

YEAR OF HARVEST

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# Blessing

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## Super Girls for Jesus!

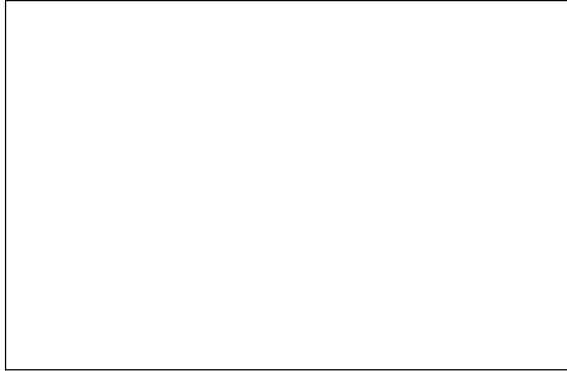


1500 Girls decide in AROMA 2005  
that they would  
WALK THE TALK!

***See inside for details...***

# Super Girls for Jesus!

(The concluding talk by Dr. Lilian Stanley in Aroma 2005 on "Works, not Words")



The Bible, time and again tells us, that God cares for our walk, not talk. True to that, when we come to the Book of Revelation, there is hardly any talk about talk. It is all works, works and works. We can talk the walk; but can we walk the Talk? It is easy to talk; but it takes a lot of energy and struggle to walk what we talk.

Tsunami like events testify that we are living in the last days. The Book of Revelation teaches us a lot about works. The three days, whatever you heard was sweet to hear and eat. But when the Word penetrates you, goes into your depth and starts its work of transformation it will turn bitter. "So I went to the angel and asked him to give me the little scroll. He said to me: Take it and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey. I took the little scroll from the angel's hand and ate it. It tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it, my stomach turned sour" (10:9,10) Let's see what God has to say about works in the last days.

## 1. Works and Character

The emphasis placed on works outstands, as we read the Lord's warning to each of the seven churches—

2:2 Ephesus "I know your works"  
2:9 Smyrna "I know your works"

2:13 Pergamos "I know your works"  
2:19 Tyathira "I know your works"  
3:1 Sardis "I know your works"  
3:8 Philadelphia "I know your works"  
3:15 Laodicia "I know your works"

The Lord says, "I know your works..." and then goes on to talk about labour, patience, love, faith etc. which means our character, that is our holiness. Our number one work is to build our character. Purity is jewel for a girl. Many thieves will come to steal it. Beware! The honeybee will never, never sit on dirt though it may starve for want of flowers or honey. Remember, holiness is your priority, even if you have to sacrifice your life. Let's not dilly-dally, but take holiness seriously.

While writing in his first letter to his disciple Timothy, Paul admonishes him, "Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly" (4:7). Less talk, more work! As we take up this training, we find ourselves in the pit of failure often and feel like giving up. A Christian has no defeat. Defeat is when you refuse to get up from your fall. Every fall is a landmark achievement in your Christian walk, provided you recover. Appraise the situation and make decisions. Hard times teach you hard lessons. The day you say, "I give up," is your doomsday. "Never quit"—live by these words all your life. Never let your optimism flag. Hang on to Jesus. He is our only recourse. Some who escaped the tsunami were those who clung to branches. Cling to Jesus and no tsunami can take you away. Look forward, never backward. As many times you fall, get up, put the past behind, dust your bottom and continue your walk. No doubt it's a struggle. But let me quote Gab V. Pensadov here: "It's no use looking up to heaven with too much faith and too little struggle."

## **2. Works and Excellence (2:19)**

“I know your works...and that you are now doing more than you did at first.”

This Tyatira Church had a passion for progress; it was becoming better everyday. Growth is the mark of a Christian. A baby grows everyday invisibly. Though you cannot measure its growth day by day, it is growing nonetheless. Our everyday spiritual growth may be microscopic but all the while we are growing. We are not where we want to be, but we are not where we were either. Growth stops at death. Spiritual inanition leads to backsliding. Work relentlessly for a better life. We are not perfect but we constantly aim to be better. A little more Bible study, an extra ten minutes of prayer, an additional outreach, a step-up in manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, ten marks more in all the subjects this year, an extra home responsibility! Reach new peaks. Let each year have a spectacular beginning. Throw yourself heart and soul into this effort. Let the spirit of excellence possess you.

For this you need fellowship. Some complain that they have only Sunday to rest, eat well, wash clothes and clean up. No, on no account stop going to church. Church going has fallen on difficult times lately. For some it is a weak substitute for a picnic on a boring Sunday. TV has become a fierce competitor for the church. Choose a good spiritual church where you get good Bible teaching, warm fellowship and sincere pastoral care. Be in touch with the pastor and his wife to share your sorrows, joys and problems. A senior, good friend or a teacher may be close to you. Take them into confidence and share your fears. Some of you are devastated and weeping inside. Trust your parents and take their help. If not, seek the help of a spiritual lady. Pray with her. That will help you climb out of the valley.

Three or four of you can join together and write a Bible test each month. Get it corrected and give prizes. Compare notes on your development. Counsel and

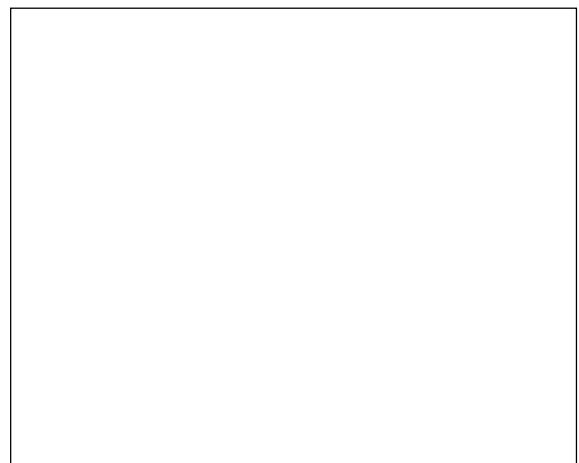
correct one another. Let that friend or senior check the TV programmes you watch, the calls you get in your mobile, the books you read, the letters you receive, the friends you go out with, the sites you visit in your computer. Be open and honest to your mentor. That's the way to grow. The best mirror is a friend's eye. Cheating her is cheating yourself.

To the church of Sardis the Word of the Lord was, “I have not found your works perfect in the sight of my God” (3:2). Your good must become better and your better best. Your best can become better too! Become excellent! Never be satisfied with what you are. In Proverbs 31:29 we read, “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.” You must have a holy competition and transcend above all. You must become a super girl for Jesus, not a spider woman. Show thumbs up sign, jump and say, “I am a super girl for Jesus.” Some are fans of Amitab Bacchan or Rajinikanth or Vijay. But you must be Jesus fans—100% Jesus stock!

## **3. Works and Open Door (3:8)**

“I know your works, see, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.”

“Little strength!” Gideon suffered from inferiority complex. He thought he was the weakest and the least. But the Lord said, “Go in the strength you have and save



Israel out of Medians' hand. Am I not sending you?" (Jud 6:14). "Why do you look at your weakness?" God said, "It is I who is sending you." Because of inferiority complex Gideon was hesitant to enter the door God opened for him. Many or most or all girls suffer from inferiority complex. They think they are weak, sick, deformed, disabled, unattractive, dull. Learn to ignore your weaknesses and cultivate your strengths.

Most girls wish they were boys. But God chose to make you a girl. Shout, "Hallelujah, I am a girl." Don't worry about your setbacks. Never entertain even a whiff of self-pity. The door is open before you. It is a great God who is commissioning you to the task. A police man may be thin as a drumstick. But when he stretches out his bony hand the big lorry halts. That's because of unassailable authority vested on him. Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. THEREFORE go" (Mt 28:18-20).

When God opens doors who can shut? Go to your home, relatives, friends, school, college, neighborhood and become friendly with people. Introduce them to the living God. Invite the neighborhood children and teach them Gospel songs and Bible stories. Two of you can start praying in the lunch interval and then start inviting others.

Did someone call you a fool? Very good. God wants you. Did your parent or teacher call you an useless zombie? Excellent. You are the right candidate for God's job. "Brother, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise...influential...of noble birth. But God chose the foolish... weak... lowly... the despised things, and the things that are not" (1 Cor 1:26-28). God wants not Goliaths but little Davids; not stallions but donkeys. His grace is sufficient for you. His strength shall be made perfect in your weakness. Ask what you can do for God, not the other way around.

#### **4. Works and Tribulation (2:9-10)**

"I know your works and your afflictions... Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer... Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life."

When you practice what you preach, satan will sift you as wheat.

"Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring — those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (12:17).

Testimony in mouth and obedience in life. Satan cannot tolerate this. He is going to wage a battle against you. He will fight tooth and nail to discourage you. But surrender is not an option. Throw him back on his heels as Jesus did. You will run into a myriad problems. You will face setbacks in health. What tomorrow if you are diagnosed for cancer? Will you deny Him? Will you be faithful till you kiss death? You will face problems at home. You may be an orphan bearing the brunt of a step-mother's gibe. Problems in school, college or neighborhood may asphyxiate you. Or you may be battered by academic demands that you cannot satisfy. Some boy may ditch you. Your father may be a drunkard, parents divorced, marriage delayed, failure in exams, poverty or whatever. Don't push the panic button. Suicide is the devil's voice. God has a bright future for you on this planet. That's why the devil tries to kill you before time. When you see each crisis as an opportunity, life will become more fulfilling. Girls need to be all backbone to face any challenge. With Christ by your side you can tackle any problem.

Do you know the devil's future? "And the devil who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur... They will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (20:10). You are fighting a battle which has already been won. You cannot

possibly foresee the incredible events of your future. It is foretold in 7:13-17. "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." "Great tribulation!" Yes, tribulation of unfathomable magnitude, that can drive you to madness and shatter you to pieces. There will come a time when suffering will be at an all time high. We must enter the small gate and walk through the narrow road (Mt 7:13). At the end of the road Jesus waits for you with a handkerchief. Keep your eyes on the crown of life and keep going.

### **5. Works and Future (14:13)**

"Then I heard a voice from heaven say write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, they will rest from their labour, for their works will follow them."

Today you walk in Christ. You must keep on walking so, till you die in Christ. Then you can shake hands with death. We go to a place where there is no work or labour or struggle or pain or tears. Life and death are coworkers. Death is the finishline when you will be crowned for your good works. Your qualification, jewels, houses or bank balance are not going to accompany you. You are going to live only once on this earth. Don't meander through life, walk purposefully. Only the good works you do will count on the last day. Ask this question in any decision that you make—Am I choosing something of eternal value or something of temporary value. Have your eyes on eternity. Time will one day run out for all of us. Then, on that D-Day what matters will be what we did here on earth.

Mary Slessor, white queen of the Calabar once spurned an amorous white missionary in Africa, because he refused to follow her to her field. Let any of your decision be eternity based as Paul admonishes the Colossians, "Since then you have been raised with Christ, set your heart on things above, not on earthly

things" (3:1,2). Money has dumped many in hell. Let go all things which you cannot carry into eternal life.

### **6. Works and Judgment (20:12,13)**

"The dead were judged according to their works."

In the terrible judgment day there is no talk of talk. Judgment is according to works. What have you accomplished for God? How have you lived for God? There are too many things to do in life. Choose that which shall not be taken away from you. Before you do any thing ask this question, "Lord, is this Your will?" You will hear His gentle reply. He will reveal His will to you. Everyday pray that God will fill you with the knowledge of His will. You don't need to be a Ph.D, to know God's will. Fear God and obey His Word. Then you will never miss His will.

On that dark day knees will knock for fear. But those whose works were according to His will, will be lifted up. "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake; some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise (remember Mt 7:21-27?) will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever (Dan 12:2,3).

Have you been careful to do the will of God in your life? Of David it is written, "When David had served his own generation, by the will of God he fell asleep" (Acts 13:36). Can the same be said of you in the great white throne Judgment? God has brought you into this world to do His will. Wait on the Lord to know it. Serve that purpose and you never need to fear judgment.

### **7. Works and Rewards (22:12)**

"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to his work." Jesus said the same, "For the Son of man is going to come in His Father's glory with His angels, and

then He will reward each person according to his works” (Mt 16:27). For what do you receive rewards?

□ *Mt 5:11,12—Rewards for persecutions*

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven.”

□ *Mt 5:46—Rewards for Christian love*

“If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

□ *Mt 6:1-4; Lk 6:35—Rewards for secret alms and loans*

“When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”

“Love your enemies, do good to them and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great.”

□ *Mt 6:6—Rewards for prayer*

“When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

□ *Mt 6:16,18—Rewards for fasting*

“When you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen and your Father who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

□ *Mt 10:41,42—Rewards for hospitality*

“Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous

man’s reward. And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”

□ *1 Cor 3: 8,13,14—Rewards for ministry*

“The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor... His work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward.”

□ *Eph 6:7,8—Rewards for good works*

“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.”

□ *Heb 10:35—Rewards for confidence*

“So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.”

□ *Heb 11:6—Rewards for seeking God*

“Without faith it is impossible to please God; because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”

It is hard for us to believe that when we pray or give a cup of coffee to a guest or help someone, or seek God, we have accolades on high.

There’s going to be a breathtaking award giving ceremony up there. Keep doing all the above till your life is done.

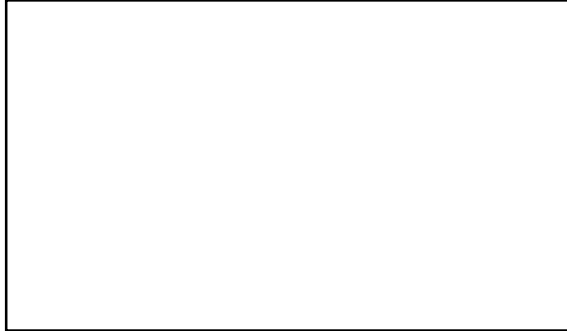
Set your mind on eternal rewards and keep marching forward as Moses who, “regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward” (Heb 11:26).

***Be Super Girls for Jesus!*** ■

# *Son News*

*Special Bulletin on Aroma 2005*

*Mrs. Minvelli Sapphire, Chennai*

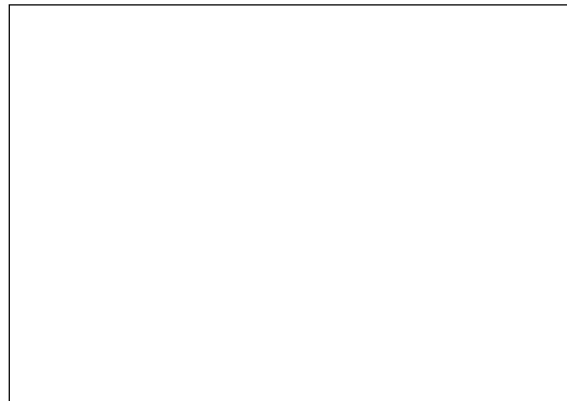


## **The Headlines for today**

- Grand Slam - Aroma 2005, a smashing three day Young Girls Camp in Sitteri Hills of Tamilnadu!
- 1500 participants, many saved, many filled, many committed to serve God! 90% New Comers!
- Buses, Vans, Cars cram the parking area. Girls in rainbow colours from all districts crowd the hills!
- Special talks: (1) Choicest Vine (2) Walk the Talk!
- Special Features: (1) Amy Carmichael drama (2) Miss Aroma!

## **News in Detail**

The days were 13, 14, 15 and 16 of January 2005 – Pongal holidays. Young unmarried girls aged from 16 to 25 started



arriving at the campsite in all imaginable colours. The dedication service started at 6.30 p.m. After an introduction talk the camp was dedicated to the glory of God. The auditorium was full. All sat spell bound by the cultural programmes.

## **Our Sitteri Reporter shares**

Hello, can you please enlighten us about the first day programme?

The talk on “Choicest Vine” pictured a vineyard full of gravel and stones, broken fence and totally destroyed. It was explained through a skit and talk explicitly, how our lives can become a beautiful vineyard when submitted to the Saviour. More than half the crowd was touched and fell at God’s feet confessing their sins.

The afternoon talk was enlightening, edifying and enriching, delving into the Scriptures and bringing out truths explaining the theme, “You can Talk the Walk; but can you Walk the Talk?”

Our Tuticorin branch had taken enormous efforts to make 50 charts of the Tsunami scenes and displayed it. It was moving and many were motivated to help the victims.

## **Returning after a short break**

Gumthalakkadi Gummava,  
Aromana Summava!

Buy our teenage sensation  
‘Sweet Sixteen’

A book for teenagers!

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(including books published!)

## **Back to the News**

Evening events were thrilling. Miss Aroma contest captivated the bubbly audience. The contestants from all districts



**Not a beauty contest,  
but a contest of wits & skills.**

underwent tests and nine among them were selected for the stage. All the nine exhibited their talents of mimicry, singing, speech etc. Finally the number one was crowned as Miss Aroma.

The Question-Answer session cleared the clouds in young hearts. Answers were sharp, short and sweet.

**Live Telecast – 15 January**

The message on the Holy Spirit descends on everyone like dew. The Spirit of God moves on the congregation. Oh, here one is speaking in tongues. There a group is shaking under the power of the Spirit. More are receiving. Praise God, hundreds receive the Holy Spirit.

Afternoon they walk to the villages to witness the tribals and share the goodnews with them. Four teams fan out to four villages. They walk 15-25 kilometres and return with the challenge of the unreached. Beautiful sore feet indeed!

Tired but not tired they gather for the evening meeting. The drama depicting the life of Amy Carmichael holds the audience's attention. The dialogues and scenes stir up hearts.

The headmistress of the Sitteri Blessing School comes up and shares how the tribal children have even become post-graduates. It is beyond our imagination how our Sitteri Missionaries develop the people on eight angles like Social, Economic, Academic, Health, etc. Sitteri children give a dance.

All the missionaries in Sitteri Hills come up the stage along with their families.

Up, up, up, Come-on, clap, clap, clap, clap, clap. The song: *Who are these, standing so beautiful*, is apt for them. The loudest handclap is probably for these soldiers of the cross.

15 girls who had recited the book of Philippians without a single mistake come up to receive prizes. Remarkable are the two tribal girls from Pereri Pudur of Sitteri Hills, though done only upto 5th Standard, had memorized the book with great patience for the past two years and recited without a single mistake. Up they come. Hippi Hurray! Hippi Hurray! The book for next Aroma is the Book of James.

When the call was given to the girls to commit their lives to serve God a couple of hundreds stood up, laying down their lives on the altar.

**Returning after a short break**

Halo 2006 will be conducted in Sitteri Hills during the Pongal Holidays for boys between 16 and 25 years of age. Get ready. Every year hundreds of lives are changed, moulded and catapulted from Sitteri Hills for God! Grab the opportunity!

*A Kuruvi, Thangakuruvi,  
Aroma 2007 ku Variya Nee!*

**Back to the News**

16th started with the testimony of an active soulwinner. It challenged the participants as they gathered districtwise to form 142 student cells.

The history of Blessing Youth Mission was presented in an interview form. The closing message ignited the youth force to go with a commitment to plunge into action. The participants lingered taking photographs and autographs with no heart to leave the scenic spot. But by sunset the campsite was its usual quiet self, the butterflies having flown away to spread the Aroma!

**Weather Forecast**

There shall be showers of Blessing.

This is a Son News presentation! ■

# Examination Season ABCs...

*Duke Jeyaraj*

Here are my ABCs that will gear up students for the tough season ahead even as the examinations inch closer. These exhortations are given in a random order so that they would orderly fit an A-G acronym. Some of the exhortations are supported by an incident in the life of the most brilliant student we get to meet in the entire Bible — Paul. Here they are:

**ATTEMPT** questions for all the marks in your exam paper. If we don't even *attempt* to answer all questions we are showing *contempt* towards God who loves to bless any honest effort. If your efforts were zero then even if God multiplied it a million times it would be still a zero! Before Paul achieved anything for Jesus we read that he tried to "attempt" things for Jesus (Acts 9:26).

**BURN** the midnight oil. Chances are that for some unavoidable reasons you have started dusting your textbooks just before the exam season. What do you do then? There is only one answer: burn the midnight oil and sacrifice sleep. If you can stay up late or get up early to watch live cricket action out of Australia and New Zealand then surely you CAN do the same for the sake of your studies. You must! If Paul had a task to complete he would not mind tossing aside sleep (2 Cor 6:5; 11:27).

**CONCENTRATE** when it comes to doing well in exam. What matters most is how much concentration you put in your studies and not just how long you study. It is about quality rather than mere quantity. It is about how deep you can go into your subject. Forget your friends for some time. Turn off the TV for a while. You can catch up on the latest Cricket action little later. Concentrate. Paul was quite adept at that. He wrote, "I decided to concentrate only on Jesus Christ and his death on the cross" to the Corinthians (1 Cor 2:2).

**DIVIDE** equal time to answer each question you know the answer for. You may know the solutions for all the problems printed in your Maths paper. But solving them on the answer sheet will only give you the marks due to you. Because Paul was a good time-manager, he could

confidently tell the folks at the Ephesus church to "make the best use of the time, because the days are evil" (Eph 5:16).

**ENJOY** the entire exam season. Don't think of them as a "necessary evil." When I was in Bible School, some of my most enjoyable times were the exam times. Boy, it was fun! You see, your mind will never entrap what it never enjoys. Paul taught young Timothy about a "God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy" — your God and my God (1 Tim 6:17). If God has provided us "with everything to enjoy," the word "everything" includes most definitely studying and examinations!

**FEAR** the Lord because that is the beginning of wisdom (Prov 1:7). Doing daily devotions even during exam time, praying before you start to study or before you start to write an exam, refusing to copy, etc are pragmatic ways you show the fear of God amidst an increasingly God-defying generation of students. Paul was a stand-out student in Gamaliel's school before he met Christ, before he had the fear of the Lord. But guess what? He confesses that all that he accomplished outside of a relationship with Christ was "rubbish" (Phil 3:8).

**GOOFING UP** in one exam paper does not mean you are no good in that subject or that all is over. It just means you should work more hard in the same. Just a little more! So don't give up! If that subject is Chemistry you will do well to write out the complex equations a dozen times before the exam, instead of flipping through them as you perhaps did. If that subject is Maths you would do yourself a world of good by solving the problems step by step instead of reading the already solved problem like it was an Enid Blyton's Novel! Forget what happened in that exam and face the other exams with a fresh mind. Paul's counsel is relevant here: "But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead" (Phil 3:13).

I could take you till we reach Z. But I guess you've to return to your study room...! ■

## *Swept by the Tsunami!*

*K. Parameswaran, Nagapattinam*



I was born in Vellore District, Tamilnadu. I belong to a tribal community. I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour from a non-christian background in 1982 at the age of 18. God blessed me abundantly and lifted me to be a Junior Technician—Operation with the ONGC. In 1986 I worked as a volunteer with Blessing Youth Mission. I married Choodamani, also from a non-christian background in 1991. My loving wife and I started a very simple life in Nagapattinam. Our house is in the sea shore.

We were serving the Lord in and around Nagapattinam. We invited students from various colleges for a programme called “Dhool Christmas 2004.” About 400 attended and 50 made a decision for Christ. On Christmas day we had a programme with dinner for local children. On 25th, our home was like heaven. Seven of our non Christian relatives had come to celebrate Christmas with us and to see the sea for the first time.

On 26th December, I woke up as my children greeted me Happy Birthday and many more returns of the day. We went to the beach deciding to get back soon as we had planned to go to the church. The sea was like any other day—calm and pleasant. Walking and playing on the beach is part of our daily routine. We were playing with a flying disc for about 10 minutes against the background of the sea. My wife and mother were at home.

My son suddenly called out—“Daddy, Daddy, look at the sea!” I saw the sea rise to about

50 feet in a second... something unusual. We began running in fear. My son was holding my hand. We couldn't match the speed of the water that travelled at 500 km/hr. In seconds the wave slammed on us and we are twirling and twisting like rag-dolls. I could hear my son cry “Daddy!” as he was drowning. The wave threw us apart and I was helpless to save him. The palm trees in the shore 750 meters away, tore my skin as I tried to hug them. I was slammed against a compound wall which crumbled to pieces. Finally I clung to a branch and survived. When the wave went back the beach was clean swept of people—a volley ball team, two cricket teams, college girls who came for physical exercise, morning walkers... about 150 in all. Three of us only survived.

I went in search of my children and relatives. My eldest daughter Rakshanya (12) was lying across the railway track. I brought her body home. My son, Kirubasan's body was found 2 km away. After a search of three hours I found my second daughter's body in a bush (Karunya). Just then the second wave was chasing us. I, along with my nephew, carrying the body ran home. We barely made it. We found eight out of ten bodies. By then, the city was gripped with fear and almost 75% of the inhabitants had fled the city.

We bathed and dressed the dead. We couldn't get even a wreath or few flowers for them. Not a single person was available to dig a grave for fear of more waves. The pastor and a close friend, Mr. Thanasingh were there for me. I, myself placed my children without even a coffin, in a single grave and covered them with sand. On 26th, our house was like hell.

Please pray that God would strengthen us as we walk through this valley of death. We want to continue to serve the Great One with fervour in the remainder of our days on earth. We don't have questions to ask God. Why me Lord? God gave us three sweet children and God took them to be with Him. All glory be to God. We shall meet our children someday at Jesus' feet. ■

# The Cross of Christ

*Jabez Burns*

**“God forbid that I should glory, except in the CROSS of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal 6:14).**

By the cross of Christ is not meant the mere wood on which He was crucified. It is superstition, and not piety, which is strengthened by handling and contemplating crucifixes.

By the cross the apostle refers to the sufferings and death of the Redeemer—that death by which atonement was made for the sins of the world.

To glory signifies to boast, to delight.

Three prepositions will place the subject of the text in its fulness before us—

***I. Those things highly prized by others, were despised by the apostle.***

There is an obvious tendency in the human breast to boast of something else than God.

(1) The Jews boasted that they were the children of Abraham. (Lk 3:8; 2 Cor 11:22). So might the apostle; but he did not (Phil 3:4-5). Pious ancestors will not avail, unless we possess their virtues and excellences (Gal 3:6-7).

(2) The Pharisees boasted of their great superiority over others: they were those separated ones; the peculiarly holy of the people (Lk 18:11-12). Paul, in his ignorance, no doubt gloried in this; but when he was enlightened by the gospel, the spirituality of the law and his own sinfulness were made manifest (Acts 22:1-5; Gal 1:13-14; Phil 3:5-6).

Spiritual pride and glorying is monstrous in the sight of the Lord. Who can stand in the Divine presence? Who can be justified when He judges?

Now “less than the least of all saints” (Eph 3:8). Christ now all, and Paul nothing.

(3) Men boast of their learning and talents. (Jer 9:23). So might the apostle; but he did not. With regard to his education, it had been under the distinguished Gamaliel (Acts 22:3; 5:34). He possessed a mind of the highest order; yet of these he did not boast. (2 Pet 3:15).

(4) Men boast of their civil distinctions and immunities. And so might Paul. Besides being exalted as a zealous and distinguished Pharisee, he was a Roman citizen; yet however others might exult in these things, Paul did not (Acts 22:27-29). He cared not for wealth or worldly honours; all these he counted but as dross and dung for Christ (Phil 3:7,11).

***II. That which was treated with the greatest contempt was the Object of the apostle’s glorying.***

Everything connected with Christianity was hateful and odious, both to Jews and pagans. “The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness” (1 Cor 1:22-23).

In the estimation of the people,

(1) The person and rank of Christ were contemptible (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:2-3).

(2) His doctrines were so—humility, meekness, and mercy (Mt 5:2-12; 11:28-30).

(3) His condescension was so. The minister of the poor and of the vile (Lk 5:30; 19:7).

(4) The universality of His gospel was so, especially to the Jews. Hence, when He referred to the widow of Zarephath, and to Naaman, they tried to cast Him headlong (Lk 4:26-29).

(5) His disciples and preachers were so (Mt 4:18-22; Acts 4:13).

(6) But most of all His cross. In this His reputation and station in life were assailed.

He now became as a slave. His character vilified. He was ranked with malefactors (Gal 3:13; Mk 15:28; Isa 53:12).

Hence His cross everywhere was a stigma upon His followers; and it has been so everywhere and to this day, that the carnal mind has hated and despised His cross. Yet this was the apostle's object of supreme love and glorying (Phil 3:8). He wrote and preached about it everywhere.

### ***III. The apostle had the highest possible reasons for glorying in that Object.***

From these reasons we must select the more interesting and prominent. Let us look then at the cross of Christ; and,

(1) We see the curse removed from our guilty helpless world.

God "sent Him not to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved" (Jn 3:17).

But how did He redeem it? How roll away the black cloud of the divine displeasure? How? By becoming a "curse for us" (Gal 3:13). He was tried and sentenced, and endured the painful death of the cross; He stood in the place of the transgressors; "Christ suffered, the just for the unjust" (1 Pet 3:18).

(2) All the blessings of salvation flow from the cross.

Let us trace the great and glorious blessings of salvation to their source.

(a) There is pardon. "In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:14). "It behoved Christ to suffer...that repentance and remission of sins...in His Name" (Lk 24:46-47). Hence in the supper, "This is the New Testament in Christ's blood for the remission of sins." Without shedding of blood no remission (Heb 9:22; Rom 5:8-9).

(b) There is peace. The heart in a pacified state, reconciled to God. This also comes to us through the cross. "Having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col 1:20,21).

(c) There is sanctification or holiness. How are we to be healed and cleansed? It was predicted. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened... for sin and for uncleanness" (Zech 13:1). "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 Jn 1:7). "Who loved us and washed us from our sins" (Rev 1:5). "These have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev 7:14).

(3) The cross of Christ furnishes us with our only plea in prayer, and is the only way of access to God.

The way to the holiest is by the blood of Christ. Then what is the great argument which renders prayer effective? It is the finished work of Christ upon the cross. Here the covenant of peace was ratified; here all the fullness of salvation was obtained; here all the promises are made over to believers. There had been no throne of grace, no mercy nor hope, but for the death of Christ. The sinner would have had law, and justice, and holiness, and truth, all against him.

(4) The cross of Christ is the great incentive to the love and service of God.

"We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 Jn 4:19). Nothing can soften the heart if this fails. The love of Christ kindles ours (2 Cor 5:14). Here we feel we are not our own, for we are bought; give ourselves back to God (1 Cor 6:19-20).

(5) The cross of Christ is the only constraining power to induce us to exercise love and mercy to our fellowmen.

A sense of our obligation to Christ for His love and mercy to us, will fill us with compassion to our fellowmen. We cannot be revengeful, haters, malevolent, if we are the disciples of the cross. We shall imbibe the Spirit of the Saviour, who exclaimed, "Father, forgive them" (Lk 23:34).

(6) The cross of Christ is the great instrument of the believer's triumphs.

How does he overcome the flesh? "I am crucified with Christ" (Gal 2:20).

How the world? "The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal 6:14).

How Satan? "Above all, take the shield of faith..." (Eph 6:16). Faith in the cross. It was the death-blow to his hopes. Satan was spoiled on the cross, and flies before it (Col 2:15).

How death, the last enemy? Why by the cross, "Christ has died." O death! I fear thee not! Christ has overcome thee! "O death! where is thy sting?" (1 Cor 15:55).

(7) The cross of Christ shall raise the world from the ruins of the fall.

It is God's great spiritual machine, to shake the heavens and the earth. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He comes whose right it is; and I will give it to Him" (Ezek 21:27). "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me" (Jn 12:32). It is the wood cast into the bitter waters, sweetening the streams of the world (Ex 15:23-26). God's banner shall never be taken down till the battles of the Lord's anointed shall have obtained universal triumph and universal glory (Psa 110:1-7).

(8) The cross of Christ shall be the subject of the song of the redeemed forever.

In Heaven it will be as the tree of life. "Worthy is the LAMB that was SLAIN to receive power, and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing" (Rev 5:12). We shall probably forget science, and literature, and commerce, etc, but study the mysteries of the CROSS forever!

### **Application**

1. Have you experienced the saving power of the cross? Have you fled to it?

2. Do you glory in it? These are the evident signs: A reception of the doctrines of the atonement as the great cardinal truths of

Christianity. A holy delight in contemplating the mysteries of redeeming love. A grateful devotedness of yourselves to His service and glory. A giving all the glory of salvation to Jesus.

3. The rejectors of the cross must perish. No other Saviour, nor remedy. □

### **PLEASE PRAY AND HELP**

Our missionary sister Rosalind Kumar, wife of Mr. C.D. Kumar, who has been working among the 'Siddi Tribe' in the jungles of North Karnataka for over two decades is suffering from chronic 'Drug Induced Skin Allergy.' Her condition became worse and was rushed to the CMC Hospital, Vellore, recently, where she is undergoing treatment. The treatment is very expensive and the healing is slow.

Kindly pray and extend possible help towards her treatment.

**BLESSING YOUTH MISSION**  
**Church Colony, Vellore 632 006**

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J.D. Sapphire  
Signature of publisher

# News from Fields

Compiled by E. L. Mathansingh, Field Coordinator

The Blessing Youth Mission has stationed over 300 missionaries in 13 States of India, namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, for revival ministries and cross-cultural missionary evangelism leading to church planting in churchless places. The news of various fields is compiled here for PRAISE and PRAYER.

## ANDHRA PRADESH

- Praise God for enabling our missionaries to share the Gospel to the following seekers: Radha, Shanthi, Jyothi, Hena, Nagalakshmi, Hanoch, Satya Babu Rao, Amarnath, Prasanth, Nithin Kumar, Bandu, Karuna, Barathi, Saroja, Srinivas, Nagaraju, Nagesh, Pallavi, Bavani, Sujatha, Lakshmi, Satyanarayana, Kamala Kumari and Aruna.
- 200 poor people were blessed through the free medical camp conducted in Korukonda village.
- Praise God for the 16 people who have obeyed the Lord in water baptism.
- Pray for Nageswara Rao (AIDS) and Chennamma (Diabetes).
- Our General Secretary Mr. J. Shanthakumar was the speaker for the Andhra Pradesh staff retreat held in Vijayawada.

## ASSAM

- Our missionary Leence Joel shared the Word of God in Panigaon Baptist Church. Pray for a revival in this congregation.
- Pray for the salvation of our new student contacts—Hussain, Gourab and Ricky, as they are eagerly reading the Word of God.
- A spiritual renewal meeting was conducted for the 113 staff and students of St. Luke's Hospital in Tinsukia and 28 committed their lives to Christ.
- Pray for our prayer cell member Simon a final year medical student who has injured his spinal cord in an accident and is totally paralysed below abdomen.

## GUJARAT

- A special Gospel meeting was conducted in Karchipada village; 325 villagers heard the Good News; 65 people decided to follow Jesus; 8 people were anointed with the Holy Spirit.
- 12 persons are regularly participating in an exclusive prayer meeting arranged for bank officials; pray for our lay leader Mr. T. Prince who plays an active role.
- Pushpa, one of our contacts fractured her leg; pray for her healing.
- Native Workers' Training programme conducted in Nadiad enabled to equip the enthusiastic leaders of Vasavi people group.

## JHARKHAND

- Muni Juhi and Sapna of Ukni accepted Jesus as their personal Saviour recently.
- Pray for the seekers in Sakhia village—Ajay, Sanjay, Arjun, Manohar, Ansari, Riazzudin, Ganesh, Poppu, Rasakiram, Mukesh and Iswari.
- Praise God for Samir and Urmila who have restored their family life through prayers and counselling.
- Pray for Philisita, Rajendra and Jenny (Childlessness); Pushpa Tigga and Binod (TB) and Raju (Leprosy).

## KERALA

- A new book *Blessed are the Obedient* in Malayalam was released in a special meeting in Nellickakuzhy, in which our General Overseer A. Lionel challenged the Christians for missionary evangelism.
- J. Wilson and Y. Daniel participated in the Preachers' Training Programme held in Chennai.
- Missionary couple Duke Jeyaraj-Evangeline has shifted from Trivandrum to join our team in Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh).
- Mr. & Mrs. S. Wilson have moved to Trivandrum from where the state work will be coordinated.

## MADHYA PRADESH

- Praise God for Kallu, Raja, Mahesh, Nandi and Hemant who have accepted Christ.
- 850 people watched the *Jesus* movie in Manpura, Kachari and Bajna villages.
- A Special Training Programme was conducted in Shahgarh in which 19 elders from our fields were trained to give an impact to the villagers by their exemplary lifestyle and edifying teaching. Our senior missionary couple M.C. Ponniah-Sathyavathi systematically taught about the marks of a true leader.
- In a prayer gathering in Jabalpur 5 girls received the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
- God enabled our missionaries to start worship services in Tiwari Kheda and in Barodra villages. Pray that the worshippers may grow and glow for the Gospel.
- Our Jabalpur team ministered to 2000 students and 100 staff of St. Gabriel School with the help of the 'Cross Bearers' music team. Pray that the power of the Gospel may change the lives of the audience.
- Blessing Readers' Meet was arranged in Bhopal, in which Mr. Biju David of Katni encouraged the 75 participants for active involvement in the missionary evangelism.

## MAHARASHTRA

- Our congregation in Jath gathered for a 3 day fasting prayer and prayed for the spiritual awakening of our Nation.
- Praise God that He protected our missionaries in Vaduj from a major road accident when they were going for ministry in a van.
- 130 people heard the missionary challenge in a "Mission Evening" organized in Miraj and decided to invest their time, talents and treasure to fulfill the Great Commission.
- Pray for the family of Kshirsagar who is facing problems from the local people because he has opened his house for the prayer meetings.
- 12 native workers were fruitfully trained in a 3 day programme in Vasai.

## ORISSA

- Free medical service organized by our missionaries in the villages of Ghotichaper, Kurumahandi, Mindra and Kudumdara.
- Hari and Hira, a couple separated for 10 years rejoined recently by the fervent prayers and counselling.
- Praise God for the boldness of our believers in Soura area, who stood firmly in their faith amidst the constant threatening and the enticement of the disturbing forces.
- God manifested His divine power in the lives of the following people: Sanju, Daniel, Jamuna and Parbati (Malaria); Neero Saber (Acute hip pain) and missionary couple Philip and Snehalata (from a cobra).
- 68 people obeyed the Lord's righteousness through water baptism in Govindapalli and in Umerkote fields.
- A three day Revival meeting was conducted in Rayagada, in which missionary Y. Paul Dinakaran challenged the 300 participants for holy living and bold witnessing.
- A two day fasting prayer organized in Cuttack, motivated the Christians to become prayer warriors.

## RAJASTHAN

- Shyamlal, Ramswaroop, Omprakash, Richpal, Jutharam, Jugal, Kishan, Suresh, Jothi, Satpal, Makkhan and Govind have been met with the Gospel; Pray that the seeds may grow.
- Praise God for Munnimeena who stands firm in her faith.
- God enabled our missionaries to regularly conduct the worship services in Ghatia, Debri, Shakarwada, Bakanear and Chiramahudi villages; pray that these worshippers may bring their kith and kin into His fold.
- Pray for Munimeena (Ear Problem); Meenakshi (Appendicitis); Jugal (Mental depression); Jitu (Evil spirit); Geesaram (Drunkenness); Gyarsi Hariram (inflammation in the body) and Suman (Childlessness).
- One of our native workers, Mahaveer's wife was blessed with a baby boy.
- Missionary Victor Jeyakumar has joined the Neem ka Thana team. Pray for a suitable life partner for him.

## TAMILNADU

- Pray for the salvation of the 90 people who were met by personal evangelism in Kottapatti village.
- Praise God for Kanagaraj, Ponniyammal, Govindaraj, Nalini, Menaka and Poongothai who are showing much interest to read the whole Bible and to know the truth.
- Missionaries and believers were greatly encouraged by the visit of our partners from Coimbatore and Devakottai. They went into the remote areas and ministered through songs and skits.
- 40 young people attended youth meeting conducted in Chitling. A team from Trichy ministered in this meeting. Pray for the follow up.
- By the grace of God a new church building was dedicated in Nochikuttai. The tribal congregation was happy over the participation of our well wishers from Chennai, Trichy, Tirunelveli and Nazareth on this joyous occasion.
- Missionary John Milton marries Bama, one of our headquarters staff, in Sitheri Hills on 5th March 2005. Congratulations!

## WEST BENGAL

- Praise God for Biran, Deepali, Kalavathy and Malathy who are seeking God with genuine interest.

➤ New Testaments were distributed in Khorani village; pray that the 35 people who have received the Word may have a life transforming experience with the Lord.

➤ God gave an open door among the women in Jalpaiguri Railway colony; 10 ladies are regularly gathering for Bible study. Pray that many more Marys may arise from this place.

➤ In answer to our prayers Subhadip who is our Gospel-contact got a job in Railways and his sister Sudipta was healed miraculously from a cyst in her nose. Hallelujah!

➤ Pray for the release of Blessing books, *How to be saved* and *To Dear Students...* in Bengali before the forth coming Literature Drive Programme in Kolkota city, April 3-10.

## GENERAL

- Mr. A. Jeyaraj and Mrs. Lalitha Mathansingh participated in a consultation on Advancing Christian Leadership in India, organised by the Haggai Institute in Hyderabad.
- Pray for safe delivery (towards April end) of Mrs. Evangeline Jonas, the daughter of Mr & Mrs. Stanley.

➤ Pray for the student contacts, children of our well wishers and the missionary kids who will be appearing for Board / University examinations shortly. God should crown them with academic excellence. ▣

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Founder: R. Stanley, B.E., M.Tech.



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