that we set a good example for our children. We can't expect them to do things that we don't do. The acts of kindness, the generosity, the going out of the way, the reaching out to others that we practise and make a way of life is being observed by our children. In time, with God's help, they too will do the same. I am sure God's heart is happy when He sees His children helping each other.



- Shirin Samuel



Baking Corner

“Traditional” Chocolate Cake



A “traditional” chocolate cake with chocolate ganache dripping on the sides and the glow of candles makes it even lovelier, makes it the perfect cake for a birthday or an anniversary. This cake can be made with cocoa powder or cooking chocolate. Delicious frostings and icings like butter cream, coffee icing etc., can be spread on top or in-between layers to enhance the taste of the cake. By adding extra ingredients and multiple layers to the cake, other variants of the chocolate cake can be made such as Black forest cake, Devils food cake, Ding Dong, Fudge cake and so on.

Ingredients:

1 cup	-	Flour (Maida mavu)
1 cup	-	Butter (Vennai)
100 g	-	Powdered sugar (Poditha sarkarai)

3	-	Eggs (Muttai)
1 tsp	-	Baking powder
1/2 tsp	-	Vanilla essence (Vanilla saarai)
5 tbsp	-	Cocoa power (Cocoa thul)

Method:

1. Separate eggs
2. Beat the egg whites till light and fluffy. Keep aside
3. Beat melted butter and powdered sugar well
4. Add egg yolks and beat well
5. Add vanilla essence and beat well
6. Add egg whites and mix well
7. Sift together flour, baking powder and cocoa three times
8. Fold in the flour mixture gently
9. Pour into a well greased and floured cake tin
10. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 180 Degree for 25 minutes
11. Serve with the icing of your choice like butter cream or chocolate icing.

Christian cooking tip: Never put icing on the cake when it is hot. Always let it cool before icing it. Similarly never speak when you are hot and angry. Always wait till you have cooled down before saying anything.

Theme for Next issue:

“Preparing families - identifying red flags and potential pitfalls and providing tools”

Please send articles, short stories, real life experiences and tit bits to ffvellore1978@gmail.com by 30th September 2021.



by Dr. Peter S.C. Pothen*

The story starts with the creation of Man by God. The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (Genesis 2:7).

The Hebrew name for man is "Adam" which is derived from "dama" which means earth, the ground. It shows that he is the "earth man" and not only indicates his origin but also his appointed role to care for the earth. The word "dama" also means 'red' or 'ruddy' so the earth in the Garden of Eden may have been red like earth/soil in Bangalore. As Anthony Phillips comments: 'Man tills the soil to live, yet in the end is buried in it' (*Lower than the Angels*: 20). Human life is of dust. It cannot break into immortality. As David Atkinson states:

We then notice that *God formed man*. God shapes man out of the earth with His own hands. The picture is of a potter moulding the clay or of an artist. There is a bodily nearness of the Creator to His creature, God, so to speak, gets His hands dirty to bring us to life. This implies God's authority: He shapes me and I am inescapably His creature. It also implies that my body, and what I do with my body, are not unimportant.

(*The Message of Genesis 1-11*: BST Series, IVP, 1990: 56)

Next God plants a Garden in Eden, in the East, and puts the man He has created in it to care for it. Eden is an actual place and the geographical details are given as lying between four rivers, of which we know two, the Tigris and the Euphrates. Adam's job was "to work in it and take care of it" (NIV) or "to till it" (RSV) or "to cultivate it" (ASB). So Adam was not a "food gatherer" collecting fruits from the trees (as the Sociologist/Anthropologist theories of early mankind tell us) but an **active agriculturist**. He is told to "to work it and take care of it"

2:18, the woman was made as "a suitable helper" for man. David Atkinson points out that this is defined by two Hebrew words *ezer knegdo*, where *ezer* means "one who comes alongside to help and this is qualified by the adjective *knegdo*, which means "one of equal worth". There is therefore no inequality here because the words "helper suitable for him" means "a helper matching his eminence."

(*The Message of Genesis 1-11*, BST Series, IVP, 1990: 68-69)

He is only given one command "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." We should also note here that Adam was a vegetarian.

At the end of Creation "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (1:31), but now he makes a different statement "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." So in Gen.

This is the end of the story of Gen. 2: 15-25 where Adam is unable to find a suitable mate from within all the animals (not even a female ape!!) and so God creates a woman out of Adam's rib and brings her to him. Adam's response, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" as he greets the woman whom God brings to him as a father brings forward a bride, is an ecstatic cry of welcome, the acceptance of an equal and the joy and relief that the waiting is now over. It indicates the acceptance of a



covenantal relationship, as does his cry of delight in calling her *Ishshah* (woman) and accepting her as an equal who is related to him in a special way in which no other living creature could be (Gen. 2: 20). Her name was 'Woman' or '*Ishshah*' (soft) which is derived from the male '*Ish*' which denotes strong. As Matthew Henry says, "She was not created from his head to rule over him, nor from his foot to be treaded upon, but from his rib, the place closest to his heart, to be loved and cared for." It talks of equality and complementarity. This is broken after the Fall when the equal partner "Woman" becomes "Eve" or 'the mother of all living' (Gen.3: 20).

In fact as David Field argues:

It was after sin's arrival that man gave woman a new name - "Eve, because she would become the mother of all living" (Gen. 3:20). Innocent though that naming ceremony sounds, it was a clear step backward from the innocence of Eden. "Woman", man's partner in the ideal relationship that Genesis 2 describes, had now become "Eve", his means of producing offspring. From now on the temptation to see her as a sex-object, merely a functional aid, would grow stronger and stronger.

(Field, David, *The Role of Women*, Inter-varsity Press, Leicester, 1990, 47)

The creation accounts in Genesis show that both man and woman are created equal and meant to enjoy a

close relationship of interdependence. Genesis 1:27 emphasises that both "male and female" were created "in the image of God". Karl Barth asserts that it is this male and female existence of humanity that is identified with the *Imago Dei* and it is only in the interdependence of this relationship that the meaning of being truly human can be experienced.

The two-stage creation in the Genesis 2 account indicates three reasons for this close knit relationship. Firstly, they are created this way as humans have a real need for fellowship, which can be only fulfilled by close relationships, so as to be truly human as Karl Barth stresses. Secondly, the creation of woman out of man stresses the close relationship and unity between the sexes in conformity with their common origin. Paul emphasises this in 1 Cor. 11:11-12 where he points out that Woman originally came from Man but later all men, including the Saviour, were born of women. Therefore there is not only **equality** but **interdependence** between the two sexes. Thirdly, the creation of woman stresses the equality of the sexes as woman is created as a companion and co-worker, significantly a similar term as used by God in his relationship with humans. The description of humanity as both male and female in Gen. 1:27; the naming of woman as *ishshah* with its link to *ish* (man) in Gen. 2:23 which indicates male and female complementarity and equality and shows

how deeply man feels she is an equal and partner of identical worth and finally the emphasis that the wife is man's most precious partner who cannot be replaced by anyone else (Gen. 2:24), all confirm this equality that is necessary for true unity (Neuer, Werner, *Man and Woman in Christian Perspective*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1990, 67-68). The basic pre-supposition is therefore that Man and Woman are **equal** in terms of Genesis 1:27 and Gal.3: 27-28 as well as **interdependent** as per Paul's argument in 1 Cor. 11:11-12. The third presupposition is therefore the **complementarity** as pointed out in Gen. 2:18, where the woman was made as "a suitable helper" for man.

This is the end of the story of Gen. 2: 15-25. The Biblical definition of a Christian Marriage is given in Genesis 2:24. Gen. 2:24 states, "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and be united to his wife, and they become one flesh." The aim of Christian Marriage is to become "one flesh." This involves both the leaving and the cleaving to one another. "One Flesh" talks of unity, equality and oneness in every way – mentally, physically, spiritually and psychologically. It is **not** talking of a physical leaving or a process of marriage ("Leave, then cleave and only then become one flesh" as is sometimes wrongly taught) but of a relationship

where the husband puts his wife first. Gerard Von Rad points out that Gen. 2:24

is not a process of marriage but "a concluding, summarizing word of the narrator, a short epilogue" (*A Commentary: SCM*, London:1972: 83) which explains, as Westermann puts it, "the elemental power of love between a man and woman, which is independent of any existing institution" (*Genesis: A Practical Commentary*, Eerdmans, 1987:2). In other words, it refers to not just physical leaving but to an emotional and psychological leaving of parents and in the priority of the relationship to the spouse before any other parental, sibling or familial relationship (Pothan, *Unpacking the Family*, Grove Books: 1992:14-15). This relationship will cause the cessation of the conflicts between Daughter-in-law and Mother-in-law, if the husband would put his wife first. We should note that Gen.2: 24 ends with a full-stop so a marriage is complete even without children. Children are an additional blessing from God as the Bible tells us (Ps. 127: 3-5; Prov. 17:6). The story in Genesis 2 closes by telling us that the man and the woman in the Garden were naked and not ashamed. There is an openness and a unity, neither masked by guilt, nor disordered by lust, not hampered by shame (Atkinson, 1990: 79).

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our learning ground



by **Elsa and John Daniel***

I and my wife grew up in different cities of Maharashtra and were raised in Christian homes by godly and dedicated parents. We both were burdened with the desire to share the gospel and make disciples who would make many more disciples. Before her marriage Elsa was working in few mission hospitals being a qualified nurse. I too had worked in mission fields after I was convinced of God's call to me for full time mission work.

Soon after our marriage both of us went to the rural parts of Maharashtra with the desire and burden to share the gospel with the unreached people of the *Vidharba* region. The job of carrying the gospel to remote tribes hidden in strange and dangerous places often requires courage and boldness equal to that displayed by the soldier in the performance of

his duties. While we found peace and security in God, we knew that there would be little comfort out in the wild jungle, travelling by crowded buses, or sometimes walking several

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kilometres to get the basic necessities. But we did not anticipate the numerous lessons God was waiting to teach us and the unexpected blessing He had kept in store for us. **Transformation does not only occur in the lives of people who receive a missionary family but also in the lives of missionaries themselves.** Our lives were changed for the good because of time spent outside of our own culture and comfort zone. We look back now and see the many ways that our experience has shaped us and intertwined our lives with others to affect God's purposes.

Elsa says, "Since we lived on the training campus, we had tall and beautiful corn fields. One of things I greatly missed on the mission field was the pleasure of singing and praising God in my own language of comfort (during service we only sang in Marathi). The corn fields provided the luxury of privacy and sitting among the tall plants I could sing away to glory undisturbed and unembarrassed. The times I spent in communion with the Lord then were so intimate and intense and effortless that I do miss those precious moments very much."

We realised that if we have to win souls for Christ among the people groups of Maharashtra, we need to be very sensitive to their culture. We began studying the underlying beliefs that affected their behaviour, discovered the needs of the people and recognized what was valued in that culture.

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Initially I bought a small guitar, hoping to learn to play it in order to enhance our singing and worship time, praising God in Marathi, which is the general spoken language all over Maharashtra. Soon we realized though that the villagers preferred songs in their local language using their folk instruments. After I realised it, my guitar was cast aside and we began singing *bhajans* with harmonium and *tabla*. This attracted the people to us and in the following years during Christmas and New Year, we had all night *bhajans* and dancing around the camp fire. How they enjoyed it and were not only participatory but also receptive! They love hearing God's word or songs in the language of their heart. Singing and dancing is so much a part of the tribal culture.



WHEN WE VISITED THEIR HOMES, THEY CONSIDERED IT A GREAT HONOUR AND WE RESPECTED THEIR CULTURAL PRACTICES



What we realized during our work with the Tribal group was that the youth who are exposed to city life and the global culture through social media, wanted to imitate what they saw and wanted to sing songs in Hindi like the modern bands. We made it a point to encourage the youth not to disown or abandon their culture but follow their own indigenous traditions. Our aim was to ensure that a given people group's worship entirely reflects its own culture, with as tiny an outside footprint as possible.

We even arranged for painting classes for the *Warli* tribal believers who had never learnt their own beautiful painting style which is such a rage in the cities. These paintings do not depict mythological characters or images of deities, **but depict social life**. Images of human beings

and animals, along with scenes from daily life are created in a loose rhythmic pattern. These tribal paintings of Maharashtra are traditionally done in the homes of the *Warlis*. The technique used to create this art is also as simple as the art itself. A bamboo stick is used as paint brush a painted red-ochre background acts as a canvass. Only white colour, consisting of rice paste with gum is used for painting. They were able to incorporate Christian themes into their paintings.

In the earlier days when the local people visited us, we served them tea in cups or glassware and meals also in crockery with which we were familiar. As days passed by we understood that this was misunderstood, as us not accepting the local people as family. So later we went and procured stainless steel plates and tumblers from the market and began serving our guests in them because that was culturally acceptable.

At times on their festive days or during times of any celebrations they invited us to their homes. When we visited their homes, they considered it a great honour and we respected their cultural practices and ate what they gave us except the *prasatham* which is offered to their gods and they respected our convictions. There had been times when they wanted us to sing songs and pray before we leave. During their festival, we never did evangelism because that is like asking for trouble.

We went there as a newly married couple and Elsa was wearing her *thali* in gold chain. But they could not believe or accept us as married. So we went to the market and got their type of chain which has black and gold beads and instead of wearing their *thali* symbol, she wore her traditional *thali* in that beads chain which she called as a hybrid *thali*, and after that Elsa's marital status was accepted. Further her *thali* became a point of conversation among the women



The very first time we visited a family, they spread a beautiful charpai and both of us seated ourselves on it. Within a few seconds, the women of the house were signalling Elsa to get up and come inside up to the kitchen. So the traditional practise is for men to sit

Also in their culture a husband and wife will not walk side by side but since we were not aware we used walk beside each other and enjoyed talking. Ever since knowing their ways, instead of persisting in our own habit, Elsa made me walk two three steps ahead of her and she followed me. Elsa was so used to wearing salwars as it is quite comfortable but in their places *sarees* are the acceptable attire for women and as long as we were with them Elsa was wearing *sarees* even if it was a bit tedious and uncomfortable wearing.

We adapted ourselves to eating their food like maize roti, jawhar etc. Since in their culture eating beef is considered an offence, we gave up eating beef when we were there. On their festival days they would not eat non-vegetarian food. Therefore in our homes or in our training centre, non-vegetarian item was not cooked and served on their festive days.



IT IS BETTER TO MAKE ALL THESE SMALL CHANGES AND ADAPT OURSELVES THAN BECOME A STUMBLING BLOCK TO THEM OR ALIENATING THEM FROM US.



together and have conversation drinking tea while women chat together inside. When visiting them we went as a couple or as a couple of women or as two men. It is better to make all these small changes and adapt ourselves than become a stumbling block to them or alienating them from us. God taught us to forego many of our cultural habits and practises in order to exhibit God's love.

It is mostly the women who first receive Christ as their personal Lord, saviour and master and as they live their life pleasing to Him as a light and pinch of salt, the men of the house are drawn to Christ. So when women accept Christ, it is a big struggle for them because it is they who daily light the oil lamps near

their gods, wash the *pooja* utensils or perform any *pooja*. Once when a daughter-in-law accepted Christ, she was in deep anguish. There is no point in antagonising the rest of the family or encourage them to make radical changes. So we comforted her by saying that God is seeing our heart and attitude and asked her to continue to wash those utensils and light the lamps while communicating with Jesus, the living God.

For married women when they become Christians, it is hard to remove the *thilak* from their forehead because *thilak* is removed only when she becomes a widow. Therefore we never forced them to remove the *thilak* and some women removed it eventually as they grew in their faith and when they had inner conviction. By being sensitive to their culture and background, we could prayerfully and wisely enable them to make a smooth transition.

They are so used to worshipping before idols and so when they accept Christ the family is in a dilemma. Our suggestion to them would be to have a picture of Jesus in the place where they had kept their idols and pray to Him or worship Him without incense sticks. Traditionally for all their festivals they made special sweets and burst crackers. So those who became Christians they would wonder how to have celebrations. So Christmas and New Year days are celebrated with special sweets of their tradition like *puranpoli*, not cakes, have a meal together and they

enjoyed bursting crackers. At times we had a quiet time of worship and prayer.

In the beginning when people who have accepted Christ would address us as 'Brother' and 'Sister' and greet us with good morning or good night. But these words were picked up by others without understanding the meaning or significance and made a mockery even by children. Therefore we insisted that they address us and greet us in the local language and in their traditional ways.

Their faith was very simple and very child-like. A lady in a village had some mental illness and considered to be demon-possessed. So when her children went out they kept her locked in the house. One day her children as a matter of fact, went and attended a service conducted by a missionary. One of the children asked him very boldly, "can your Jesus heal my mother?" The missionary without any tinge of doubt told her, "Jesus can do anything." At that very moment the mother who was at home saw a vision of Jesus on the cross and heard him tell her "I will heal you, but will you share the gospel with others?" She agreed and was healed of her illness. She was a poor daily wage earner who went to earn for three days in a week and other three days she went with the missionary ladies sharing the good news of God's love. What a lesson on implicit obedience for all of us!

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Her relationship with Jesus was so intimate and personal and trusted His words without any doubt. She had only two sarees which she washed and wore and one day one saree tore off but she had no money to buy another saree. The lady prayed and trusted God to provide her. Next day when the saree vendor came she selected two sarees but could not buy because she had no money. Still she remained in faith. After completing his sales, the vendor returned and gave her the two sarees. On enquiry she found one of her neighbours had paid for the sarees. Such is their unwavering faith.

On another occasion she had to walk past a tree in which a huge poisonous snake was hanging. She instantly cursed the snake saying, "You will not move." The snake was simply hanging without moving for

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four days to the utter amazement of the villagers who visited the location. That was her simple way of proving to others the power of the living God.

We have seen God working in mysterious ways and He is a God of wonders. It has been our marvellous experience to see a complete illiterate person who could read nothing else but only the Bible. God is above every culture and every human limitation. He communicates with such simple people in His own personal and intimate ways and they take Him at His word and live in intimate fellowship with Him. They are powerful and strong witnesses to Him in the midst of pain, suffering, ridicule and rejection.

It is not that their lives are free from opposition and false accusation. When God's word is at work, the powers of darkness also work over time. False complaints in police station have been lodged about people being forced to accept and follow Christ. Families have shown tremendous courage even under severe pressure and boldly acknowledged that they follow Christ by their free will and not by force and boldly have testified to what God has done in their lives and how reading the Bible has transformed their lives.

Elsa says she had wondered why the God, who speaks and reveals Himself so intimately in so many ways with these people, is not communicating in similar ways with her. Then she realised that God has given her knowledge and countless opportunities to read His word and know Him unlike those people groups who are hearing His word first time. "To whom much is given, much will be required". Luke 12:48.

Countless friendships were developed with people groups of Maharashtra. Deep partnerships were formed with our brothers and sisters in Christ as we spent time together on our knees, praying for our families.

Yes, we missionaries have the potential to raise up the next generation of leaders to seek after the heart of God and reach all peoples, together. They can inspire the younger generation to rise up in spiritual maturity and carry the torch where the previous generation was unable to go. With God's strength and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, we can have the stamina and strength to do the hard things and partner with God in the work He is doing all over the world.

*Elsa & John Daniel – both after working in the fields in Maharashtra for more than 25 years, now are in Vellore. Mr. John Daniel is at present taken over the responsibility of Gen. Coordinator of Missionary Upholders Trust. Mrs. Elsa is working in CMC Distance Education Dept. They have one daughter.

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TO
KNOW
CHRIST
AND
MAKE
HIM
KNOWN

MISSION STATEMENT



TO LEAD
PEOPLE
TO BECOME
FULLY DEVOTED
FOLLOWERS OF
CHRIST.

WIN people *to* Christ

BUILD them up *in* Christ

EQUIP them to serve
for Christ

*To make
believers
out of
unbelievers...
and disciples
out of
believers*

GOD WITH US. GOOD SHEPHERD. HIDING PLACE. HIGH TOWER. I AM. IMMANUEL. INTERCESSOR. JUDGE OF ALL. JUST ONE. KEEPER. KING OF GLORY. KING OF KINGS. LAMB OF GOD. LIFE. LIFTER OF MANKIND. LIGHT. LIVING BREAD. LORD. MAKER. MAN OF DOUBTS. MASTER. MEDIATOR. MESSIAH. NAME ABOVE EVERY NAME - PHIL. 2:9. PHYSICIAN. POTTER. PRINCE OF PEACE. RABBI. REFUGE. ROCK. ROSE OF SHARON. SACRIFICE. SALVATION. SAVIOR.



COLORING CORNER

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JESUS LOVES LITTLE CHILDREN

Owned and Published by
Beulah Chandrasekar from No:21, Kalathu Methu Street, Viruthampet, Vellore 632006
and printed by M.Charles Jayakumar at Emerald Printing Press, 12 Voorhees College
Campus, Arni Road, Vellore 632001. Editor: Beulah Chandrasekar.

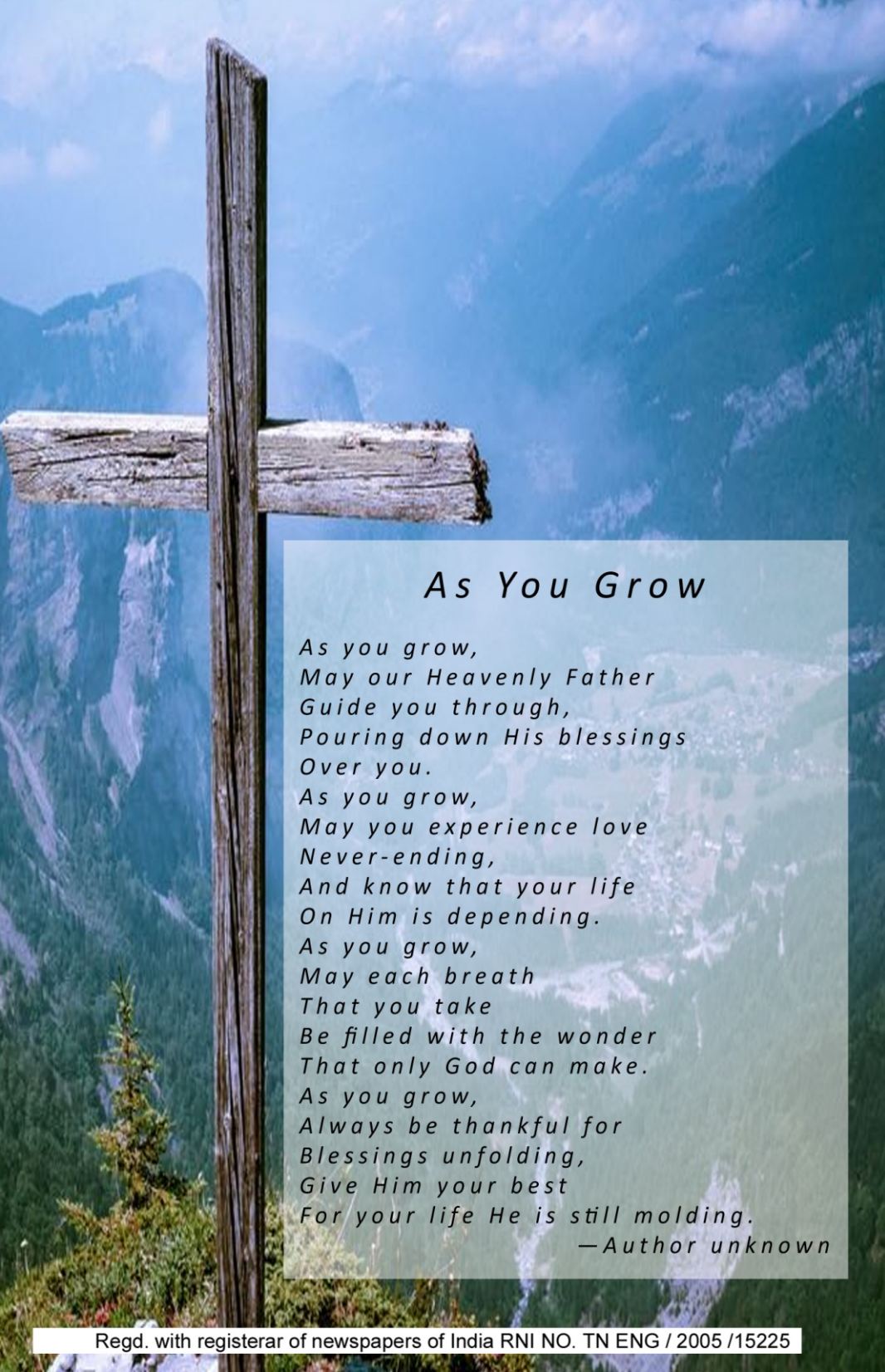
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As You Grow

*As you grow,
May our Heavenly Father
Guide you through,
Pouring down His blessings
Over you.*

*As you grow,
May you experience love
Never-ending,
And know that your life
On Him is depending.*

*As you grow,
May each breath
That you take
Be filled with the wonder
That only God can make.*

*As you grow,
Always be thankful for
Blessings unfolding,
Give Him your best
For your life He is still molding.*

—Author unknown