When we are cursed
we bless,
When we are persecuted,
we endure it;
When are slandered,
we answer kindly.
1 Corinthians 4:12

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CHIEF EDITOR’S NOTE

“Our biological birth puts us in the category of mere men. But after our second new birth in Christ, we are equipped to live ‘under the Laws of Christ’, far beyond the prescribed boundaries for ‘mere men’.”

ARE YOU NOT ACTING LIKE MERE MEN?

E.M. Bounds said:

“What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men whom the Holy Spirit can use. The Holy Spirit does not flow through methods but through men. He does not come on machinery but on men. He does not anoint plans but men”.

Each of us are exhorted to live, walk and behave like Jesus Christ. “He who abides in Christ should walk as He walked” (1 Jn. 2:6). We must learn to speak from our hearts. Jesus always spoke from His heart. The Bible was written for our hearts, not for our heads. The psalmist said, “Thy word have I hid in my heart that I may not sin against Thee.” Ps. 119:11.

For you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 1 Cor. 3:3

Paul rebuked the Corinthians for “walking like mere human beings”. He warned them to stop behaving like mere men – with human limitations. Our biological birth puts us in the category of mere men. But after our second new birth in Christ, we are equipped to live ‘under the Laws of Christ’, far beyond the prescribed boundaries for ‘mere men’.

Paul goes on in vs. 16, of 1 Cor. 3:9, “for we are all God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.”

The use of a possessive descriptor, “God’s – that we belong to the Lord Himself, is a sobering and amazing thought! Each one of us, is a treasured possession of the Eternal, Sovereign and Powerful God!”
We are fellow workers with God — meaning we have a 2-dimensional relationship — a vertical dimension with God and a horizontal dimension with our fellow workers, serving together to share the gospel and make disciples.

We are called God’s field, as God works in the lives of every believer, to make us a producing field — breaking up the fallow ground, weeding out our self-reliance, and nourishing us to become mature people, fit for the battle in hostile environments, laboring together in the harvest.

We are God’s Building, His workmanship. He is building us to be grand temples of the Holy Spirit. God’s divine power equips us with everything that we need for life and godliness. Everything is comprehensively inbuilt in us for that purpose; each one of us have been woven wonderfully by God — as we are sent as a promised child, with a definite plan and purpose.

So, to walk as mere men is:

- to labour and strive all your life in this world, for some earthly advantage
- to put our hope and confidence in visible and perceptible methods, and not trusting the promise of God or believing His power
- to be full of hypocrisy, deceitful and falsehood, with no truth in the heart
- to naturally find nothing so sweet as anger, hatred and revengeful thoughts against one another
- to seek our own, making SELF the god and center.

So, the question is how should a Christian should walk?

There is no doubt that each of us have to persevere and endure the battle, daily, daily, daily. Changes should be evident in our lives — in our thinking, in our actions, in our words and in our daily walk.

Charles Spurgeon, “A man’s life is always more forcible than his speech. When men take stock of him, they reckon his deeds as dollars and his words as pennies. If his life and doctrine disagree the mass of onlookers accept his practice and reject his preaching.”

We are called to “walk, circumspectly, not as fools but as wise”. (Ephesians 5:1-15).

Amen.

Shibu Thomas  
Chief Editor  
Voice of the Christians
Pastor and 75-year old sisters beaten, congregation attacked during fasting prayer, Tamil Nadu

Pastor Rangaswamy Philip has been ministering at ‘Glory to God Church ‘for the past 13 years. This Church, located in Annur, is a town in Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu.

On Friday, 03rd May 2019, nothing could have prepared Pastor Philip and the congregation for the attack that took place during the ‘Fasting & Prayer’.

A congregation of regular Church goers of around 30 members were gathered for the ‘Fasting & Prayer. At around 11.15 am, suddenly, there was a loud shouting and sloganeering, taking the whole congregation by surprise.

8 religious fanatics, headed by Thangary, armed with sticks, iron rods, and sharp weapons, trespassed into the sanctuary, and began abusing and intimidating the Pastor Philip. They accused him of indulging in conversion activities, and violently slapped him across his face a couple of times. Creating fear and terror among the congregation, they brutally beat them with sticks. Even elderly women were not spared. Iyanar, Andathal, and two 75-year old sisters - Marughathal & Kittamupan were not spared.

Eventually, after vandalizing and literally destroying the place, the fanatics gave the slip and ran away.

Pastor contacted the Police and the local Hospital who rushed an ambulance to the site of the attack. 4 critically injured persons were rushed to the Government hospital for further medical treatment.

Two elderly sisters and Pastor who suffered injuries, at the hospital
The Police, evaluating the ferocity of the attack and the damage to property, filed a FIR (First information Report) against the fanatics.

Pastor along with his wife and 2 children, live in this House Church. Most of the Utensils, Church equipment – chairs, floor mats, fans etc. were destroyed by the vandals.

Speaking to Persecution Relief, Pastor was deeply moved that old people were targeted and beaten by the fanatics.

“They are very, very poor people, but love the Lord and wanted to participate in the ‘Fasting and Prayer’ in spite of their ages.

“I am willing to endure the beating but I am very sad that they beat my elders”.

The forces of darkness are ruthless, determined, and cunning. The enemy would love nothing more than to fill our minds with discouragement and defeat.

Opposition will come, but our God is greater.

“Great is our Lord, and abundant in power, his understanding is beyond measure” (Psalm 147:5).

We are grateful to Pastor Joshua informed Persecution Relief about this incident in Tamil Nadu.

Church, please pray for Pastor Philip, not to be discouraged, instead to stand firm and let God fight our fiercest battles.

Relief Provided

“I AM VERY GRATEFUL TO BRO. SHIBU THOMAS WHO CONTACTED ME AND EXTENDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND TOOK CARE OF ALL MEDICAL EXPENSES FOR THE 2 ELDERLY SISTERS; HE PAID FOR REPLACEMENT OF THE DAMAGED ITEMS IN THE CHURCH. MAY GOD RICHLY BLESS HIM.” - PASTOR RANGASWAMY PHILIP

The house Church vandalized
Deceased Christian forcibly cremated by religious fanatics, Odisha

Pastor Babulal Tandi is affiliated with ‘Mission India, and has been serving at the Bhanpur Village, Narla Block, Kalahandi, Odisha, for the past 15 years. This House Church, has the been the venue for Sunday Worship service, where around 2 dozen believers gather every Sunday.

On Friday, 10th May, one of the believers of the Church, Bro. Butti Bihari, around 70 years of age, who had been ailing for the past several months, passed away. While grieving for their loss, the immediate kin – his two sons, began to make arrangements for the final burial service.

Against the father’s final wishes, son Anant, who is not a Christian, refused to allow his father’s body to be buried as per Christian rites. He garnered support from the local villagers and religious fanatics, bringing a communal colour to the incident. His brothers and other family members of the deceased, tried to make him understand that he should fulfill the explicit and last & final wish of his deceased father Bihari. They explained to him that he was a ‘born again believer’ and that as a Christian, he should not be cremated but buried as per a Christian rite.

But son Anant, was adamant that his father would only be cremated and refused to even consider burying the body.

Later, the villagers, forcibly took Bro. Bihari’s body and cremated it. Not satisfied, they decided to go to Pastor Babulal’s house and further harass him.

Ascribing blame to Pastor Babulal Tandi for the situation, they cornered him, brutally beating him up. By the grace of God, Pastor managed to escape from there and reached home.

Shouting anti-Christian slogans, threats and abuses, they demanded that he come out of the house. However, Pastor and his family – wife and 2 children – one boy of 17 years and a girl of 12 years, fearing further altercation & escalation of the situation, stayed indoors. Undeterred, the rowdy and violent mob, vandalized his house and demolished a portion of the kitchen wall.

When our Founder spoke to Pastor Babulal, he sounded extremely distressed and terrified but through prayer and counsel, his spirit was lifted up through the word of God.
Pastor added that on the 5th of April, a few people committed their lives to following Jesus Christ. Since that day, he claims that the fanatics had been targeting him.

On Sunday, 12th May, Pastor and his family gathered in their home and prayed instead of the regular Worship Service.

Pastor Babulal has asked for our prayers for the safety of his family and church members. He has asked that we remember the persecutors in our prayers too.

Rev. P.D. Joseph, Mission India, expressed concern over the turn of events. Rev. Jakub Kumar, Coordinator, Mission India, informed us about his Associate Pastor being beaten up.

Persecution Relief has reported similar incidents where first-generation Christians are denied a Christian burial. In most cases, the villagers or members of the kin, conspire and hijack the deceased body and cremate it, to prevent a Christian burial.

Odisha has recorded 3 incidents of hate-crimes against Christians in 2019. Odisha ranked as the 6th most hostile state in 2018 with 20 hate-crimes.

“I learnt about Persecution Relief through our Rev. Jakub Kumar, Coordinator, Mission India, who put me in touch with them. Once I narrated the events, they encouraged me and lifted my spirits through prayer. I thank God for their ministry and the financial support extended towards medical expenses and reconstruction of the wall of my kitchen. God bless Bro. Thomas”. - Pastor Babulal Tandi
Persecution and Relief

Christian home vandalized, Tripura

Just as the final hours of Election counting ended and results were announced, religious fanatics raided the house of a Christian brother, demolishing his house and all things in it, triggering fears.

On Thursday, 23rd May, at around 8.00 pm, when the family were not at home, a mob of religious fanatics, illegally entered the home, vandalized all things in it. All Church items – Holy Bibles, furniture of the home, utensils, floor mats and musical instruments were completely destroyed. Bro. Samrat was deeply moved that his home was targeted.

Bro. Raju, the older brother, of Bro. Samrat Urang, who lives a few kilometers away, has opened his house to accommodate the family. The family are grateful to God that all of them are unharmed in spite of the loss of their home to the violence and discrimination.

“GREAT IS OUR LORD, AND ABUNDANT IN POWER, HIS UNDERSTANDING IS BEYOND MEASURE” (PSALM 147:5).

We are grateful to Evangelist C. O. Davis, In-charge of Brethren Assembly in Tripura, who called Persecution Relief and informed about the incident.

Church, please pray for Bro. Samrat, not to be discouraged, instead to stand firm and let
“Evangelist C. O. Davis, In-charge of Brethren Assembly in Tripura, informed me about Persecution Relief. When I reached out to them, they were very pro-active and very empathetic. I thank Bro. Shibu Thomas for the timely financial support that has helped extended. God bless Persecution Relief”. - Bro. Samrat Urang

God fight his fiercest battles. Pray for the congregation that gathers every Sunday, that they will not be scattered or lost, for peace, forgiveness and reconciliation as they find alternate accommodation to gather in the days ahead.

If any of you reading this incident, is led by the Holy Spirit, to assist Bro. Samrat rebuild his home, please write us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com or contact us on WhatsApp:+ 91 9993200020.

FOUNDER - PERSECUTION RELIEF

WWW.PERCISIONRELIEF.ORG
The Christian Community in Guntur, expressed disappointment and condemned the burning of the “Holy Spirit Foundation Church”, as they gathered at the site in a show of support and unity, in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.

Pastor Kalimala Purushotham had been ministering at “Holy Spirit Foundation Church”, since the past 5 years, where around 500 Christians gather every Sunday. This Church building was located at Nallapadu, a neighbourhood of Guntur in Andhra Pradesh.

On Friday, 24\textsuperscript{th} May, around mid-night, it is alleged that religious fanatics trespassed into the property, set the thatched roof-cottage-Church on fire, and completely razed to the ground.

All the Church materials like Holy Bibles, Chairs, Musical Instruments and the Pulpit, were reduced to ashes.

On receiving the news, Pastor Purushotham, who lives around 2 kms away in a village called Vengalaya Palli, rushed to the spot to see the unbelievable sight. Speaking to Persecution Relief, Pastor’s son Israel, a graduate from Bible College, expressed great sadness and disappointment at this religious, hatred-motivated crime. He estimated the loss at around Rs. 5 Lakhs.

Church pray that God in His mercy, would comfort and strengthen Pastor Purushotham and his family.
If any one of you, reading this story, is led by the Holy Spirit, to financially support Pastor Purushotham, please write to us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com or WhatsApp us at +91 99932 00020.

With Jaganmohan Reddy, who is a practicing Christian, taking over as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Christians in Andhra Pradesh are praying that the situation with the Christian community would enjoy religious freedom, to practice their faith in safety.

Church, please pray that Christians across India, for God’s supernatural protection over all of them.

The scale of “crack down” against the Christian minority community has been unprecedented.

In 2018, Andhra Pradesh recorded 16 incidents, making it the 9th most hostile state against Christians. 9 incidents have been recorded so far, from Andhra Pradesh, in 2019.

9 Church buildings have been burnt this year. This is the 2nd Church that is being burnt in Andhra Pradesh.

“I WAS SO DISAPPOINTED WHEN THE CHURCH BUILDING WAS BURNT. I AM GRATEFUL TO PERSECUTION RELIEF OF WHOM I HAD NOT HEARD OF BEFORE. THE FOUNDER ENCOURAGED ME AND PRAYED WITH ME AND PROVIDED FINANCIAL RELIEF TO RESTART THE BUILDING. I AM SURE THAT MY LORD WILL VINDICATE ME. GOD BLESS PERSECUTION RELIEF AND THEIR MINISTRY.” – PASTOR KALIMALA PURUSHOTHAM
Bro. Philip Christy along with Pastor C. B. Masih and others who were attending a Gospel Meeting at Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, where accosted by local Police and taken to Mubarakpur Police Station on charges of indulging in conversion activities.

On 29th May, Bro. Philip Christy and 2 others, who were on their way to Jaunpur, halted at Azamgarh, to attend a meeting organised by Pastor C. B. Masih, where the Speaker Rev. Vinod Ram Babu.

The meeting was in progress in a ‘private open filed’, when a Police Team, gate-crashed the meeting and demanded that the meeting be stopped. When Bro. Christy and the organisers objected to this unreasonable demand from the Police. However, the Police were hostile and not ready to listen to any explanation, and ordered the Pastor and the organisers to accompany them to the Mubarakpur Police Station.

As though pre-planned, there was a huge mob of religious fanatics who had gathered in large numbers, shouting anti-Christian slogans and
protesting outside the Police Station. What followed was an angry exchange of words, abuses and accusations by the fanatics, in front of the Police, alleging that conversion activities were taking place and the Gospel meeting, without any validation.

Eventually, SHO Mr. Mishra and other senior officers, listened to both sides of the story. Other Christian Leaders reached the Police Station, and explained to the Police that what transpired was not illegal and well within the Constitutional rights of an Indian citizen.

By the grace of God, after nearly 5 hours of negotiation, Bro. Christy, Pastor Masih and others, were released by the Police, without any charges being filed against them.

Church, please pray Christians across India, for God’s supernatural protection over all of them.
Christian Murdered, Chhattisgarh

Bro. Sachdev Samrat, a 48-year old tribal Christain, was found murdered in Bijapur District, Chhattisgarh State.

At the time of writing this story, his killers are yet to be apprehended by the authorities. Unfortunately, the likelihood of the attackers being brought to justice is highly unlikely as he was falsely alleged to be a Police Informer.

Speaking to Persecution Relief Founder, local Pastor Nagendra Kumar Jena condemned the beastly act. He recalled that Bro. Sachdev Samrat was a committed Christian, who assisted him in ministry work, for the last 2 years.

The events that led to the killing of Sahadev, go back to more than 10 years, when he was being harassed by both police and Naxalites, suspected of being an informer for both sides, said Pastor Jena.

In 2004, Pastor Nagendra, originally from Odisha, heard the call of God and left to minister at Bhairamgarh Tehsil, Bijapur District, Chhattisgarh.

He worked hard, travelling the challenging jungle and mountain terrains by foot, visiting villages, and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. God blessed him with the gift of healing that when he prayed over these tribal villagers who were sick, they were healed and delivered from their sickness, oppression and bondages.

In 2007, during one of his many travels, he visited Gudshakal village and shared memorable moments from his lifetime.
Cover Story

THE MEETING STARTED AROUND NOON AND ENDED AROUND 4.00 PM. SINCE THE AREA AROUND THE JUNGLE BECOMES DARK VERY QUICKLY IN THE EVENINGS, NO ONE VENTURES OUT AFTER SUN-SET. SO, STRAIGHT AFTER THE MEETING, PASTOR AND HIS TEAM HEADED BACK TO BHAIMARGARH.

Nevertheless, Sahadev and Sukhdev’s family continued living in the village even when they were harassed. The villagers called for a meeting and forbade the 2 families from going to the town to participate in worship meetings – yet nothing could stop them.

At the Church, under the mentorship and guidance of Pastor Nagendra, both Sukhdev and Sahadev flourished as an Evangelists. They started reaping souls for the Kingdom of God and this became a hindrance for the Naxal movement. Both actively supported Pastor in the Church, helping him, just as Aaron and Hur stood with Moses.

Sahadev was continually tortured by the Maoists, after which he left the village for few months and came to live in Bhairamgarh.

In September of 2013, a team of around 16 members, including Sukhdev, Sahadev, 3 women and couple of children from Bhairamgarh church, under the leadership of Pastor Narendra Kumar Jena, travelled to Itampar, situated around 14 kms, south of Bhairamgarh, close to Abhujmad, for a Gospel Outreach Meeting. The Team travelled on 8 motorbikes through Maoist-infested jungle, as the rough terrain and unpaved road, could not accommodate a jeep. On foot, people would have to travel days to access this remote region.

On their drive to Itampar, Pastor and his team were conscious that they were being closely watched by Naxalites.

The meeting started around noon and ended around 4.00 pm. Since the area around the

the gospel. Sukhdev Negi and his family, committed to become followers of Jesus Christ. So real and passionate was their conversion, that the entire family would travel 12 kms by foot, every Sunday, to Bhairamgarh, to attend the meetings.

Sahadev Samrat, nephew of Sukhdev Negi, also living in Gudshakal, was active in the Naxals movement. He started accompanying his Uncle to these meetings. The gospel message gripped his heart and in 2013, Sahadev was baptized. He renounced his life as a Naxalite, and surrendered his life to be a Christian.

As soon as the families accepted Jesus as their Saviour, the villagers started oppressing and ostracizing them, to recant their faith. But both families were adamant and steadfast, refusing to forsake Christ.

As this village lies in the interior and deep jungles which was ‘controlled’ by Naxal groups, the Naxals had instructed the villagers not to visit the town regularly – as they felt that they needed to keep an eye on those who did, as they could be forced to provide information to the Police about Maoist activities.

The area around the
jungle becomes dark very quickly in the evenings, no one ventures out after sun-set. So, straight after the meeting, Pastor and his team headed back to Bhairamgarh.

However, the Naxalites had set a trap and ambushed the entire team.

Their focus was only Sahadev, who was isolated, captured and dragged into the jungle, as the team watched on, stunned, bewildered and dumbfounded – feeling powerless against the armed mob of Naxalites. The rest of the team made a hasty retreat on foot, leaving behind their motorbikes.

The day of his funeral………his immediate family and funeral procession through the village

The following day, it is alleged that the Naxalites had a mock-court ‘Jan-Adalat’ – “an alternate dispute redressal mechanism”, to examine if he was indeed a Police informer. Bro. Sahadev was finally released by the Naxals— when Sukhdev took the responsibility on himself.

In 2018, Sukhdev Negi became the Sarpanch (village head) and things took a turn for the worst. His elevation didn’t go well with the Maoists. In August 2018, Maoists surrounded Sukhdev’s house to attack him. While he tried to give them the slip by running out into the darkness, he was chased and caught by the Naxalites, who killed him. Taking the opportunity, Sahadev who lived opposite his Uncle’s house, narrowly escaped with his life.

Naxalites have a tradition, that once a man is ‘marked’, they ensure that retribution is paid back. They never forget anything done against them. Time is never a factor and even after a gap of 15-20 years, they hunt the betrayer down. Sadly, Sahadev Samrat was on their radar and it was only a matter of time, that the Naxalites would get him because they believed he was a Police informer.

Sahadev purchased an Auto Rickshaw on loan, along with some money that he received from the Church, towards his services, with which he made a lawful & decent livelihood.

The day of his funeral………his immediate family and the funeral procession through the village
On 25th May, 2019, according to heart-breaking reports, Sahadev, his wife Rudkai, 4-year-old daughter Dipshika and 1-year old baby, had gone to their mother-in-law’s house, to attend a marriage. His mother-in-law lives around 2 kms away from his home.

Naxalites appear to have received information from anti-Christians, about Sahadev’s movements, since they anticipated his arrival.

Around 10.30 pm, Sahadev and his wife were sitting in the auto and talking when she noticed a group of men walking towards the Auto. Just as she alerted her husband, Sahadev tried to run away, but was overpowered by the ruthless mob, who dragged him deeper into the darkness of the jungle, stabbing him multiple times, fatally injuring him.

Powerless against the armed mob of Naxalites, heart broken by the loss, terrified by the brazen attack, nobody ventured out to retrieve the dead body. It was only in the morning, when the Police forces arrived, that they reached the site where Sahadev’s gruesome, mutilated body was found.

Pastor Nagendra arranged the funeral and Sahadev Samarat was buried on 26th May, 2019, at his village.

Sahadev is survived by his young wife Rukdai (25 years), daughter Dipsika (4 years) and a 1-year old daughter. They belong to Halba Caste (ST).

Church, pray for the safety of widow Rudkai, Pastor Jena and the congregation, to stand steadfast in their faith, in the face of such a great tragedy.

A MARTYR IS NOT ONLY A HERO FOR THE FAITH, BUT A PRESERVER OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION.

Persecution Relief has recorded 477 incidents of hate-crimes against Christians in 2019, of which, 17 incidents were from Chhattisgarh, making it 8th most hostile state.

In 2019, we have already recorded 157 incidents of hate crime cases against Christians, until April 2019 – in which 7 were from Chhattisgarh.
THE MAN WHO TRANSLATED THE BIBLE INTO ENGLISH, WAS BURNT ALIVE AT THE RIDICULOUS YOUNG AGE OF 42 YEARS OLD, FOR HIS EFFORTS.

(Source: Google Foxe’s book of Martyrs.)

Nearly 500 years ago, this week, William Tyndale, fondly called ‘Father of the English Bible’ was strangled and burned at the stake after being tried and convicted of heresy and reason for translating the Bible into English.

**HIS OFFENSE!**

He translated the Greek Bible into English.

That you have a Bible in a language you can read is largely due to his labors, and many of the very phrases you read in it retain the flavor of his understanding of the Greek and Hebrew.

A graduate of Oxford and Cambridge, Tyndale had a powerful desire to make the Bible available even to the common people in England, in order to correct the ‘Biblical ignorance of the priests.’ At one-point Tyndale told a priest, “If God spares my life, are many years pass, I will cause a boy that driveth the plow, shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost.”

Today, 90% of the King James Version of the Holy Bible and 75% of the Revised Standard Version are from the translation made by Tyndale, a man to whom you owe more than you’ll ever know.

A nice dream, but how was Tyndale to accomplish his task, when translating the Bible into English was ILLEGAL at the time?

He went to London to ask Bishop Tunstall if he could be authorized to make an English translation of the Bible, but the Bishop would not grant his approval.

However, Tyndale would not let the disapproval of men stop him from carrying out what seemed so obviously God’s will.
With encouragement and support of some British merchants, he decided to go to Europe to complete his translation, then have it printed and smuggled back into England.

In 1524 Tyndale sailed for Germany. In Hamburg, he worked on the New Testament, and in Cologne, he found a printer who would print the work. However, news of Tyndale’s activity came to an opponent of the Reformation who had the press raided.

Tyndale himself managed to escape with the pages already printed and made his way to the German city Worms where the New Testament was soon published.

Six thousand copies were printed and smuggled into England.

The Bishops did everything they could to eradicate the Bibles. Bishop Tunstall had copies ceremoniously burned at St. Paul’s; the Archbishop of Canterbury bought up copies to destroy them. Tyndale used the money to print improved editions!

Tyndale continued hiding among the merchants in Antwerp and began translating the Old Testament while the King’s agents searched all over England and Europe for him.
A copy of Tyndale’s “The Obedience of a Christian Man” fell into the hands of Henry VIII, providing the king with the rationale to break the Church in England from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534.

In 1535, Tyndale was arrested and jailed in the castle of Vilvoorde (Filford) outside Brussels for over a year.

Tyndale’s work was denounced by authorities of the Roman Catholic Church and Tyndale himself was accused of heresy.

Tyndale, 42 was finally found by an Englishman who pretended to be his friend but then turned him over to the authorities. After a year and a half in prison, he was brought to trial for heresy -- FOR BELIEVING, among other things, IN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS and that THE MERCY OFFERED IN THE GOSPEL WAS ENOUGH FOR SALVATION.

In August 1536, he was condemned and was executed [burned alive at the stake] publicly on October 6, 1536, in a small town in Belgium.

As he burnt to death, Tyndale reportedly said “Lord, open the king of England’s eyes.”

**WAS HIS PRAYER ANSWERED?**

YES! The prayer was answered first in part when three years later, in 1539, Henry VIII required every parish church in England to make a copy of the English Bible available to its parishioners. Today, Tyndale’s prayer is fully answered, not only are the King’s eyes opened, but the Bible a universal instrument.

- In 1611, the 54 scholars who produced the King James Bible drew significantly from Tyndale, as well as from translations that descended from his.

- In 2002, Tyndale was placed at number 26 in the BBC’s poll of the 100 Greatest Britons; but in heaven he surely would be before the preceding 25.

A very important and interesting piece of history worth knowing and appreciating by all believers. May it challenge us to spend quality time in this same glorious book that this great servant literally gave his life for.

Today, it’s hard to imagine the world without an English Bible, and there could now be as many as 900 of such translations in existence – but before Tyndale it had never happened. He’s known as the Father of the English Bible, since the later, epochal work of the King James Version of the Bible largely consisted of Tyndale’s scholarly and accessible translations.

The English language, as with scholarly understanding, continues to evolve – and so the work of Bible translation continues today.

But without the courage and genius of men like Tyndale, who challenged the status quo before them and died for doing so, it might never have been possible.
BURKINA FASO: 5 LEADERS KILLED IN 3 MONTHS AS ISLAMISTS CONTINUE TO TARGET CHURCHES
By World Watch Monitor

At least ten more Christians have been killed as a spate of attacks on churches continues in northern Burkina Faso. The ten, who died in two attacks on 12 and 13 May, include another Catholic priest, Siméon Yampa.

On Monday, 13 May, a procession of four Catholics was attacked while they returned a statue of Mary to their church in Singa, 25kms from Kongoussi, reported Fides. The armed men let children go before killing four adults and destroying the statue.

IRANIAN CHURCH CLOSED, CROSS TORN DOWN
By World Watch Monitor

An Assyrian church in northwestern Iran has been closed down and the cross removed from its tower, reports advocacy organisation Article 18.

A “large number” of agents from Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence and EIKO, an organisation presided over by the Supreme Leader, reportedly stormed the 100-year-old church on 9 May, changed all the locks, tore down the cross and ordered the church warden to leave.
In Iran, members of the historically Christian Assyrian and Armenian communities are a recognized religious minority, whose freedom of religion is protected by national law. However, churches that have attracted Muslim-born Iranians by holding services in the Persian language have been forced to close, or to at least stop those services and hold them only in their respective native languages.

SRI LANKAN CHRISTIANS GRAPPLE WITH AFTERMATH OF EASTER BOMBINGS AMID FEARS OF FRESH ATTACKS
By World Watch Monitor

Sri Lankan Arasaratnam Verl is deep in mourning

His son Jackson (13) and sister Verlini (36) were killed instantly when a bomb exploded in the evangelical Zion Church in the eastern city of Batticaloa on Easter Sunday morning, 21 April.

Verlini’s husband Ranjith (39), an engineer and Blackbelt in karate, died a week later of kidney failure: he also had 3rd degree burns.

Of the 257 dead, about 180 were at the church sites. The others were killed in blasts at the Shangri-La, Kingsbury and Cinnamon Grand hotels in Colombo. The three hotels had advertised their Easter brunches. Hours later on Easter Sunday, two more explosions followed during police raids.

Christians had been experiencing persecution in this Buddhist-majority
country, but this is the first time they were targeted by Islamist terror groups. The Bodu Bala Sena (Buddhist Power Force, or BBS) had been attacking Christians and Muslims over the last decade.

In 2018, NCEASL recorded at least 86 incidents of discrimination, threats and violence against Christians, and it had reported 26 such incidents this year until March 25.

More than 70 percent of Sri Lanka’s population follows Theravada Buddhism. Muslims make up about 10 percent of the population, and Christians less than eight percent, the majority of whom are Roman Catholic.

NUN DECAPITATED, MORE THAN 30 OTHERS KILLED IN CAR IN TWO WEEKS

CAR (International Christian Concern) -

More than 30 people were killed in the past two weeks in continued violence in the Central African Republic, including a Catholic nun who was decapitated. Most of these people were killed near the town of Paoua near the border with Chad. It is believed that the killing was done by a group called 3R. According to a UN Spokesperson, the group had called a meeting for villages near Paoua, but then ending up killing those who showed up.

3R was one of 14 groups that signed a peace agreement in February of this year. However, with this act of violence, they have broken that agreement. Bi Sidi Souleymane, also known as Sidiki, was the leader of 3R prior to the signing of the agreement. After it, he was assigned as a special military advisor to the Prime Minister of CAR. Now he is being called on to arrest those who committed this crime, or else he will be held accountable.

Also, Sister Ines Nieves Sancho was decapitated nearly two weeks ago in the town of Nola in southwest CAR. It is unclear who committed this atrocity, but the sister had been a long-time resident of that area, working with impoverished women and girls. According to the Washington Post, local authorities said that her killing might not be linked to the ongoing sectarian violence between Muslim and Christian militias, but may have been an attempt to make money.
PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH IN INDIA

ATTACKS ON CHRISTIANS

WWW.PERSECUTIONRELIEF.ORG
The Woman of Samaria

Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” — John 4:13, 14

While the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans, Jesus had. As the omniscient Lord, He knew all about the woman of Samaria, and went there to show and teach that He was above all religious and racial prejudices, and that true worship consisted in worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth.

So, what kind of woman was this Samaritan water-bearer? She is referred to, at least twice, as “the woman of Samaria”. From this phrase alone, we get to know about her religion and nationality. Not only was she from an alien race as far as the Jews were concerned, she was also obviously poor. Women of affluence did not draw water from the well in those days.

There is another possible reason why this woman was referred to as “the woman of Samaria.” When Jesus met her at Jacob’s well, as God He knew all about her dubious past and her association with the men of her town. She had no standing even on a moral front as far as her townspeople were concerned.

Jesus could tell her everything about her life and her guilty past. He knew her soul’s deepest need, and through this personal connection he made with her, God reached an entire city.

As a Samaritan, this woman knew about the law against adultery. When Jesus found her, she was living with a man who was not her husband. Not only this, she had already had five husbands before this man. Jesus was aware of this. However, He did not expose her sin to others. He wanted her to feel the sense of sin herself. Her life had to be a clean receptacle to receive the living spring of water, so Jesus, the omniscient Lord, revealed

Radha Menon

Adam’s Rib
WHAT JESUS SUPPLIED WAS NOT EXTERNAL WATER TO SATISFY A RECURRING PHYSICAL NEED, BUT AN INTERNAL AND ETERNAL SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL, LIFE-GIVING WATER. AS THE WOMAN CONTINUED TO COMMUNE WITH THE LORD, LIGHT BROKE IN UPON HER DARKENED MIND AND HER IGNORANCE GAVE WAY TO SPIRITUAL INSIGHT.

to her the filth in her life. The very wounds her shame would hide were laid bare by His all-searching eye.

As the woman spoke of the deep well before her and about Christ having no bucket to draw water from the well, Jesus said to her, “Anyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but anyone who drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst anymore; the water I shall give him will turn into a spring of water, welling up to eternal life.”

What Jesus supplied was not external water to satisfy a recurring physical need, but an internal and eternal source of spiritual, life-giving water. As the woman continued to commune with the Lord, light broke in upon her darkened mind and her ignorance gave way to spiritual insight.

It is fascinating that it was to this unnamed Samaritan woman that our Lord actually revealed His true identity when He said, “I that speak to you am the Messiah.” How privileged this sinful woman was to hear from the lips of Jesus Himself the divine secret of His Messiahship! By the Spirit, the woman accepted and acknowledged this truth. She immediately became a powerful witness to her remarkable discovery. Leaving her water pot behind at the well, she hurried back to the city. There she witnessed to the men she knew only too well about the truth of Christ the Messiah for whom both the Jews and the Samaritans were waiting. With the zeal of a new Evangelist, she said to them, “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I ever did: is not this the Christ?” Such was her earnestness that many of those men who came with her to the well to listen to Jesus and learn from Him, believed and accepted Him as Christ, their Saviour. Not just because of her witness but because they listened and heard for themselves and believed.

Thus was a city saved through a Samaritan woman – a slighted gender within a reviled race!
The prize of war is a concept used in battles which says that victorious armies have the legitimate right to use the weapons of the enemy plundered during war against the enemy. One of the most powerful weapons used by the devil against Christians is the threat of death. Jesus Christ plundered death from the enemy and used it against the powers of darkness through self-sacrifice.

Romans 5:6-21 is one of the most enlightening and powerful passages on how Jesus Christ appropriated death from the enemy and through self-sacrifice used it as the most powerful weapon against the powers of Satan rendering them helpless. Self-preservation usually deters most people from doing right, good and holy deeds, and results in them saying little lies or big lies, small scale stealing or embezzlement to buy something. Self-sacrifice on the other hand results in the enemy being absolutely unable to put fear into us. Let us see how Christ used death which

as we move from Romans 5:6-10, we see Christ’s motivation for self-sacrifice – Us – you and me. See what kind of people it is that Christ died for – the weak, the ungodly, sinners, even for enemies. This is how God shows his love for us. What now is the effect of Christ’s death on the cross for us? Justification (Rom 5:9) and reconciliation (Rom 5:10). To be justified means to have right standing before God.

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effect of Christ’s death on the cross for us? Justification (Rom 5:9) and reconciliation (Rom 5:10). To be justified means to have right standing before God.

But you know how it is when family members fight – we’re ashamed to look at each other or be the first to say sorry. There was a young man who got caught up in drugs and gangs and fought with his father. He knew that his father was right but he had too much of an ego to accept his fault and say sorry. One day, even though he was not on talking terms with his father, his father tells his good and obedient brother to protect the sinful son with his life and so his brother follows him everywhere. Even though initially he tells his brother to get lost, his brother doesn’t leave his side and he tells the sinful son what the father had told him to do. The wicked son ignores him and goes on with his wicked life. One day his brother dies protecting him. Knowing that he died for him because he loved him so much and because his father loved him finally resulted in reconciliation with the father. They returned to the relationship that they had initially. That is exactly what Christ’s death on the cross does for us.

Christ’s death on the cross justifies those who believe in Him. And those who believe in Christ also have their relationship restored with their heavenly Father. Why would Christ suffer so much for us? Because He loves us. Josef Tson has a beautiful rendition of Isaiah 53:11a – He will see the result of the anguish of His soul and be satisfied. He, Jesus Christ will see faithful Christians all over the world in a justified and reconciled relationship with God the Father and be satisfied. We are to live as Jesus Christ’s offspring – self-sacrificial and loving.

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David was lonely.

The psalmist David was feeling all alone. The guilt of his sin had caused him to lose his communion with his God and that left him feeling miserable. God sure seemed, far, far away.

And as if that was not bad enough, David finds that his loved one, friends and relatives seemed even further away. Those that he considered close to him, those whom he thought he could count on, don’t seem anywhere in the picture. Just when he needed them the most, they either did not seem to care or were not able to help.

And yet, further into the psalm, David finds his glimmer of hope in the Lord. Despite his spiritual depression, David clings to the Lord. Though he did not really feel it, in faith, David declares, for in You, O Lord, I hope; You will hear, O Lord my God (v15). David chose to turn toward God in his affliction, rather than away from Him.

For the **Weary Soul**

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**LEFT ALONE**

“My loved ones and my friends stand aloof from my plague; And my relatives stand afar off” - Psalm 38:11 (NIV)

Preethi Alice Jacob

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EVERY ONE OF US GOES THROUGH TIMES OF LONELINESS. TIMES WHEN WE FEEL ALL ALONE AND NOBODY SEEMS TO BE THERE FOR US. TIMES WHEN WE HAVE LONGED FOR JUST ONE PERSON WHO UNDERSTANDS, JUST ONE WHO REALLY CARES ENOUGH TO GIVE THEIR TIME AND THEIR SHOULDER. TIMES WHEN WE HAVE FELT EXTREMELY LONELY IN A FULL AND CROWDED ROOM.

Every one of us goes through times of loneliness. Times when we feel all alone and nobody seems to be there for us. Times when we have longed for just one person who understands, just one who really cares enough to give their time and their shoulder. Times when we have felt extremely lonely in a full and crowded room.

Loneliness is a very real and painful experience. Sometimes we are lonely when we are physically far away from all our...
LONELINESS IS ALSO ONE OF THE DEADLIEST OF DISEASES THAT IS RAMPANT TODAY AND CAUSE FOR MANY A SUICIDE. IF YOU HAVE BEEN THROUGH THIS SITUATION AND EXPERIENCED THIS PAIN, KNOW THAT IT NOT WITHOUT A PURPOSE. IF GOD HAS ALLOWED YOU TO GO THROUGH THIS SUFFERING, IT IS ALSO FOR YOU TO REACH OUT TO OTHERS AND SO BE A WOUNDED HEALER!

loved ones maybe because our work takes us away. Other times it could be that we feel lonely, emotionally, when it seems, not one other human being seems to understand us or what we are going through. And then are other times when we feel like we are far away from God, when it seems like even, He does not understand? Or times, like the David in this psalm, that we feel separated from God because of our sin.

Have you been in that place? Are you in a place of loneliness now? Know that you are not the only one. Feeling lonely is common to all mankind, at some point or the other.

Also know that the Lord is always near you. Whoever else might leave or forsake you, He never will. He says, be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6)

So, would you like David, choose to turn toward God, cling to Him, when you are hurting and feel all alone. Would you too pray that the Lord would not be far off and that He would be quick to help you. (v20-21).

Loneliness is also one of the deadliest of diseases that is rampant today and cause for many a suicide. If you have been through this situation and experienced this pain, know that it not without a purpose. If God has allowed you to go through this suffering, it is also for you to reach out to others and so be a wounded healer!

Are you lonely today? Turn to God, tell Him all about your troubles, ask Him to give you today, one person to whom you could reach out. Would you also prayerfully reach out to one person you know who could be lonely today, with a kind word, a quick call?
**SUMMARY:**

- Tamil Nadu continues to be the hotbed of religiously-motivated violence against Christians – and has recorded 30 verified persecution incidents this year, up to end-April 2019.
- In 2018, 67 incidents of hate-crimes were recorded from Tamil Nadu, making it the 2nd hostile state in India.
- A growing sense of insecurity is perceivable and felt by the Christians community and minorities alike, especially in the villages.
- Of the 9 Churches that have been burnt in India, 4 have been from Tamil Nadu
- Several Churches and Christian Institutions were attacked by religious fanatics, taking law into their own hands, indiscriminately terrorizing Christians
- With the newly elected government, pray that Christians will be able to exercise their Constitutional rights and have religious freedom, to practice, profess and propagate their faith.

**HATE CRIMES RECORDED IN TAMIL NADU - 2019**

- Jan, 5
- Feb, 6
- Mar, 9
- Apr, 6
- May, 4
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