**EDITOR’S NOTE**

“This year, we are celebrating the 69th year of Independence of India. Independence is freedom to think, act and speak your mind. It also means responsibility to respect each other. The strength of India’s pluralistic society lies in its diversity, with a long standing commitment to inclusion and tolerance.

And so it is with us Christians — our identity as Indian and as Christian are inseparable. A Christian’s obedience to the faith and loyalty to the nation are unquestionable. As followers of Jesus, our primary focus is to embody the love of God with our fellow citizens. Yes its true that Christians are burned, beaten, tortured, persecuted, denied promotions and side lined by the society at large. But Jesus taught us that,”Blessed are the Peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God”. God is a peace loving God and a peace making God. God’s children have the character of their Father.

We must get rid of the “ENEMY IMAGE ” we have of those who persecute us . The moment we regard them as the enemy, God’s love can no longer work through us to reach them! We must sincerely pray for and even love those who hate us. We are also called to take a stand for our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ. Hebrews 13:3 says, “Continue to remember those in prison as if chained with them, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.” Let us be a peculiar people, with the mind of Christ - a people of light, who respect, love and pray for other people of different religions and faith. Let’s remember to uphold our leaders and ministers who lead this nation. May God give them the wisdom, knowledge and understanding to govern and lead this land of India with all wisdom.

Warm wishes to you all on the 69th Indian Independence Day.”

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**Bharat-ki Beti Gang Raped & Killed**

Sis Esther’s (name changed) body was found half naked, in the forest under Bayanar Police Station jurisdiction, district Kondagaon, in the state of Chhattisgarh on July 22, 2016. She was on her way to school when she was intercepted by a group of men who gang raped and murdered her. The cruel perpetrators even glued her eyes & lips together with Fevi Kwick!

Esther was subjected to such agonizing cruelty for the simple reason that she and her family were unyielding and steadfast in their stand and faith in Jesus Christ. She is one among the six children of her parents. The family have been boycotted and ostracized by the villagers for their firm resolve in remaining Christians. Therefore, in order to teach them a lesson, this shameful and horrific act was committed.

Sr. Esther’s father, Br Maner Sori, courageously declared that “I will never leave Jesus Christ whatever may happen. I am not worried about my daughter because she is at the safest place in Heaven”. The family walk around 25kms (one way) to attend Sunday worship service Church, let’s continue to cover this family with our prayers.

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**MISSION:** TO LINK THE FREE CHURCH OF THE WORLD WITH THE PERSECUTED CHURCH IN INDIA

**AIM:** FREEDOM TO WORSHIP JESUS CHRIST IN INDIA

**MOTTO:** SERVE PERSECUTED — LOVE PERSECUTOR

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A INTERDENOMINATIONAL INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT TO THE PERSECUTED CHURCH IN INDIA

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**A WALK 4 PEACE**

I am Guvvala Joseph Antony, born in the peaceful country India. Although I am quite settled in a career, something gnawed at me – the urge of social responsibility and that had to be more meaning and purpose to life.

My mission is simple. A proverbial drop in the ocean, I plan to walk in the 1st phase, an estimated 20,000 kms covering India and the 9 neighbouring countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, India, China, Myanmar and Nepal.

I am not in search of publicity; I do not need it. I heed my inner voice from the Lord that tells me that, what the world requires more than food or energy is PEACE. For this PEACE, I am ready to give up my life to carry the message of PEACE.

I am moved by the suffering that strife is causing as can be seen all over the world. People will talk about peace. Let them. I want to take action and do something that should help in promoting peace among families, school children, College students, among communities, societies and among nations. Peace provides stability and peace is a fertile ground for progress and growth of mankind.

Let Peace rule....

PLEASE JOIN US at awalk4peace@rediffmail.com / www.awalk4peace.com

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**THE EARLY CHURCH WAS MARRIED TO POVERTY, PRISON & PERSECUTIONS. IS TODAY’S CHURCH MARRIED TO PROSPERITY, PERSONALITY & POPULARITY?”**
Ps. Surenderan V
Honoured

Ps. Surenderan was chosen by God to suffer for Christ. Recently, Pastor had gone to visit a family in the Alappuzha district of Kerala, to give a copy of the Bible. On his return he was waylaid and beaten up by some troublemakers and threatened with dire consequences if he returned.

When asked if he had filed a complaint with the Police, Ps. responded saying “Why should I complain when my Savior Jesus Christ has asked me to forgive them? In fact, I love them and pray for them daily so that they may also know and experience the love of Jesus Christ.”

Persecution of Jesus

Luke 4:29 And they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.

Luke 23:11 And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.

John 5:16 For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

John 7:1 After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.

John 8:37 “I know that you are Abraham’s descendants; yet you seek to kill me, because my word has no place in you.

John 10:39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

Can We Repair Our Troubled World?

Dear Friend,

We live in a world filled with trouble. We see it in the news every day - the brutal killings of people at clubs in Orlando and Fort Myers, Florida; the assassination of Police Officers in Dallas and Baton Rouge; the murder of innocent people celebrating Bastille Day in Nice, France; Churchgoers in Normandy; women murdered under the guise of honour killings deemed to have dishonored the family name by Islamist extremist relatives. The list could go on. No corner of this world is immune from violence.

As people of faith who try to live with goodwill toward our fellow men and seek to help those suffering and in need, we struggle not knowing how to respond to these atrocities. As violence and suffering increases, it is easy to lose hope. But this brings to my mind an old Jewish saying: “All the people of Israel are responsible for one another.”

Though the saying comes from a Jewish context, it applies universally: All of us are responsible for each other. What does this mean in the real world? It means that, faced with those who would sow chaos and destruction, we must be the ones who sow hope, who make ourselves responsible for doing good, not just for ourselves and our families, but for our churches and synagogues, our communities, and our world.

It can begin with the smallest of things. We can be the ones who, in the course of our everyday lives, say “hello” and “thank you” to the waitress at the restaurant serving us our coffee, to the policeman directing traffic, to the people we encounter every day who we might otherwise take for granted. One simple act of kindness just might turn someone’s bad day into a good day; it just might be the act that gives that person the will to extend kindness to others.

Now, this may not end the scourge of terrorism. It may not bring about world peace. It may not lead to a world free of suffering. But it will bring a measure of peace into our hearts, and allow us to share that peace with others. We need to be directing our lives toward that goal. We need to be able to end each day by saying: I did the best I could to end anger and hatred by bringing, even in some small way, some love and understanding into the world.

As people of faith, it is our particular responsibility to try to change the environment we live in to one of kindness, hope, and love. We remember this when we read the biblical injunction “To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). Our acts of kindness may seem insignificant, but they are powerful and meaningful, and can change each and every one of us. And when we take that role as agents of change seriously, we are taking one step closer to realizing the Jewish concept of tikun olam – “repairing the world” – and that, my friends, is desperately needed right now.

With prayers for shalom, peace,

Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein
Founder and President

Ps. Rampal and Nandlal Kidnapped

Ps. Rampal and Ps. Nandlal were kidnapped while they journeyed home after conducting prayer meetings. They were badly beaten and left abandoned. Police stumbled upon them and detained them in jail for 4 days. Eventually, after securing bail, en route to their village Mauganj, around 80 kms from Rewa, the group met with a serious accident. Ps. Rampal’s wife was critically injured and is still recovering in hospital, recovering from a fractured spine; while their family friend Bro. Ajay is deceased.

Church, please pray for God’s protection over their families.
In spite of many attempts to persuade him, Polycarp insisted that he was a Christian. The pagans and Jews in Smyrna clamored for his death and shouted that he should be burned. 

The mob collected the fuel. When the pyre was ready, he himself took off all his clothes and unfasted his belt. He also tried to take off his shoes, though he was not in the habit of doing this before, because each of the faithful was always eager to be the first to touch his flesh. Although Polycarp lived an excellent life, he was treated with the utmost consideration before his martyrdom. They wanted to nail him to the pyre. He said, “Leave me as I am for He who enables me to endure the fire, will also enable me to stay on the pyre without moving...” After Polycarp had prayed, the fire was lit but it was slow to consume him and ultimately he was slain by an executioner’s dagger.

This is a small leaf taken from the pages of history. The death of this Church Father Polycarp, still seems to come alive to many of us that when we have read these lines, we make hasty, emotional decisions, to be more prayerful and faithful in the ministry going forward, as this man of God had in his life time.

There are men of God who sacrifice their family for the sake of following Jesus Christ. In the village of Jatterbeda, little did they know that their daughter Sangeetha would one day sacrifice her life for Christ, into the hand of the persecutors. Her father had made a public decision before the village committee that he and his household would follow Jesus whatever the consequences they may face.

The family of Pastor Yohan, little did they know that he would have to lay his life down into the hands of the Naxalites for the sake of bringing the Koya tribes to Christ! The Naxalites had demanded that he leave the village or the Church would face dire consequences. He was brutally beaten and then axed down to earth with his hands cuffed behind him.

India needs servants of God like Pastor Yohan who worked in His Master’s vineyard fearlessly and faithfully. Another example of a common believer Mr. Maner who suffered the tragic death of his daughter, who was raped and killed brutally by the persecutors of the Gospel.

Has the spread of the Gospel come to a halt with the death of these frontline servants of God! Never! Rather, it will flourish and multiply more as the seeds fall to the ground.

Let’s ask God to give us the courage and confidence of Bishop Polycarp or Pastor Yohan Maria, to face death fearlessly for the sake of Christ or like Mr. Maner, suffer for Christ for his faith in Him.
5 Ways to PRAY for Those Who Persecute You

“I have no right to gossip or slander you all in any way. And I refuse to deny any claims that I have. I have purposely kept silent and will not curse you in any way with my words.”

Jane got an email from Gary with those claims the day after a mutual friend called her with a mouthful of gossip, slander and curses Gary spewed about her. In other words, Gary sent the out-of-the-blue email to “refute and deny” gossiping and slandering Jane less than 24 hours after the corrupt communication came out of his mouth. Gary was trying to cover his sin. But it was too late. And Jane’s associate wasn’t the only one who came back to her with a mouthful of Gary’s persecuting words.

See, when someone is gossiping about you, slandering you or otherwise cursing you behind your back, the devil will do everything he can to make sure those words get back to your ears. Much of the time, the gossip, slander and curses just make your accuser look like a fool. Mature, discerning Christians recognize evil speech for what it is, refuse to give an ear to it—and wouldn’t think of spreading it. But the enemy often finds less mature messengers through which to deliver his fiery darts.

When you find out someone is speaking gossip, slander or Christian curses over you or your family, you have two choices: You can react in the same wicked spirit as your persecutor, or you can resist the temptation to act like the accuser of the brethren and respond like your Father in heaven instead. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, “Love your enemies, bless who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5:44-45).

So, what does this look like in action? How do we love our enemies and bless those who curse us and do good to those who hate us, practically speaking? How do we pray for those who purposefully, knowingly use and abuse us? How do we act like sons and daughters of our Father in heaven? Here are five ways:

1. Pray that God would forgive them. Although it’s vital that you forgive your persecutors, we walk the way Jesus walked when we pray for God to forgive our enemies. Both Jesus and Stephen, while they were being persecuted by enemies of the gospel, prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60). If you want to be more Christlike, pray like Christ prayed when He was persecuted.

2. Pray for God to give them a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus. Obviously, your persecutors need a greater revelation of Jesus, because the more we truly know Christ, the less we’ll allow the devil to influence our thoughts, words and deeds. Pray “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to [them] the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of [their] understanding being enlightened; that [they] may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power” (Eph. 1:17-19).

3. Pray for God to root them and ground them in love. We know that love is kind (1 Cor. 13:4) but whoever slanders is a fool (Prov. 10:18). The Bible doesn’t have anything good to say about fools, but God still loves them—and if they were rooted and grounded in the love of God, they would not gossip, slander or persecute people. Pray that they, “being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that [they] may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph. 3:17-19).

4. Pray for God’s love to abound in them. You can’t walk out the Beatitudes without abounding in love. Pray that your persecutor’s love “may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that [they] may approve the things that are excellent, that [they] may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God” (Phil. 1:9-11).

5. Pray for God to show them His will. Once your persecutor is rooted and grounded in love and understands God’s will, they will be more likely to repent. Pray that they “may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that [they] may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:9-10).

Beyond that, intercede as the Holy Spirit leads you until you feel a release in your spirit. And remember, Paul admonishes us to “bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse” (Rom. 12:14). At its root, to bless means to speak well of, and to curse means to speak ill of. So don’t respond to your persecutors by running all over town telling people what they did to you. If you do, you’ll be guilty of gossip, slander and cursing your enemy. Move in the opposite spirit. If you respond God’s way, you’ll be blessed.

As for your enemy, well, he’s likely to be blessed with some conviction from the Holy Spirit, and your prayers pave the way for you both to grow in the character of Christ as you guard your heart from bitterness. Amen.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma

PRAY for India & Adopt a District

Joel 3:12 …..Let the nations be awakened!
Isa 1:2 …..Let the earth hear the voice of the Lord!
Ps 9:20 …..Judge the nations in your sight, Father, and put them to fear,
Rom 8:22 …..Father, the whole creation groans and labors
Rom 8:21 …..to be delivered from the bondage of corruption,
Jn 15:26 …..send forth Your Spirit of Truth to bear witness of you,
Jn 16:8 …..and to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.
Mt 24:14 …..that the gospel of the kingdom may be preached in all the world.
**THE ROOM OF DARKNESS**

We all have a Room of Darkness deep within our soul! This Room is found in the young and found in the old! Even the most devout Saint has that “base” nature that resides within this Room! A nature that must remain locked away or it will bring us eternal doom!

You may think you have your Room of Darkness subdued and secure! But think long and hard, are you really sure?

Who holds the key to that Dark Place in your mind? Have you locked that door and given the keys to The Devine?

Or do you “keep the key” so you can slip in and slip out! With “no one the wiser” as you pretend to be holy and devout!

The ROOM of DARKNESS can only be secured with the blood of the Lamb! Then we must place the Keys on the Alter of THE GREAT I AM!

‘The ROOM of DARKNESS is disguised with an enticing look and appeal! It beckons unto your “flesh” and wants you to come inside and kneel!

Many of the MIGHTY have fallen because they never gave God the key! The ROOM of DARKNESS enslaved them and they were never able to get free!

A few moments in that Room for a sinful thrill! Can destroy a reputation that took a lifetime to build!

Lewis E. Thomas
As given by God on 7/28/2016

**LOVING PRAYER OF A CHRISTIAN WITNESS**

Jesus said, But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you (Mathew 5:44) Christianity is neither a religion nor a political entity to be persecuted. Yet down through the ages Christianity has been the object of severe persecution. Many forces and philosophical views have tried to smother it by using all sophisticated weapons. It is not a religion that other religions may fear it. It does not have any political motto to rule the people.

Christianity is a way of living in harmony and fellowship with God and His people. The Cardinal message is “Love God and love one another”! Christian missionaries have only tried to share the love of Christ to world. Jesus Christ loved the world (lost world in sin) and gave Himself as a sacrifice of atonement. The context of the persecution upon Jesus’ disciples was because of their witness for Jesus in the world. We will not retaliate, that is not our method.

We would like to share Jesus’ Love with you and tell you that we are not your enemies but friends. We are a loving band of messengers who would herald the love of Jesus Christ. And as He told us, we will pray for this world and those who persecute us. Please join us to love and pray for those who persecute us, to tell them that “we love them.”

All Christian Institutions and charitable services have only one message to proclaim that is “The Love of Jesus.” The loving prayer of a Christian witness is more powerful than any man-made weapon. So Jesus said, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

DR T S Abraham USA

... and they CRUCIFIED Him

The cross is placed on the ground and the exhausted man is quickly thrown backwards with his shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square wrought-iron nail through the wrist deep into the wood. Quickly he moves to the other side and repeats the action, being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flex and movement. The cross is then lifted into place. The left foot is pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees flexed. The victim is now crucified.

As he slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating fiery pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain -- the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As he pushes himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, he places the full weight on the nail through his feet. Again he feels the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the bones of his feet.

As the arms fatigue, cramps sweep through his muscles, knitting them deep relentlessly, and throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push himself upward to breathe. Air can be drawn into the lungs but not exhaled. He fights to raise himself in order to get even one small breath.

Hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-renting cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain as tissue is torn from his lacerated back as he moves up and down against rough timber. Then another agony begins; a deep, crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

It is now almost over. The loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level. The compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissues. The tortured lungs are making frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. He can feel the chill of death creeping through his tissues. Finally, he allows his body to die.

All this the Bible records with the simple words, “and they crucified Him” – Mark 15:24
It is possible to send out a firm signal against capitation fees by derecognising the offending colleges, thus making their degrees worthless. That would act as a deterrent, not just for the colleges, but also for the students who are willing to pay to get admitted. The very thought of these colleges disposing of mediocrity doctors on an unsuspecting public is frightening! You can well imagine the havoc these ‘doctors’ can do when they try to recover their investments!

After interrogating all the suspects and witnesses and examining their mobile phone records, CBI said that there was "enough evidence" to establish the case against a Judge of a High Court.

The near collision of two aircrafts in one of our airports could have resulted in a major disaster in aviation history. Mediocrity in the administration of the airlines is the cause for incidences of near-collision. Accountability of the operating staff has to be ensured.

Elections

Huge amounts are now being spent on elections by people whose sole aim is to enrich themselves. The declared assets of our MPs are more than Rs.3075 crore, when 28 crore citizens of our country are below the poverty line. A former governor of the Reserve Bank of India has observed, politics is the most lucrative business and democracy is no more “of the people, by the people, for the people,” but “by few, for few.”

It is a matter of great satisfaction that, in this situation, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has come clean and set an example for his ministerial team and the bureaucracy to follow. Defence Minister Antony is referred to, in the corridors of power, as St. Antony, symbolic of his clean image. He has declared a war on corruption, warning that defence deals would be “ruthlessly cancelled” if malpractices were detected in acquisitions.

What is essential now is courage among the people of God to stand together against the misdeeds of the strayed leaders and their henchmen. It is necessary for Christians to set the standard for others to emulate. Christian leadership should be free of corruption, and transactions should be transparent. They should function in subordination to the Master and be accountable to the people. It seems the only practical option is that leadership positions should be for limited periods only and that person will be considered as unfit and shall be rejected.

Numerous reports regarding leaders involving themselves unashamedly in embezzlement of funds and immorality are doing the rounds. Secular courts have severely criticised the heads of some Christian organisations for ignoring the ideals they preach. The judges have quoted from the Bible in their judgements to teach the leaders a lesson. Disciplinary actions have also been taken by some churches on their ecclesiastical heads. Even these have not prevented some of the leaders from continuing their shamef ul acts.

According to a newspaper report, parishioners of a church in Mumbai want their priest transferred. They are planning to boycott religious services and attend other churches in the neighbourhood. They have circulated letters among fellow members asking them to stop all church services, if the priest, whom they accuse of financial misdeeds, is not transferred. Besides misappropriating church funds, the priest is also accused of creating a divide among the members.

What is essential now is courage among the people of God to stand together against the misdeeds of the strayed leaders and their henchmen. It is necessary for Christians to set the standard for others to emulate. Christian leadership should be free of corruption, and transactions should be transparent. They should function in subordination to the Master and be accountable to the people. It seems the only practical option is that leadership positions should be for limited periods only and kept in perpetual renewal. It is never too late to set things right, provided there is commitment.
Angler Catches Woman Instead of Fish in Alaska, Credits God for Rescue

As Pastor Andy Foor settled into what he thought was going to be a peaceful Saturday morning of fishing on the Kenai River in Alaska, he suddenly heard screaming. A woman had slipped into nearby water. Foor uttered a prayer and cast his line. God oversaw what happened next.

Foor, an Everett, Penn. resident, was visiting Alaska for the summer. He was angling off a dock downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge in Soldotna at about 5:30 a.m. Saturday when he saw two women walking along the bank of the river, according to the Peninsula Clarion.

After one of the women slipped into the water, at first she went under and didn’t come back up for about 15 seconds, Foor said. At that point, he didn’t think she’d come back up at all, he said.

When she did, all he could see was the top of her blonde hair. She wasn’t wearing a life vest, and he was yelling, “I can’t swim; I’m drowning!” the pastor said, who remembers everyone standing there feeling helpless.

The woman fell in just upstream of the bridge and was far enough out in the river that no one could reach her, reports Peninsula Clarion. Other anglers on the dock were unsure of what to do. Foor said he thought about taking off his waders and swimming out to her, but knew he wouldn’t be able to help her.

So he glanced at his fishing pole.

“I just said a prayer, and a voice said, ‘Throw your line out into the water,’” Foor said. “I hollered to the girl so that I’d get her attention, and I cast.”

Foor said he considered taking the hook and weight off of his 50-pound braided line, but the same voice, the Lord, that told him to cast, indicated it would be alright, he said.

He said her eyes were fixated on him. The line reached the drowning woman and she latched on. Foor swung her back toward the dock downstream of where he stood. Another angler went down the steps to help her up onto the dock, where others were able to help her dry off and warm up.

Foor pulled in his gear and wandered down to see if she was alright, he said. “She was saying, ‘Where’s the man who threw me the line? Where’s the man who threw me the line? Where’s the man who threw me the line?’” Foor said. “And I just stepped down and said, ‘The Father loves you, and here’s the man.’”

She came straight to him and hugged him, he said.

Foor said others thought she might have died had he not been able to throw her the line. He said he wanted all the credit to go to God for the rescue.

The Kenai River is a fast-flowing, cold river. Many people recreate on and near it, and there is a death or near-death almost every year in the river.

By Julie Brown Patton (NEWS@GOSPELHERALD.COM) Jul 23, 2016

God's Own Children

God has never excluded children from His plan for human salvation. Even as early as Moses' time it was the entire Israel that was redeemed from Egypt as recorded in 1 Corinthians 10: 1-4. They were 'all' under the protection of the cloud, and 'all' passed safely through the Red Sea. In the cloud and in the sea they were 'all' baptized as followers of Moses. 'All' ate the same spiritual bread and drank the same spiritual drink. 'They' drank from the spiritual rock that went with 'them', and that rock was Christ himself. This emphasis on the word 'all' is proof that God's 'all' encompassing salvation is for adults and children alike.

In the Old Testament, God preferred to save entire families. For example, it was Noah and his family that were saved from the devastating flood (Genesis 7: 7). Similarly, it was Lot and his family who were saved from the damnation of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19: 16). Likewise, it was Abraham and his family who were called out to become the nation of Israel (Genesis 12: 1-5). As for Rahab, it was her entire family that was saved (Joshua 2: 12, 13 and 6: 25). Joshua testified, "As for me and my family, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24: 15). When Moses confronted Pharaoh, he stated that every person of all the families of Israel would go into the desert to celebrate the festival of God (Exodus 10: 9).

This trend of salvation for the entire family was continued into the Christian era. For example, Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Today salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19: 9). It was the families of Cornelius (Acts 10), Lydia (Acts 16: 15), jailer (Acts 16: 33), Crispus (Acts 18: 8) and Stephanas (1 Corinthians 1: 16) that were baptized.

It was predicted that God would send his Holy Spirit upon all people, whether they be men or women, young or old (Joel 2: 28). Therefore, Joel insisted that repentance was for the entire community, including new born infants. "Your praise reaches into the heavens. It is sung by children and infants", stated David in Psalms 8: 1, 2). This was not merely a statement but a prophecy which was fulfilled when Jesus triumphantly entered the city of Jerusalem and went into the Temple (Matthew 21: 15, 16).

The early Church consisted of a large number of Jews (Acts 6: 1, 7), who considered children to be gift from God (Psalms 127: 3). They initiated their children into the faith at a very early age, taught them the scriptures and imbied them into their spiritual values (Deuteronomy 4: 9 and 11: 19).

Children have been called out by God for His service, even though they were not mature enough to understand His will or the ways of the world. The Lord's power was upon John even before he was born (Luke 1: 40-41 and 66) and he was commissioned to be a prophet when he was only seven days old! (Luke 1:76). Samuel was dedicated to God even before he was conceived. (Judges 13: 2 - 5). Samuel was consecrated even before he was conceived (1 Samuel 1:11. 19. 20).

God 'saw' David when he was still in his mother's womb! (Psalms 133: 15. 16). Jeremiah was chosen and selected to be a prophet before he was born (Jeremiah 1: 4). Isaiah was appointed to be God's servant even before he was born (Isaiah 49:5). Paul was chosen to be an apostle even before he was born (Galatians 1:15).


When people brought their babies to Jesus, he took them in his arms, placed His hands on each of them and blessed them. (Luke 18:15) and Mark (10:16). This is because "the unbelieving husband is made acceptable to God by being united to his wife and the unbelieving wife is made acceptable to God by being united to her Christian husband. If this were not so, their children would be like pagan children, but as it is, they are acceptable to God" (1 Corinthians 7:14).
Disappointing Times

The church today is God’s Israel to fight the forces of evil

Like many others, I watched with bated breath a new government take office in Delhi some months ago. In May of last year, we had witnessed an epochal change at the national level and now we were about to witness another one in our city. To me, it was like a bloodless revolution, bringing in sweeping change. But the optimism did not last long before the bickering in the top echelons of the ruling party spilled out into the public space, dashed all hopes of a new dawn to the ground. Over time, it has only got worse as the bickering amplified to occupy more space and involve more and more people. It has been discouraging to watch one’s dreams die and slowly get cast aside, and coping has not been easy.

Discouragement is a part life. It comes usually when we do all the right things, but see no results. We work hard but notice no progress. Whatever the situation, we give it our all, but nothing happens. Discouragement makes us want to quit, saying things we shouldn’t say; that’s how Jeremiah felt. God called him to speak a difficult message to a rebellious people. He obeyed. Yet on one occasion Jeremiah so angered Pashur, an assistant to the high priest and chief security officer for the temple, that the man arrested Jeremiah, beat him, and threw him in jail. Here was a man in deep distress. He endured physical, emotional, spiritual and professional anguish. He walked into deep despair, all for doing God’s will. Often in our discouragement we look inward – to our problems, our frustrations, and our situation, though we need to look upward to God who has not abandoned us.

We're all human. So it makes sense that our hearts often hurt for people impacted by tragedies here and abroad—tragedies that can leave us feeling helpless.

What can we do in response to the violence and destruction around us?

1. Pray Deeply

“Prayer is the Christian’s greatest weapon.” —Billy Graham

As believers, we look up. We seek out God through prayer—and trust in His sovereignty.

Scripture tells us prayer is one of our most powerful resources. When you don’t have any words, or when you feel like you’re beating down God’s door with the same prayer day after day, ask God’s Holy Spirit to help you. The Bible tells us the Holy Spirit is an intercessor for us and cries out to God on our behalf.

2. Immerse Yourself in God’s Word

When you feel as if your very soul hurts from news reports of another shooting, evil act or disaster, how do you find comfort?

There is a place of refuge. The Bible tells us, “Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him” (Proverbs 30:5).

3. Guard Your Heart

“Grief can kill a person emotionally and physically. If not counteracted with God’s strength and power, our personal weakness may debilitate us.” —Billy Graham

Do our minds ever erase graphic images such as horrifying footage from tragic events?

You may have experienced what’s called secondary trauma from viewing video clips and photos on TV and social media. It’s important to recognize how these lasting impressions can affect you, as they can be physically, emotionally and spiritually damaging.

4. Care for Others

“Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” —Galatians 6:2

It’s important to guard your heart, but you can also support others experiencing secondary trauma—some who may be going through a personal crisis as well.

“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.” —Philippians 2:4

No matter how out of control the world gets, taking action and selflessly serving others can allow God’s perfect peace to fill your heart.

If you feel God leading you to help people but can’t be there in person, you can still share hope with others worldwide. By BGEA, July 28, 2016, Topics: Crisis Situations, Current Issues, Hope, Prayer.