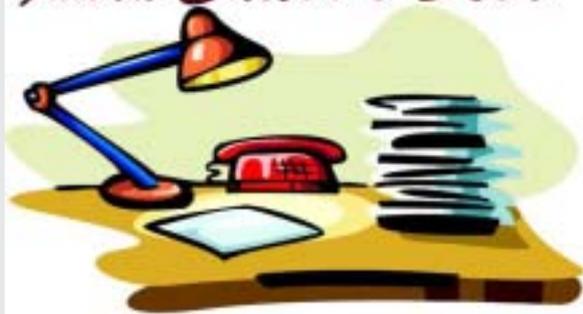


From the Editor's Desk



## "FIRST LOVE"

*"Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent" (Rev. 2:4,5 - NIV)*

Pentecostals should have no enemies and no hatred among themselves. All are same in Spirit and the Body of Christ, even though there are apostles, prophets, teachers, helpers, administrators and speakers in various tongues.



Thomas Ninan

**Apostle John**, in the last book of the Bible, Revelation, records the messages from Lord Jesus Christ to seven churches in Asia Minor around 95-96 AD. The Lord begins with His message to the church in Ephesus where John served also as the head. The Lord and Master of the church appreciates them for their work, toil, patience, endurance, rejection of evil men and false apostles and yet they have not grown weary. But He points out that the church have abandoned the love which they had at first (Rev. 2:2-4). Holy Spirit is not only praising them, but also pointing out the deficiency as well as the remedy for it.

What is the remedy? Remember from what you have fallen and repent and do the works you did at first. Before closing the message, the Lord did not forget to add another praiseworthy character of the church: they hated the work of the Nicolaitans which He also hates. Now Nicolaus was a reputed early Christian of Antioch church – see Acts 6:5 – one of the seven elected to serve on the table. The Nicolaitans were followers of Nicolaus and his teachings were similar to that of Balaam: that is, eat things sacrificed to idols and commit fornication – see Num. 25:1-3.

Let us now turn to our title, FIRST LOVE. Apostle John himself is known as the 'Apostle of love' - whom Jesus loved and was found leaning on Him at the Last Supper (John 13:23). Jesus said that the two greatest commandments are: Love God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your spirit and with all your strength and equal to that, love your neighbour as yourself and added that all the Law and the Prophets are contained in these two. Jesus also said that you love your

enemies and pray for those who persecute you. If there is no love in me, I am only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have faith to move the mountains, but no love, then there is nothing. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. It was the greatest sacrifice and love demands sacrifice which does not call for any rewards. In 1 John 2:6 we read: "he who abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked". Love unifies and not divides. Pentecostals should have no enemies and no hatred among themselves. All are same in Spirit and the Body of Christ, even though there are apostles, prophets, teachers, helpers, administrators and speakers in various tongues. Ministries are various but body is same - no

servants and subservience. Each one has a duty and respect for each other to establish the kingdom of God. Jesus said the gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come. If we are waiting for Him to come, then all of us have to focus

on evangelization. Each church member should be encouraged to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ which is his duty.

The body (church) is one but organs are many. No confrontation among the organs only cooperation - no rivalry, only unity. So there is no chance of fighting and quarrelling. If there is friction or division, we have to iron it out in a spirit of love and forbearance.

*Now let us heed the warning of the Master of the church: "Remember from where you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place".*

No confrontation among the organs only cooperation - no rivalry, only unity. So there is no chance of fighting and quarrelling.

# *Four great mistakes revealed -* **in the Book of Job!**

Job is a book that calls into question divine justice and providence in a very touching manner. To address "the problem of evil" and the many instances of seemingly senseless suffering in our world, there is probably no better commentary than the Book of Job. The burning message that comes through to us in this book is that God's chosen ones can cling to a foundational faith rising out of utter despair. When every alternate source of help fails, the man of God can rise above it all and in resignation fall back on God saying, "*Though He may slay me, yet will I trust Him*". Let us examine the following mistakes observed here, as we study the book in depth.

## **1. Mistake of Satan:**

**"Job served God for what he could get out of Him"!**

IN PROSPERITY OUR FRIENDS KNOW US; IN ADVERSITY WE KNOW OUR FRIENDS. Job's comforters were fair weather friends. In his adversity they failed Job. They shared in Satan's accusation that Job's devotion to God was from wrong motivations. Satan makes the following charge in chapter 1: "*Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made a hedge about him? -- But put forth thine hand and touch all he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face*". Satan and the world cannot understand how sincere faith continues to abound around us and how God's kingdom has a persuasive sway over human lives. The fact of the matter is that no human heart is totally satisfied with any love except by the Infinite. The devil can't fool us into thinking that a meaningless life without God is quite satisfactory.

80 PER CENT OF NATURAL SCIENTISTS BELIEVE IN GOD. Natural scientists all over the world are discovering things about our universe that it could not have possibly come into being by mere chance. Dr. Thomas Torrence of the University of Edinburgh has conducted polls among scientists which show that 80 per cent of "natural science professors now say they believe in God. The incredible size of the universe around us compels us to acknowledge for its source a power greater than itself. A quasar discovered in 1987 (at the time believed to be the farthest object to us from earth), was 81 million trillion miles from earth! The source of such an enormous universe can't be any less powerful. The Creator God, through His creation is giving expression to facts

about Himself. He does it even in little things such as the lovely tulip: examine its shape, its texture and its design, the streaks of red which He paints on its yellow petals with the stroke of His infinite brush! Is it any wonder that like Job, thousands in every century have set out on a journey of search for the Creator?

Yes, people everywhere are thirsting for God. They are searching beyond a good job, an overflowing pantry or a huge bank account. Some 800 years ago a humble man named Francis of Assisi decided to practice the Christian faith, turning his back on wealth and serving the poor. Thousands began to follow him; and to this very day, thousands more have determined to follow in his foot steps. Yes, today there are millions chanting Francis' well-known prayer, "Lord, make me an instrument of peace", not for what they could get out of God, but for themselves.

## **2. Mistake of Job's wife:**

**"With the loss of temporal means, all is lost"!**

Job's wife voiced this popular notion; it was a major blunder. She said to Job: "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die". That foolish woman saw in the loss of their temporal possessions the loss of everything. Job corrected her by saying, we are to accept both good and bad from God in a spirit of surrender. The fruitfulness of our garden is not to be tested by the number of leaves that fall off, but by the lovely flowers it produces. COUNT YOUR GARDEN BY THE FLOWERS, NOT BY THE LEAVES THAT FALL.

C.T. STUDD WHO GAVE ALL, REAPS 10000 PER CENT. January 13, 1887 was a red letter day in the history of missions, when England's C.T. Studd, the wealthy heir of a 29,000 pound bequest decided to give away all of it in obedience to Christ's word: "*sell what you have and give it to the poor*". D.L. Moody, George Muller and other church leaders became the recipients of Studd's generosity. Like Paul he "suffered the loss of all things and did count them but dung". He traded the luxury of his boyhood home, a two story mansion, for a humble thatch-roofed house in the heart of Africa. From there he launched the



**Rev. Dr. John Cherian**

The article is a summary of Dr. Cherian's TV sermon, telecast a few years ago.

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**Natural scientists all over the world are discovering things about our universe that it could not have possibly come into being by mere chance.**

Worldwide Evangelization Crusade. It sent out hundreds of missionaries around the world, expending millions of dollars and pounds. Thus a ten thousand per cent reward for his sacrifice was handed back by His Master, whom Studd implicitly trusted. Job's wife too found out in the long run that the loss of the temporal did not mean all is lost. "The Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before".

"At times Jesus comes to calm the storm; at other times He comes to calm you in the storm". Perhaps Job's friends did not learn this important truth

Job charged God with unkind treatment. What Job failed to remember was that Satan was also in the picture: of course under God's permissive will.

**3. Mistake of Job's friends:**  
**"Suffering is the result of sin"!**

"AT TIMES JESUS COMES TO CALM THE STORM; AT OTHER TIMES HE COMES TO CALM YOU IN THE STORM". Perhaps Job's friends did not learn this important truth. To them, this fierce storm in Job's life meant he had sinned. Eliphaz is quite outspoken. He bluntly tells his suffering friend: *"Is not thy wickedness great? (22:5) "If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up" (22:23).* Job's friends missed the whole point. Sin is not necessarily the cause of suffering. O yes, there are times when God sends His rod of chastisement in the face of sinful behavior. We are not to take moral failure lightly, by any means. In connection with the fall of some leaders recently, others have begun practising extreme caution. For instance, Billy Graham was moved to introduce the "MODESTO MANIFESTO" to his associates. In Modesto, California, Mr. Graham gathered his team in a hotel to make a solemn pact: each one of them vowed never again to be alone with a woman other than his wife. In fact, Graham could openly affirm that from his very early days he had never eaten a meal alone with any lady other than his wife. He could also say: "I've never ridden in an automobile alone with a woman". These men firmly believed in maintaining clean, exemplary lives.

Sin is not necessarily the cause of suffering. O yes, there are times when God sends His rod of chastisement in the face of sinful behavior.

Many times we suffer, not because of sin, but because we are slow to act out our faith. In this connection let me relate the experience of Catherine Marshal, wife of the deceased Peter Marshal, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate. In 1944 she contracted a bad case of tuberculosis. It drove her to her knees, where she earnestly studied the healing accounts of Jesus' ministry. Mr. Marshal once brought her a pamphlet on healing and her faith was greatly built up, reading it. One night she

went to bed in a deep spirit of prayer and woke up at 3.00 AM still under divine unction. She sensed that every nerve in her body began to tingle. So she walked into her parents' bedroom and told her mother she felt positively that her healing had begun. After that early morning experience, the next x-ray showed that tuberculosis had indeed been checked. In a few weeks, the doctors pronounced her well! Jesus had come to calm Catherine in her storm at first; finally He came to calm the storm itself...

**4. Mistake of Job:**  
**"God is unkind at times"!**

NEVER PUT A PERIOD WHERE GOD PUTS A COMMA. Even Job found himself in error in spite of his basic integrity. He charged God with unkind treatment. This is a common human reaction from us in the heat of our trials. *"As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment, and the Almighty who hath vexed my soul"*, he blurts out (27:2). What Job failed to remember was that Satan was also in the picture: of course under God's permissive will. The thief cometh not but to kill, steal and destroy. Suffering is primarily initiated by Satan. God had clearly declared before Satan: *"Behold, Job is in thine hand; but save his life"* (2:6).

In life's battlefield, no one is exempt from the battle, no, not even God's choicest men and women. Missionaries have over the years fought demonic forces which are in alliance with our archenemy. When revival struck Indonesia, church leaders came face to face with the reality of the evils of witchcraft, sorcery and voodoo cults, particularly among tribal, animistic groups. When new converts say the "sinner's prayer" and renounce their loyalty to demonic powers, one could clearly see the manifestation of the conflict between the two powers: the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light. The fetishes swallowed in tribal rituals as well as needles inserted under skin for protection in demonic rites get ejected from their body, as soon as they say the "sinner's prayer" at the church altar. As these needles and fetishes fall to the floor involuntarily, the sound can be heard all over the church auditorium. Yes, Satan was the direct cause of Job's ordeal. But Job finally learned that he was not to put a period where God put only a comma. There was a fairer future waiting for him after that comma of a trial ridden present.

**May we all learn these hard lessons as we meditate on the Book of Job and get spiritually nourished and strengthened and become mature Christians!**

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## *Blessed are those who* **ENDURE & PERSEVERE**

*"My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful." (James 5:10-11)*

In the above passage, Apostle James brings before us another perspective of God, who in His infinite wisdom allowed His own prophets to suffer in the hands of the sinful people among whom they were ministering. Because of their faithfulness in declaring the word of the Lord, these prophets were persecuted unmercifully. Yet *"they endured as seeing Him who is invisible"* (Heb. 11:27, 32–40). The prophet Jeremiah is a prime example of this, and when we read the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, we can see how much Jeremiah suffered for being true to God in declaring His oracles!

All these prophets are examples of patient endurance in suffering for us (see 1:4), and we need to follow their footsteps today. We honor them for their lives of zeal and devotion. In this sense we call them blessed, and we agree that they were right while the world was wrong. Let us not forget that even though they went through great trials and sufferings, they endured them all with patience. If we want to be blessed, it is only reasonable to conclude that we will be called upon to do the same!

In the similar manner, the righteous Job (Job 1:1) also went through intense personal suffering not knowing that he was allowed to be tested by Satan in order to justify God's faith in his integrity. Even though Job was not always patient with his friends (who acted as miserable comforters), we are certain that Job persevered through his suffering until the very end. Job waited for God to clear up the mystery of his suffering, and as a result, reaped great rewards at the end of his trial.

We should have no doubts that our God is very compassionate and merciful (v. 11b). However, He allows sufferings for a reason: *"tribulation produces perseverance"* (Rom. 5:3). The sufferings of Job enabled him to persevere, which led him to see the final rewards that God had intended for him after He revealed Himself. For

Job, the end intended by God was that he received twice the blessings that he had before his trials (Job 42:10–15). Only by Job's suffering could he intimately experience and comprehend the Lord as compassionate and merciful. Thus, Job is thus a fine example of perseverance or fortitude that we can emulate in our lives.

The challenges and crisis that we encounter regularly can seep away our joy and strength, and at these times we are tempted to give up. If we are not aware of what God has planned to accomplish through us, we might be tempted to envy the wicked like Asaph. However, it was only after Asaph had gone into the sanctuary of God that he understood their end (see Psalms 73:3–17). King David also had a similar experience, but he looked to the future and consoled himself with these words: "As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness" (Psalms 17:15).

Let us remember that God permits suffering in our lives because it leads to His excellent purposes (Rom 8:28; Phil 1:6). If we are going through sufferings, let us be patient for God is still on His throne. Blessed are those who endure and persevere!

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you". (Matt. 5:10-12)*



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# God's Book for Mankind:

## - Part 13

### *Inductive Bible Study Method*



**Dr. C.P. Varghese**

is the Founder & President of *Peniel Bible Seminary*, Peniel Children's Home & Peniel Academy, Keezhillam, Kerala.

There are so many correct methods of reading and studying the Word of God. In this article we will study one of those methods, and God willing, we will study many more methods in the future articles.

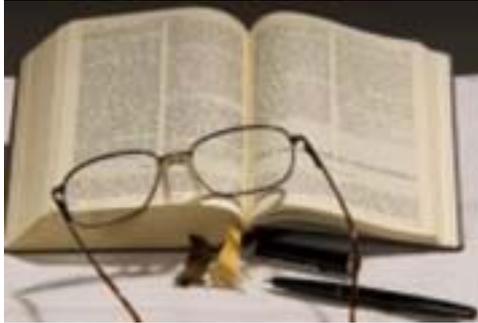
Now let us learn several right methods of Bible study. One of the right Bible study methods is known as the Inductive Method of Study. Inductive means to collect information concerning anything we plan to study in a logical process to arrive to the right conclusion. The English word inductive comes from the Latin word 'inducere' which means to bring about or to establish on the basis of observations of particular facts. It is an attempt to learn by investigation.

There are three steps to the Inductive Bible Study Method. They are *observation, interpretation and application.*

#### Observation:

This means to look into something carefully with attention to details or to inspect. So to observe the Word of God we need to read a passage again and again to find out details of the passage. It is good to read in more than one version or translation if available.

We should allow the Bible to speak for itself and do not read into it what it does not say. Some of the questions for example are: Who, What, When, Where, Why and How? Who are the people in this passage? What is the connection or relationship among them? What happened or what will happen? Where did it happen or where will it happen? When did it happen? Or, when will it happen? How did it happen or how will it happen? If it is a prophecy that is not yet fulfilled then the question should be in the future tense. Find out if anything is repeated and is there any comparison or contrast? Is the language here symbolic or literal? This process is called *observation.*



#### Interpretation:

Hermeneutics is the study of the correct interpretation of the various kinds of literature that is in the Bible. Several important aspects of interpretation are here.

#### **Context, Context, context:**

The first and most important aspect to remember in interpreting the scripture is to know the context. The English word context comes from the Latin word, "kontextus" meaning putting together or interweave. This means we must look at the passages before and after the text of study. The context is the set of circumstances or facts that surround a situation or event. Then we must ask several questions and find the answers from the content of the scripture. What was the cultural setting of the time and place of writing and to whom it was originally written, the dispensation in which it was written and other books by the same writer?

#### **Compare:**

Compare scripture with scripture. To do that ask questions such as, "What does this verse mean? "What do other passages say about this person, subject, topic, theme or event? Interpretation should be consistent with other passages of scripture that deal with the same matter. Is this interpretation consistent with the theme of the particular book of the Bible that we are studying? We must not interpret any part of the Bible as an isolated text; rather every part should be interpreted in light of the whole Bible.

#### **Kind of Literature (Genre):**

There are many types of literary style of language or genre in the Bible such as such as history, biography, Law, poetry, prophecy, parables, metaphors, letters, instructions or teachings are some of them. Each should be interpreted accordingly. We must interpret, understand and learn from different types of scriptures in different ways in the light of the truth of God as it is in Christ Jesus. Remember that the word of God does not contradict itself.

Three steps to the Inductive Bible Study Method:.

*Observation, interpretation and application.*



# THE JOY THAT IS SPECIAL

Mrs. Mary Mathew, Mulund

Someone is happy in winning a lottery  
Yet another is glad in winning a prize  
Happy is the one whose desires are fulfilled

The athlete is overjoyed as he reaches first  
The beggar is delighted in being well fed  
Young and old, rich or poor  
Fair or dark, lean or fat

Different targets each one moves with  
Targets and goals are fulfilled  
They party and feast  
Eat, drink and be merry

This is the formula of success and joy  
This is the practice of this world  
This is the law of this world

When in pain, when in sorrow  
Thousands of tricky issues  
Dozens of tensed situations  
One may go nervous and crazy

But the joy, that special JOY  
Enables me to go forward  
Not to turn back but to lean on my Lord  
The joy of the Lord is my strength

It enlivens me, encourages me.  
Newspapers bring disturbed feelings  
The world gives happiness evanescent  
But the Word of God brings joy to the godly

This is the joy of submission  
This is the joy of sanctification  
This is the joy of salvation  
The righteous rejoice, sing and pray

So rejoice in the Lord  
For this is the will of God  
Strive and yearn for that joy

That joy alone will help you through  
The trials, temptations, storms or hurdles.  
Reaching the other shore to enjoy  
That unspeakable joy with our Lord, forever!  
Hallelujah!

"God's Book for mankind" . . . . Continuation from previous page

## Application:

We study the Bible to live according to the Word of God. To apply the Word of God means to live in obedience to the Word of God.

**Application of the Word of God in our daily lives is hard and difficult for many reasons.**

1. Satan does not want us to apply the Word of God into our lives.
2. Our carnal nature fights against applying the Word of God into our lives.
3. Human tendency is to resist change, specially change for the better.

**Application of the Word of God is possible.**

1. God does not require any thing from His children for which He does not give them strength to do.

2. Application of the Word of God is possible because He has given us the mind of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Gal 5:16. "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh."

3. Application of the Word of God is possible because, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it." I Cor. 10:13.

**Application of the Word of God is very important.**

1. "Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin." James 4:17. God hates sin.

2 There are consequences for disobedience.

3 It is a poor witness and testimony

4. Our verbal witnessing becomes ineffective when we do not live exemplary lives.

Here are a few questions to ask ourselves in application.

Are there any sins in my life to confess?

Are there any promises to claim?

Are there any commands to obey/ Are there any examples to follow? Are there any things to praise God for?

May the Lord help you to observe, interpret and apply the Word of God in your life.

## Why Atheists do not find GOD?

*"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he who comes to God must believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Hebrews 11:6)*

All of us know who an atheist is: an atheist is a person who does not believe in the existence of God. You can find many Christians who were once atheists! If you visit any church and ask around, you may find people who formerly did not believe in God, but experienced Him at some time in their life. So it is not true to say that atheists cannot find God because countless people have found Him.

But the Bible does give a reason as to why many atheists do not find God:

*"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he who comes to God must believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him".*

This shows that the reason many atheists do not find God is because they never really honestly look for Him. However, believers who have been spiritually born-again know that God does reward those who seek Him - but not to those who do not seek Him or those who do not care.

The first step to come to God is to have faith that He exists which is something that most atheists won't take. They say there is no God and they will not even take the first step to find Him. You may have heard people say, "I don't believe it as I cannot see it". But let us take an example: *Air*, can we see it? Can we hear it? Can we taste it? Can we smell it? Can we touch it? No! But we do know that there is air. We just know it as we can experience its life - sustaining presence by inhaling it. Then why can't we believe that there can be God, too?

Another example: Russian astronaut Yuri Gagarin was the first man to go to space. When he came back to earth, reporters asked him whether he found the evidence of God in space. As he had to follow the official line of his country, he was forced to say that he looked and looked and did not find God. His words were quoted as evidence to prove that



**Janice Thomas  
Houston**

there is no God! What a strange argument! .

But after a few years another astronaut Jack Lousma went to space. He was so stunned by what he saw that he exclaimed: "To look at this kind of creation and not believe in God is impossible to me". Only an intelligent God can build such a perfect universe

It is up to us as believers to stay as role models and show the wonderful truth of Hebrews 11:6 and lead the unbelievers and the confused ones to the knowledge of God.

like this. God might not appear in a physical form. Just because you cannot see a physical form, that does not mean that you can just declare that there is no God. We as believers who have received God's Holy Spirit know how real that is. On the other hand the claim of atheists that there is no God seems like a very ridiculous thing to say.

There was an incident that happened many years ago where a college professor who was an atheist once said in a debate that he could not believe in

anything that he cannot see, taste, hear, smell or touch. Hearing this a student asked him, how he knew he had a brain which he had not seen, tasted, heard or touched it. The atheist replied that even though he hadn't seen, tasted, heard, smelled or touched his brain, just the fact that the brain experts had always found a brain in everyone that they had examined, meant that he too probably had a brain. The student pointed out that now there was progress in the professor's thinking because he was now admitting that he might or might not have a brain. Similarly keeping one's mind open to admit that there may or may not be a God, is better than not believing in God at all.

If a person 'knows' that God does not exist, that would mean he knows everything - which is impossible. Man is imperfect and he does not know everything. If there are some pieces of information that he does not know, then

God could be among those! If a person has to know everything, then he has to be everywhere at the same time, If you cannot be everywhere at the same time, then God could be somewhere where you are not present, right!

Let me quote Hebrews 11:6 once again: *"But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he who comes to God must believe that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him".*

So how do we know that God exists? It is through the lives of people around us! There are so many people out there who know God and who enjoy the rewards that God bestows on them. If we belong to that category, it is up to us as believers to stay as role models and show the wonderful truth of Hebrews 11:6 and lead the unbelievers and the confused ones to the saving knowledge of God.

# Children's

CORNER



## What is faith ?



The amazing story of Charles Blondin, a famous French tight-rope walker

explains faith clearly.

Blondin's greatest fame came when he became the first person to walk on a tightrope across the mighty Niagara Falls. People from both Canada and America came from miles away to see this great feat.

He walked across, 160 feet above the falls, several times and each time with a different daring feat once in a sack, on stilts, on a bicycle, in the dark, and even blindfolded! One time he even carried a stove and cooked an omelette in the middle of the rope.

A large crowd gathered and the buzz of excitement ran along both sides of the river bank. The crowd "Oohed and Aahed!" as Blondin carefully walked across one danger-

ous step after another pushing a wheelbarrow holding a sack of potatoes.

Then at one point, he asked for the participation of a volunteer. Upon reaching the other side, the crowd's applause was louder than the roar of the falls. Blondin suddenly stopped and addressed his audience: "Do you believe I can carry a person across in this wheelbarrow?" The crowd enthusiastically yelled, "Yes! We believe!"

"Okay," said Blondin, "Who wants

to get into the wheelbarrow."

As far as the Blondin story goes, no one did at the time!

This uni-que story illustrates a real life picture of what faith actually is. The crowd watched these daring feats. They said they believed. But their actions proved they truly did not believe.

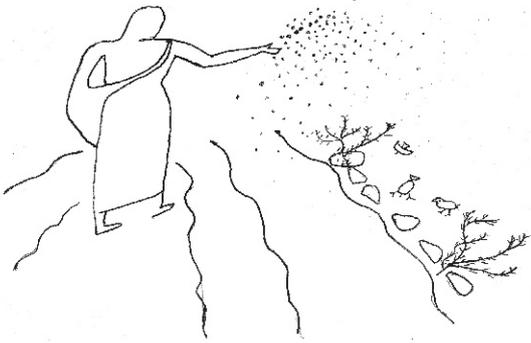
*Dear friends,*

In Christian life too we doubt God even though we know that He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. Let us learn to believe and trust in God. Matthew 17:20 says, I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you".



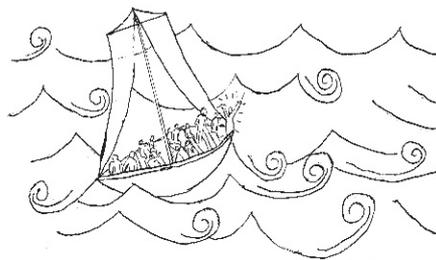
Juby Anoop, U.K.

A man who went out to sow the seed



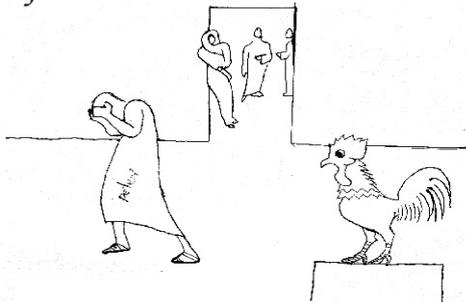
Pheba Susan Sam  
Kerala

Pray to God when you are in great distress



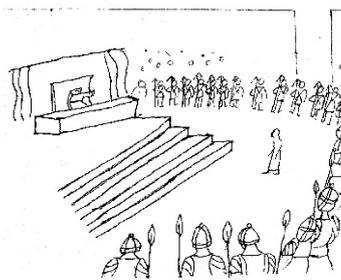
Rufos Roymon  
Bahrain

Peter denies Jesus Christ three times before the cock crows two times



Jeff Sam Scariah  
Kerala

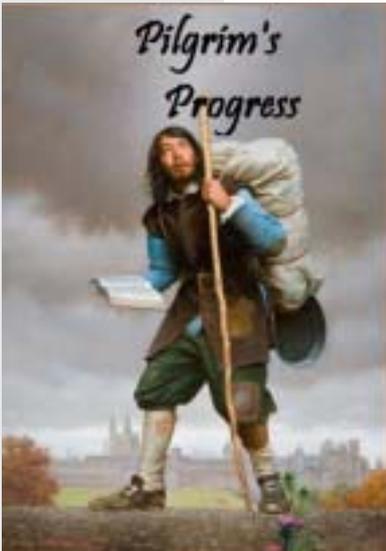
Though Jesus had done no crime, they handed him for Crucification



Sheba Mary Roymon  
Bahrain

# John Bunyan: *The man behind 'Pilgrim's Progress'*

A recent visit to John Bunyan's Museum at Bedford, England prompted me to take a deeper look into the exemplary and sacrificial life of this great man. The exact date of his birth is not known but John lived in a town called Bedford in England. John Bunyan would have been forgotten long ago if he had not written 'The Pilgrim's Progress'. This



book is still the most popular, successful allegory and was the second bestselling book for a long time and currently it is the eighth bestselling book. This book has been translated into 215 languages all over the world. It is said that in the days of westward expansion in the United States, early settlers often owned only two books, one being the Bible, and the other being John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. When we look at the achievements of this great man we are inclined to think that he must be a highly qualified scholar and may also be born in a very reputed family. But I was shocked to know about his background. John Bunyan had very little schooling.



**Evg. Anoop Chacko, UK**

John followed his father and became a tinker, a maker and mender of pots and pans and other such utensils. Though requiring some skill, the tinker's trade was not highly regarded, largely for social reasons, the chief being that most tinkering at that time was done by bands of wandering gypsies, who were not socially accepted.

One Sunday, he heard a voice which said 'Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell?' after which he decided to follow Jesus. He actively participated in the church activities. In 1655 he became a deacon of the Bedford church and began preaching, but not for long, because in 1658 he was indicted for preaching the gospel and in 1660 he was imprisoned in Bedford jail for 12 years. After completing his term of imprisonment he became the pastor of Bedford church. John Bunyan had to go through imprisonments for preaching the gospel. The imprisonment did not

hinder him from spreading the gospel as he began writing and sharing the Word. While in prison during 1676 he started writing the Pilgrim's Progress.

John Bunyan's life only affirms the verse, 1 Corinthians 1:27:

*"But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong".*

Dear friends, John Bunyan has a message for us: our circumstances, education or family background should not be a hindrance to the spread of the gospel



Sister Jenny (Steward, John Bunyan's Museum), & Evg. Anoop Chacko in front of John Bunyan's Statue,

## Discussion

# Why do many of the young generation leave their parents' church? \*\*

There is not one good answer to the above question, but there are certain things to be aware of, which might prevent such a happening.

### **Firstly, what is the status of 'Personal and Meaningful Faith' in a believer (both young and old)?**

Personal, meaningful faith is faith that impacts how we personally live, relate to others and grow in the Lord. This is practical faith that should be practiced by each believer of the older generation, seen (watched) by the younger generation and therefore, very likely, put into practice by them.

Do the Youth go to church just because their parents want them to? There are Youth today, who may have grown in church and were involved with church ministries, but are no longer interested in church. The reason for the lack of interest is not far to seek - they never had a personal and meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ - the author and finisher of our faith nor had surrendered their lives to the guidance and infilling of the Holy Spirit. All excuses and obstacles for the lack of interest will vanish when a person has a personal encounter with the Lord.

As the Younger generation grow up in Children's Church and Sunday School, they enjoy a ton of fun-filled activities, action songs with cool dance moves, but with very little memorizing of scripture verses. Bible lessons with any strong biblical doctrinal message are often buried among other playful activities. John 3:14, 15 says, "*Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be*



**Beena Ninan**  
Houston, USA

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*lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life". Only if the crucified Christ is lifted up in front of the young people, can they develop personal and meaningful faith.*

### **Secondly, is there hypocrisy in church?**

Some say that the church is full of

We are happy when we see youth on stage worshipping, or when youth attend conferences.

But it is more important to equip youth to live a Christian life outside the church environment.

hypocrites. Our Christian values and our godliness are confined to the four walls of the church. We have to recognize and live by God's great plan for our lives and teach our young ones

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\*\* This presentation was made at the 13th IPC Family Conference, Oklahoma, USA

to learn and live by God's plan in their lives on a day-to-day basis. Everyone, young or old, has to be prepared to face times of joy, times of trials, times of sorrow and times of triumph.

The young people are acknowledged as "good people" because they don't drink, smoke, watch bad movies or do other sinful things. We are happy to see youth on the stage worshipping, or when youth attend conferences. But it is more important to equip youth to live a Christian life. For example, when they go to college, they come across programs for self-improvement, they have friends who live as "good people" though not Christians, they are taught to be understanding and respectful of other people's beliefs, life styles, culture. The message given is "if the

conducts are good, then everything is fine". But none of these criteria meets what 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, "*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation*". New creations are hungry to know and speak God's Word. New creations love Jesus, and want to talk to others about Jesus and serve in the

Church. Christ gave teachers and youth pastors to the Church not for entertaining the youth, but "*to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up*" (Ephesians 4:12).

### **Thirdly, is the worship service meaningful to all who attend?**

Is language a barrier in worship services? If the singing, the preaching, the exhortations are understood by the hearers, they can be participants in the



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JKS



Old church building being renovated as Sikh temple

The Sikh community in Illinois, USA will have their first gurdwara soon by converting a 30,000 square feet Baptist church. The Temple will have a grand opening in September. Any symbols of the Christian faith in the former church like crosses or stained glass will be preserved during the renovation work and will be donated to local churches or to the Salvation Army. Temple supervisor Baba Daljit Singh Ji from Chicago said: "We need citizen's moral support. We want to educate the people in the community in the neighbourhood just to how we can do something good for the country through the temple".

*Sadly, this is the fate of many churches in USA whose membership becomes very few and cannot afford to maintain their Pastor and the property. It*

*opens up the opportunity for others to acquire the same at a nominal cost. Will there be faith when the Son of Man comes?*

Bibles are pouring into Cuba!

Bibles have not been sold in Cuban bookstores for more than 50 years. The only place people can get one is at a church. Now the evangelical church is experiencing a growth curve in Cuba. The Baptist Convention in Cuba is



distributing the Bibles to believers in more than 1,000 churches all over the island. They received more than 83,000 Bibles recently from the International Missions Board.

*It is a great sign towards freedom of religion in Cuba! It is to be welcomed heartily!*

Christian teachings could become criminalized in UK!

British Prime Minister David Cameron's new 'anti-extremism policy' is intended to defend democracy and tolerance. But the same could be used to criminalize Christian principles like 'Jesus is the Son of God' or the pro-life teaching, according to a statement of Rev. Mike Ovey, principal of Oak Hill Theological College in London. Rev. Ovey, a top theologian is also a former lawyer. He continues: "I would say, frankly,

**"Young generation" . . . . . Continuation from previous page**

worship rather than being spectators. They can apply the Word being spoken in their practical lives. There will be a sense of belonging and a feeling of responsibility to participate in various church ministries.

Is technology in worship services being used for God's glory? We utilize the big screens and the sound system very well. We have versions of the Bible on our phones and ipads. We can jot down sermon notes on ipads. But during the worship, are these same electronic devices being used for playing games, exchanging messages or texting, making to-do lists, or Google for information? After the worship service, these distractions continue to be the center of that person's life. Sooner or later he or she finds excuses to avoid attending church. There is a saying, "when the

ship is in the ocean, everything is fine. But when the ocean gets in the ship, the ship is in big trouble". Lots of things are "cool" in church. But when "cool" takes priority over Christ-centered life, then in their personal lives, Christ stays in the back seat.

**Fourthly, do all members of the Body of Christ have mutual respect?**

I Corinthians 12:18-20 reads, "*in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body*". Since the Church is the Body of Christ, young or old, youth or senior, all have been designed to work together in Christ. There should be mutual respect among the youth and the adults in matters of the church, in the words, actions and ideas being exchanged.

The church administration should be handled prayerfully and maturely, without any fear or favor. Youth should be involved in church administration prayerfully and maturely. The motto should be, "*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men*" (Colossians 3:23).

Let us make sure that "What we Believe" page in our 'church constitution' is being preached and practiced in our churches. Let us get to the basics of knowing what Justification, Sanctification, Atonement and Baptism of the Holy Spirit mean. Let us reinforce meaningful faith and worship, put aside hypocrisy and grow in mutual respect within the Body of Christ.

human experience tells us, the last thing you ever want to do is trust a government with your civil liberties”.

*What we are seeing is a growing anti-christian trend even in the so-called Christian countries of the West!*

#### Discovery of an Israeli couple!

An Israeli couple, Oriah Shimshoni and her husband, Tal, were getting their house in Jerusalem’s Ein Kerem neighborhood renovated. They experienced the surprise of a lifetime when workers discovered a 2,000-year-old Jewish ritual bath, called a mikvah. A mikvah is a pool of water in which observant married Jewish women are required to dip once a month. The Israel Antiquities Authority said that the discovery was a complete 11.5-foot-by-8-foot bath and it was rock-hewn and meticulously plastered according to the Jewish laws of purity. It had a stone staircase leading to the bottom of the immersion pool. Pottery vessels dating to the first century



and traces of fire that might constitute evidence of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple around years 66-70 were discovered inside the bath. The discovery lends weight to what some archaeologists have long suspected: that a Jewish community existed in that neighborhood during the time when Jesus lived. It is believed that John the Baptist was born in Ein Kerem. Archaeologists say that the area is important to Christians because it is where John the Baptist was born and where his pregnant mother, Elizabeth, met with Mary, mother of Jesus.

#### Woman escapes from kidnappers by prayer!

Kathi Byker was kidnapped from her home in the middle of the night. Two men taped her wrists, ankles, eyes and mouth and pulled her into their truck. According

to ‘Charisma News’, she started praying and speaking in tongues in her spirit as her mouth was taped. Romans 8:26 came to her mind: “Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words”. She continued to pray and more scripture came to her mind, bringing her peace and the fear factor was lessening. The truck stopped and Kathi was dragged into a field and taped to a telephone pole. Then the men left. The duct tape that was holding her to the pole ripped and she was free. It was still dark. Kathi ran until she saw a truck in a parking lot and a man who was sleeping in the truck. She woke him up and got his help to contact her husband.

*Prayer can make things happen.. Our Lord understands the groanings of our hearts.*

#### Episcopal Church changes marriage law!

According to a report published in ‘Christian Today’, church bishops met at the church’s General Convention in Salt Lake City, USA where they voted to change the language used in marriage ceremonies to include homosexual couples! The definition of ‘Holy Matrimony’ will be a physical and spiritual union between the couple. Previously, the definition was a ‘physical and spiritual union of a man and a woman’. The change was made to accommodate “the pastoral need for priests to officiate at a civil marriage of a same-sex couple,” according to a report for the convention.

*It is mindboggling to believe that a Christian church can redefine the teachings of the Word of God! Who has given the bishops the authority to change the definition of marriage just because the US supreme court has given some ruling? Devil is certainly pleased!*

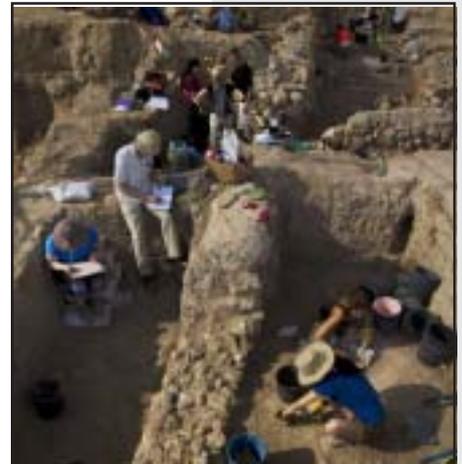
#### A ‘sin-free’ Facebook alternative!

Brazilian Evangelical Christians have launched a new site that intends to be a “sin-free” alternative to Facebook. The site, called “Facegloria,” attracted over 100,000 users in its first month of operation. The Christian Post reports that Facegloria will not allow curse words, as well as about 600 other banned

words. Violent and sexual contents are prohibited. Web designer Atilla Barros said that the company aims to be morally and technically better than Facebook. He hopes to see 10 million users on the site in the next two years. Facegloria is a social media site similar to Facebook, but offers Christian differences, including an “Amen” button instead of “Like”.

#### Goliath gates: Entrance to Gath

A massive gate was unearthed in Israel which was possibly the entrance to Gath, a biblical city that, in its heyday, was the biggest metropolis in the region. In biblical accounts, the Philistines ruled the city. The Old Testament also



Archaeologists at the site of excavation

describes Gath as the home of Goliath, the giant warrior whom the Israelite King David felled with a slingshot. Aren Maeir of Bar-Ilan University in Israel, the archaeologist leading the current excavation, said: “The new findings reveal just how impressive the ancient Philistine city once was”. The team was digging trenches to look for the ancient city’s fortifications. So far, only the top surfaces of the structures are visible, but based on the size and shape of the stones used to make them, the city walls must have been quite large. Maeir said: “The mighty fortifications would have formed a rather imposing boundary that prevented King David from expanding his kingdom westward”.

*All archaeological evidences point to the historical accuracy of Biblical narratives. Let us pray that God may open the eyes of unbelievers!*