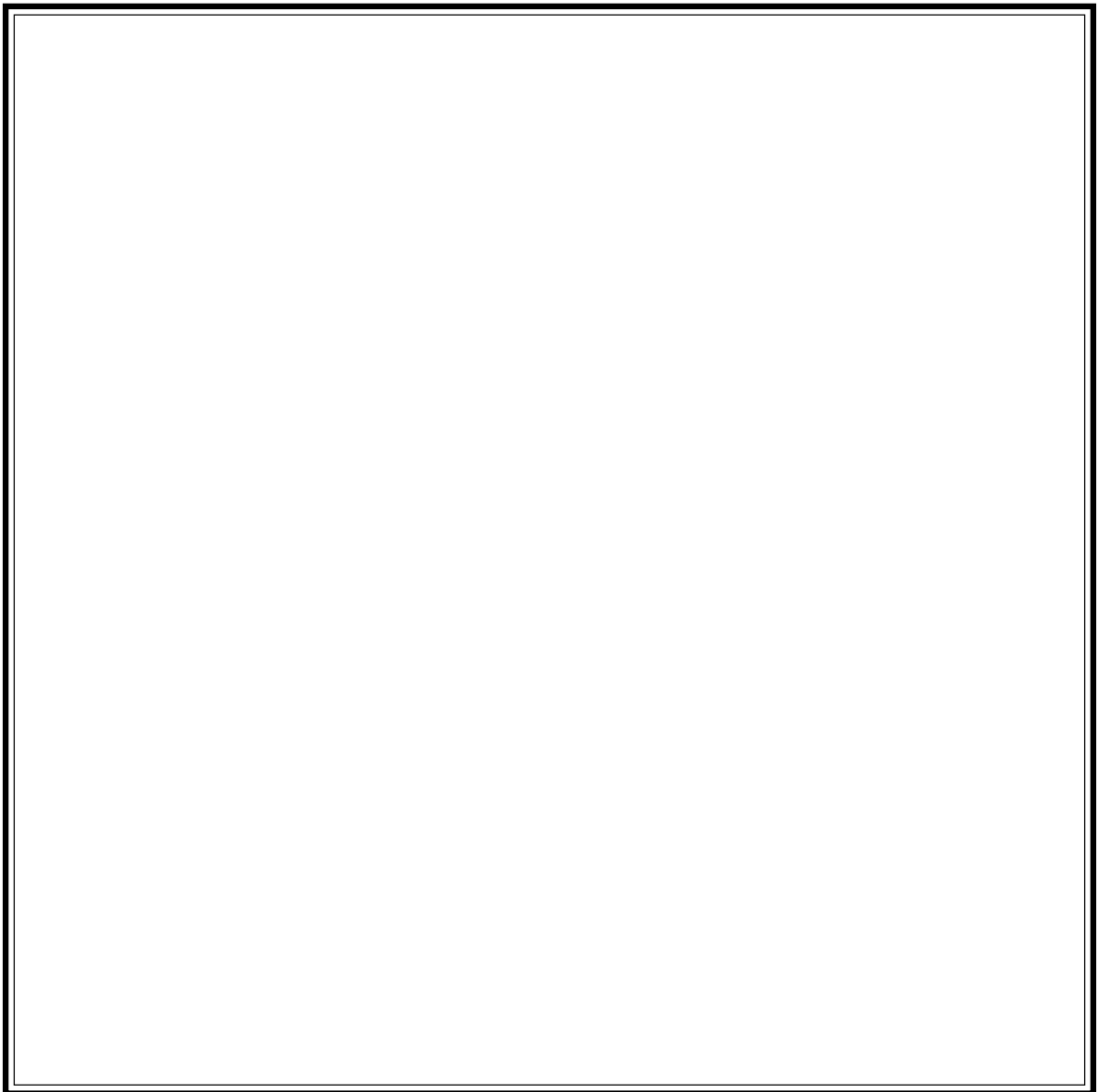


YEAR OF HARVEST

<http://www.BlessingYouthMission.org>



SEPTEMBER 2005
Volume 34 Issue 9 No. 354



HARVEST — THE “ACTS” WAY

Pearl Arthur John

The mission entrusted to Christians two millennia ago is yet to be achieved. Centuries after centuries a few faithful men have stood tall to ring the message of light to the darkened hearts of men. Men and women having received the call of God have divested their worldly pursuits and have directed their energies in taking the Gospel of Christ to the ends of the world. This army in the General's service is a minority. The majority having tasted Christ through experiencing His atoning grace and redemptive power are content with their encounters with the Saviour. They do mighty little to present the claims of Christ to the degenerating world. The early Church was significantly different as described within the pages of the Acts of the Apostles. The way of life of these saints have substantive lessons for us to follow in the end times. I have detailed here certain fundamentals that Christians of the early Church followed, which should assist us in reaching this generation with the Gospel of Christ and aid our efforts in achieving His commission.

Anointed with the Spirit

Christ's directive to His disciples was to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit before they embarked upon their mission of reaching the un-reached (Acts 1:4-8). The empowering of the Holy Spirit is an essential ingredient for effective spiritual intervention in the lives of the lost. The transformation He brings about is supernatural and is far superior to any makeover human hands can employ. Prior to the anointing of the Spirit, Peter's best for God was revenge (Jn 18:10) and worst, repudiation (Jn 18:17). Post Pentecost, the coward turned into a repository of

courage! Prior to the Spirit's seal he dithered to declare His name to a delinquent girl, post the Spirit's empowering he defied the ranks and demonstrated the power of God to a disparaging crowd (Mt 26:69,70; Acts 2:14-36). Jesus emphatically declared this change when He directed His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem. The definite outcome of the Spirit's anointing was the unleashing of power and the direct consequence of this outpouring was being witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The Spirit of God equipped and enabled the weak, wobbly disciples for the great harvest. The Church was established with the outpouring of the Spirit, endured hardships under the overshadowing of the Spirit and expanded across the earth with the empowerment of the Spirit. But now very many harvest efforts are mere exercises of the mind rather than through the expeditionary might of the Spirit. The need of the hour is that every endeavor towards evangelization be secured in the Spirit of God. For who can facilitate the completion of His work better than His Spirit? Be it the insipid exertion of a tract distributor or the intricate effort of a multi-media preacher, it is imperative that they be fastened in the Spirit of Christ.

Absorbed in Prayer

The import of Christ's words, "Watch and pray," perhaps had been clearly etched in the disciples' minds (Mt 26:41). A clear characteristic of the early Christians was their constant and consistent prayers. They never missed an opportunity to meet together for prayer. In a saloon on the rooftop

(Acts 1:13,14; 10:9) or in the sanctuary premises (3:1); by the brook (16:13) or at the beach (21:5) they were constantly engaged in prayer. The act of prayer was not considered a ritual or a ruling. It was not seen as a burden or a binding. Christians eagerly sought solitude with the Lord. Their craving was well expressed by Paul, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved." Their constant cry was by some means to save the lost (1 Cor 9:22). Their seasons of prayers were night and day! (1 Thess 3:10).

They prayed that the listeners would become like the presenters (Acts 26:29). They sought prayers to proclaim the message of Christ boldly (Col 4:4). Offered prayers to actively share the faith (Phil 1:6) and prayed that their love may abound (Phil 1:9). The focus of their prayers was spiritual and not physical. They were Christ centric and not carnal. The effect of such prayer was telling. Their concerted prayers resulted in additions to the Church daily! (Acts 2:42). The secret of Church growth is prayer. In the words of Leonard Ravenhill, harvest is a possibility only when the sleeping giant, wakes up and prays. The direct consequence of prayer is the eradication of fear and enunciation of the Word (Acts 4:31). Like the Christians of the early century, we need to commit ourselves to prayer.

Anchored in the Word

The ministry of the early Christians was inspired through the Spoken Word and their message was aided through the written Word! Peter in his maiden sermon draws upon the Word from Joel and Psalms liberally to paint a lucid picture of the power of the Holy Spirit and the glorious day of the Lord (Acts 2:17-21,25-28,34). Stephen, the first martyr, in his dynamic speech again cited numerous verses from the Old

Testament books of Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Amos. In the last recorded speech of Paul in Acts, he employs the words of Isaiah six to urge his listeners to turn to God.

Jesus during His ministerial tenure employed the Word of God on various occasions. The dialogue with the Biblical professors (Lk 2:46,47), His tryst with the tempter (Lk 4:4,8,12), when assigned to read the Word at the Temple (v 17), while expounding OT Scripture (Lk 7:26,27), countering questions raised (Lk 20) are sterling examples of the Son of Man using the written Word. In today's high paced world the so-called committed Christian hardly ever engages in meditating the Word. Bible reading by many Christians is practiced as a ritual, a talisman that will charm the reader to prosperity and ward off harm. The Biblical concept of working with the Word is to see it as light to our path (Psa 119:105). Should we not have the light how can we lead others in the right way? The Word is pure milk that nourishes our soul (1 Pet 2:2). If we are not nourished how can we feed the eager, famished souls with the Bread of Life? The Word is likened to a sword (Heb 4:12). If we are not sufficiently equipped to handle the onslaughts of the evil one, how can we assist others to fight the works of wickedness in their lives? The need for harvesters is to be fully soaked with the Word that when the Words are spoken they shall not return void (Isa 55:11).

Affable to people

The impact of the Gospel message was so powerful that it unstrung the early Christians' purses and loosened the hold of money (Acts 2:44,45). Their willingness to share their possessions with those in need and reach out to the poor among the brothers with gladness and simplicity of heart was the hallmark of practical religion. Such

attitude and action resulted in the Christians of the day finding favour with all people (Acts 2:47a). The apostolic injunction that 'faith without works is dead' was clearly practised by the early church. Faith in Christ translated in favour towards men resulted in having favour with all men. Consequently the Lord added to the Church daily (v 47b).

As harvesters living in the last days, we are confronted with this reality. The harvester who does not demonstrate his faith in tangible ways is unlikely to reap bountifully. The Christian with a long face, grave appearance and a rare smile will seldom find favour with men. Finding favour with men is perhaps one of the key means to connect to the inner man. Genuine zeal and ardent prayers if not expressed in acts of 'reaching out' to the inner man with compassion and love is unlikely to usher in the harvest.

Addressed the real needs

To a man who confronted them with a request for alms, Peter's response is enlightening. "Silver and gold have I none, but what I do have, I give you...." (Acts 3:6). The world expects the ordinary things from Christians today viz., charities, educational institutions, Justice missions, peace efforts to name a few. But we should discern their need and minister to them. Peter and John were different from the regular Temple visitors. The harvesters need to be different from the regular run of the mill Church going Christians! Although what were sought were mere alms, Peter heard the unsaid cries of the human heart. Peter's sensitivity to the real need of the beggar was sharp. His discernment of what the beggar wanted vs. what he needed was astute. Hence the response, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" The command, "rise up and walk" impacted the man in two ways; while

it brought a physical healing, more significantly his healing was spiritual! The man whose mouth never pronounced anything but a cry for alms and whose heart was filled with anything but bitterness on his unfortunate plight began praising God! (v 8). That is the power of addressing the real needs of people.

To a world that expects the role of Christians to be peacekeepers, champions of education and a bunch of good Samaritans taking care of the sick, the harvester is called to go a step beyond to address the real needs of people. These efforts are by no means insignificant. They certainly have their role. However, these are subservient to meeting the real needs of people. The real need of this generation as that of the erstwhile generations is to fill the God created vacuum in their hearts. Alert to those real needs and efforts to address them will result in joy unspeakable and praises to God, much more than what was expressed by the healed lame. Doesn't the word say, "there is great joy in heaven when one soul turns to Christ? (Lk 15:7)!

Accentuated Christ

When God honored the faith and healed the lame man, the vessels used attracted a lot of attention. That was an inescapable reality. The donkey, Jesus used to enter Jerusalem experienced the tribute paid to the Rider! To the amazement of the public and the credulous attribution of the miracle to the vessels used for the cause, Peter's response reiterates a commendable lesson no harvester should ever lose sight of: "Why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we have made this man walk" and further, "...His name, through faith in His name has made this man strong" (Acts 3:12,16).

Amidst the ministers who clamour for attention to their preaching, their

ministry, their publications, their works, the harvesters are called upon to follow the founding fathers of the Church in pointing to Christ and not seek any credit for their availability. For which vessel can pride itself for the use the Master puts it to? Isn't it solely the Master's discretion? That the Master should choose to use the vessel for a defined purpose within the Kingdom should be humbling and is sufficient reason for the vessel to draw attention to the One who uses the vessel rather than on the vessel itself.

Affirmed that Jesus is the Christ

Peter's words "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36) cut through his audience loud and clear. Peter was not on a man-pleasing trip. He did not hash any words. His declaration lacked any apology. He thundered the Word of God filled with the power of God and made no bones about the indisputable fact of the resurrection of Christ (3:15) and thus stated in no uncertain terms that Jesus is the Christ.

In a world that is exposed to varied worldviews, atheism and agnosticism appear to be viable options. The flaws within these views are hardly examined or addressed. Atheists' assertion that there is no God presupposes infinite knowledge. This is a logical contradiction, for how can a finite being allege infinite understanding? The agnostics insist that we cannot prove and therefore do not know whether God exists. Again, this worldview is riddled with similar follies, to profess that we cannot know if God exists, is essentially to aver infinite knowledge. In the absence of full knowledge, the assertion, "We do not know, if God exists" is essentially a flaw! Against such contradicting worldviews the Biblical view of Jesus is Christ is borne

by eyewitnesses who bear testament to the fact of Christ's divinity and role. When atheists and agnostics do not shy from declaring their views in various forums, why should the harvester have any reservations to affirm that Jesus is the Christ?

Abated peripherals to focus on primary

When encountered with dissension in their charity work a spin-off of their primary mission of saving the lost, the disciples called forth a meeting of the elders and made a clear decision. Their decision spells out a key factor for all ministers of the Gospel. "It is not right for us to stop our work of teaching God's word in order to serve tables" (Acts 6:2). Their calling was to impart the Bread of Life and they got caught up in providing the bread for life. This anomaly was to be corrected so that they continue to expend their energies where due! Hence they made the much-needed mid-course correction such that the peripherals do not take precedence over the fundamentals! The disciples were not against the service of the poor. Their actions vindicated their commitment to the poor. They earmarked others with the right aptitude to fill those positions (v3) and thus allowed this important aspect of Christian work to be unhampered. However, their own premium time was invested in sharing the Word!

The efforts and endeavors of the specially gifted so often like the disciples get entangled in the prized but peripheral activities. It is time that men and women of God who are good, full of the Spirit and full of wisdom are assigned to such peripherals and the specially gifted engage in the crucial commission entrusted in our hands by the Chief Charity Commissioner! In the words of the disciples, "... we can continue to pray and to teach the word

of God.” The malady of Christendom today is majority of those commissioned in the service have allowed the secondary concerns to take preeminence over those of primary import. The urgency of the task is best expressed in the words of Paul when he said, “even if married as though not married!” (1 Cor 7:29). When those set apart for the peripheral acts engage fully in those initiatives and those called out to pray and teach the Word employ themselves enthusiastically in the task, the result is a large harvest including those from among the clergy (Acts 6:7). Hallelujah!!

Ablaze for God

Stephen is reflective of the caliber of people within the early Church. The Bible describes him as a man of great faith and full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5). Further he demonstrated an uncanny wisdom and a gift of unusual words (v 10). When confronted with the fury of the people of his time, he did not lose face rather allowed his face to shine with the glory of God (Acts 6:15). When threatened with dire consequences, he did not dry up for want of words, but his discourse is possibly one of the best portraits of history being reconstructed from God’s perspective (Acts 7). His was a life filled with the magnificence of God and fuelled by a passion for God. He did not mince words as he cut through the swelling crowds, “You stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you” (v 51). He is one among the genre of godly men who were ablaze for God and abhorred evil, abided by His dictate and abdicated the pleasures of life, chose to live by faith rather than by sight.

Stephen’s message referenced the luminaries of the past, who through the centuries have illuminated a torch that was ablaze and shined as a light

in a world that was given to darkness. Abraham with no clarity of where he was being commissioned to go, yielded to the voice of God and embarked on His journey (Acts 7:4). This act of faith paved the way for Christ to come into the world in his lineage. Joseph the type of Christ in the Old Testament when confronted with the antagonism of his brothers did not burn with enmity but blazed with a reverential fear of God and demonstrated forgiveness and love that is divine. In turn he was exalted as the governor of Egypt and became a blessing to his family (v 10,14). Moses having encountered God in the burning bush and trained in the crucible of God’s school in the wilderness was set apart to lead the people of Israel from oppression, when he deserted the riches and power of Egypt.

Abraham’s life ablaze set him apart as the father of faith and he became a blessing to the entire world. As the father of faith, he was the forerunner to the Christian mandate of reproduction. Joseph’s life ablaze ushered in blessing to his entire family and extended families. As a type of Christ, he produced good fruit whose branches climbed over the wall to reach the other side describing a life of fruitfulness! (Gen 49:22). Moses’ life ablaze obliterated the oppression of Egypt on Israel and ushered in freedom from slavery. As a role model, his life reiterates the principle of harvesting the children of Israel from bondage to freedom. The calling to Christians today is to have their lives ablaze such that the Son of Righteousness may steer in faith that moves mountains, blessings to extended families and freedom from the clutches of sin in the lives of the people across the face of the earth. In a world that eulogizes compromise, Stephens who are ablaze for God and not stoop to flirt with the world is the need of the hour within

the Church. Such men will not deter from proclaiming the claims of Christ even in the face of death.

Abound in Christ

Amidst the constant cry for “sowing seeds in this ministry” that resonates from most television evangelists, the early apostles’ approach is refreshingly different. To a man who sought to “sow” into the ministry for his personal gains, Peter’s rebuke drove the point with all clarity, “May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money” (8:20). The ministers of the gospel of yore continually sowed the seeds of Christ in the hearts of men while others of their own accord sowed financial seeds in their ministry (Phil 4:10-18). Today’s ministers seek financial seeds that they may sow seeds of faith in the lives of people. What a reversal!

When ministries are faithful in planting the seeds of the Son in the hearts of men, the Jehovah Jireh will provision the requisite means to carry out the task of preaching the good news to the last man. I am not in any way insinuating that asking for financial help as inappropriate. The priorities in most ministries sadly are lopsided and that calls for serious introspection and definite course correction. Then the Lord of the harvest will usher in a harvest of such dimensions that no eyes have beheld or no mind has ever conceived!

The principles detailed above, when applied by the faithful few, will usher in the mighty harvest. May the Lord grant that we in our generation will see with our own eyes and experience in our own times the harvest of such magnitude and intensity that the world has never seen before. Oh, Lord that you may ’ring in the harvest! f

(Contn. page 10)

He has been at the center of nation’s moral and civic consciousness, having counseled Presidents and called the country to obey God’s laws. Yet he’s never been snagged by a single political party, and he hasn’t allowed himself to digress into any special focus on one political, moral or doctrinal issue. “The Bible says...” has been his badge of authority and the bedrock of his ministry.

He has always maintained his identity as a “Baptist evangelist,” but there is not a sector of the Church that has not been touched by his breadth of ministry. And here’s the reason: He has not allowed himself to be crowded into narrow corners of “emphasis” that would preclude him from being a blessing to all — which brings us to the con-cluding point.

COMMITMENT TO THE WHOLE CHURCH

In the 1940s, when the evangelical movement was in danger of becoming ultra-fundamentalists, it was considered congratulatory to blast modernists. Yet, Graham set a style that rescued the possibility of gaining some semblance of unity in the American Church.

He insisted that all Churches and Church Leaders would be welcome—solicited and encouraged to be involved in his crusades. All denominations were received as partners for the sake of evangelism.

This largeness toward the whole Body of Christ is also seen in Graham’s commitment to the local Church, and in his love for Pastors and Church Leaders. His ministry partner, Cliff Barrows, sums up Graham’s attitude toward local Church Leaders. “He genuinely loves them and has sought to learn all he can from them. Instead of criticizing their ministry, he tries to be sympathetic to the problems they face.”

Thank you, Lord, for a man named Billy Graham.

“Mark the blameless man and observe the upright; for the future of that man is peace” (Psa 37:37). f

—Rev. Jack Hayford

Victory through the People on the Mountain

A. Malarselvan, Missionary, Rajasthan

The Lord of Hosts and His Church are on war with the gates of Hades (Mt 16:18). The territory won is measured by the forward march of the feet shod with the Gospel of peace to the ends of the earth (Eph 6:15; Mt 28:18,19). Missionaries are the front line delta force of God equipped to take over the enemy's strong holds. But can they accomplish this alone? The Scripture answers this question with Israel's victory over Amalekites (Ex 17:8-16). Apart from the front line warriors, there was a small group on the mountain, which played a major role in the victory. Prayer was the role played by them.

1. Individual Prayer

Joshua and thousands of warriors were fully armed for the battle and fought with all their skills and strategies. But the Word of God says that victory was not dependent on them alone: as long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning (Ex 17:11-13). Amazing!

Thousands of missionaries have gone forth in our land to labour cross-culturally to rescue people from the dominion of darkness. They are trained to carry out well-planned strategy, equipped with vehicles, instruments and gadgets. God's people who support them with prayer and money are the people in the mountain. Nevertheless crores of people live in the shadows of death! It is because the people on the mountain have either lowered their hands or worst that they have not climbed the mountain at all. Moses said to Joshua, "Go out and fight... I will stand on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands" (Ex 17:9). Partners, Support groups, Prayer cells and sponsoring churches of missionaries have bid them to go with sponsorship services. But are you standing on the mountain of God's presence with your hands stretched towards the Lord of Hosts?

Moses with his lifted hands on the mountain is the type of prayer expected from men of God. Prayer with lifted hands will save people (1 Tim 2:1-8). The process of the harvest begins with prayer (Mt 9:37,38). It continues with the travelling prayer for the salvation of the fellow countrymen (Rom 9:1-3; 10:1). Those who sweat and bleed in prayer will alone be satisfied with the result of many being justified (Lk 22:44; Isa 53:11). Partners who pray privately, decide the enhancement in the mission fields. The victory of the front line warriors depends upon the prayer on the mountain.

2. United Prayer

Moses promised to Joshua saying 'I will stand.' But he was wise enough to take Aaron and Hur along with him to the mountaintop. When Moses was tired, they made arrangements for him to sit down and held his weary hands high before the Lord's presence. Without them Moses would have given up and God's army would have been rooted out. This incidence illustrates the biblical principle: "Two are better than one, a cord of three strands is not quickly broken" (Eccl 4:9,12).

God searched for "one man to stand in the gap" but could find none (Ezek 22:30). Hence in the New Covenant he formed a body of believers (Eph 2:15). Mutuality is the principle of the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:20,21). Jesus expects His followers to pray in twos, threes and groups and promised to give anything for united prayers (Mt 18:17-20). Prayer by a group of believers shook the place and strengthened the apostles (Acts 4:23-31). Prayer in groups by the church shook the guard and released Peter from prison (Acts 12:5,12). Prayer by two men of God shook the prison and saved the jailor (Acts 16:25-29).

The spiritual darkness over the nation is very oppressive. Hence dear missionary sponsors, encourage one another for prayer. Visit those

who are not coming for missionary prayer meetings and restore them (Heb 10:24,25). Pray in groups at home (Acts 12:12). Organize Missionary Prayer Crusades. Visit missionary fields as a team for a season of prayer and partake thereby in the spiritual warfare. For such prayers God will give our nation as inheritance (Psa 2:8).

3. *Committed Prayer*

Moses said, "I will stand with the staff of God in my hands." But he grew tired (Ex 17:9,12). His body yearned and yelled for a little rest. His hands weighed like metal. Could he rest for awhile or exchange his responsibility with someone? No! Victory of God's army depends upon the commitment of intercessors. Moses was as committed as a rock. "His hands remained steady till sunset." He came down from the mountain only after the victory of God's army! (Ex 17:12,13).

Missionary sponsors and prayer supporters who promised to stand before the Lord with lifted hands become tired by praying day after day for the same persons and same matter. The attendance for the missionary prayer cells grows thin. Prayer for self, family and probably home church takes our time. We are busy writing to other prayer agencies for personal needs and prosperity and let the missionaries, who are fighting in the satanic frontiers, to take care of themselves! The pulls of the world, work place, family and society have made the supporters to come down from the mountain while God's army fighting in the plains, is now facing despair.

Dear sponsors, cheques without a continual flow of tears of intercession cannot bring harvest (Psa 126:5). Your gifts to the missionaries without the daily spiritual wrestling in the closet cannot deliver people from the clutches of sin and satan. The determination of Esther, 'If I perish, I perish' is needed to save our people from destruction (Esth 4:16). Commit yourself to pray for missionaries daily in your personal and family prayers, weekly prayer cells and monthly prayer meetings. "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord" (Col 4:17). Then India will be saved in our generation. f

Help us Preserve the Fruits!

Many of the Saura Tribal people in the State of Orissa are responding to the Gospel and turning to the Lord through the ministry of our missionaries. Some time ago miscreants beat up some such people and burned their houses. The new believers fled away to their relatives in other villages. After negotiation with the law, the baby believers have dared to return to their village. We need to build the fourteen bulldozed houses and rebuild the shattered lives. Please help! That's the only way to preserve our fruits. Estimate Rs. 70,000/-.

Graduates For God

The Blessing Youth Mission is launching out a new unit, Graduates For God (GFG), to bring together committed Christian degree and diploma holders to foster fellowship with one another and serve as a task force in reaching the student community with the Gospel. A Consultation Meet for the formation of this Unit is arranged from 9 am to 4 pm on Sunday the 2nd October 2005. Dr. Mrs. Lillian Stanley will bring the keynote address at the gathering. Brother Lionel will bring God's Word. Please do come with your valuable suggestions. Thank you.

Venue: Trichirapalli Multi-purpose Social Service Society (TMSSS), opposite to Jenny Plaza, Near R. C. High School, 49K Barathi Salai, Trichy 620 001.
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It is not 'Ministry' but 'Character!'

(Life long ministry without losing credibility!)

Why is Billy Graham held in such consistently high esteem by virtually everyone in both the Church and the secular community? Every Christian Leader should weigh the values that are involved in the answer and frame Graham's code of personal values and ethics in their lives and ministry. How did Graham establish patterns of conduct and ministry, both public and private, that have produced track record of fidelity in every arena of life and service?

A rather unfruitful crusade in Modesto, California, in November 1948, made the Graham team to set specific policies to help guard the ministry's integrity. They asked themselves a probing question: "Why do people tend not to trust Christian ministries, especially evangelists?" The result of their open-hearted self-examination brought six major areas of concern into focus: money, sexual immorality, sensationalism, hyperemotionalism, digressions into temporary emphases or issues, and insensitivity toward the entire body of Christ—particularly to its local Pastors and Churches.

MONEY

Since the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association was formed in 1950, Graham has never accepted a love offering or an honorarium for work in his crusades. He would later accept pay for his newspaper column and royalties from some of his books, but his salary for his evangelistic ministry was set.

He began with a salary of \$ 15,000 per year, a wage comparable to prominent urban Pastors in US. That same standard has continued to guide any upward adjustment.

SEXUAL MORALITY

Candidly acknowledging their vulnerabilities to their own humanness and to the possibility of false appearances of wrongdoing, Graham and the team set strict, basic rules to protect themselves.

These rules include: (1) Keep in close proximity to one another on the road - recognizing the mutual strength of both partnership and accountability. (2) Never, for any reason, be alone with a woman,

however pure the intent (as in counseling) or innocent the setting (as in a ride to an auditorium or airport). Together the team would pray, "Lord, guard us, keep us true and help us be sensitive in this area—even to keep from the appearance of evil."

SENSATIONALISM

Any study of the preaching, writing and evangelistic style of Graham reveals a remarkable absence of the superficial, of hype, or pandering to the crowd of playing to the grandstands. Even in the early years, when his own youthfulness and his beginnings as a youth evangelist showed up in a more dramatic delivery, his communication consistently avoided exaggeration or "slick" remarks.

There's never been anything cutesy or clever about his style. There are no grandiose claims or stunts employed to attract attention. Simply put, Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 4:5 seem to say it: "For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake" (NKJV).

HYPER EMOTIONALISM

It is interesting to observe Graham's balance in this respect. Both an evangelical and a Pentecostal, are being encouraged by his steadfast maintenance of a middle road between the extremes of intellectual sophistry and emotional folderol.

He is not afraid to confront people with the eternal issues of heaven's promise and hell's judgment, yet he never become either syrupy on the one hand or mean on the other.

His recognition that the Holy Spirit does move upon human emotions is balanced by his commitment to let the Spirit draw people to Christ. Graham merely bows in prayer while seekers come forward—moved by God, not a manipulative appeal.

AVOIDING DIGRESSION

Graham has written on prophecy, yet he has never been caught in the trap of sign-seeking, date-setting or charting the future and putting it up for sale.

(Contd. page 7)

From the Coordinator of Prayer & Revival ministries...

Revive us, O Lord!

Y. Paul Dinakaran

Blessing Youth Mission is committed to **Revival** and Evangelism. Prayer ignites revival and prepares the hearts of men and women towards His high calling. By the immense grace of God, the spirit of Prayer and Revival fire are spreading across the country through our ministries under the guidance of brother A. Lionel, our General Overseer. Both fulltime staff and lay leaders are actively involved in the ministries. The State Coordinator of each State has nominated one missionary to spearhead the ministry of prayer and revival in each State.

In the State of Orissa, missionary P. Chezian organized a two days' prayer with fasting in Cuttack and a revival programme in Rayagada. More than 300 people from different denominations came together to participate in these programmes and were spiritually blessed. They returned with a challenge for holy living and bold witnessing. 50 people from the State of Orissa took all the pains of long travel in the hot summer of May 2005 to attend the Harvesters Family Camp at Sitteri of Tamilnadu. The Blessing Camp conducted in Jeypore was a great blessing to the 80 participants. In West Bengal, our missionaries V. Chelliah and Regina Chelliah are forming prayer cells and regularly nourishing the small groups with the Word of God. The response from the local Christians of Siliguri was good for the missionary cause as was evident in the missionary well wishers' meeting conducted over there.

The Lord is blessing the efforts that are being taken by missionaries Gnanapragasam and Leence Joel for the revival programmes in the Northeastern States. The programme conducted in St. Luke's Hospital, Tinsukia paved the way for many transformed lives in Christ. 110 staff of the hospital participated in the programme. Several youth prayer groups are effectively functioning in this region.

In the Northern Region also our missionaries organized several revival programmes. The revival meeting conducted in the CNI Church of Bewar, Rajasthan was a time of renewal for that congregation. The Madhya Pradesh Team conducted a Blessing Readers' Meet in

Bhopal. Several youth were greatly challenged and revived in the youth programmes conducted in Katni and Jabalpur. The Uttar Pradesh Team organized programmes in Mugalsarai and Lucknow and the Lord fed His people with His Word.

As the Lord burdened the hearts of the leaders for giving more attention to prayer, a week long prayer with fasting was organized in the month of June, this year in Nadiad of Gujarat. 20 missionaries representing almost all the States of our mission fields participated. The Spirit of God dealt with each one and led the group into a time of brokenness in God's presence, repentance and deeper commitment for prayer. Many plans for effective prayer was worked out. "Power 365" is one of those plans, which got implemented on the first of July 2005 itself. Under this plan there will be a chain prayer force for all the 365 days of a year upholding the missionary work. For missionaries it is compulsory while for others it is an open invitation to join this prayer plan. Interested prayer warriors can write to us for details.

In Andhra Pradesh the revival programmes conducted in Kurnool and Beemavaram were fruitful. There is an awakening among the youth about the need for missionary evangelism. The State Coordinator, Mr. P. Selvam reports that 25 youth responded to the call for full time ministry in one of the Church programmes in Vijayawada. The Harvesters Family Camp conducted in the Sitteri Hills of Tamilnadu witnessed 850 participants from different States of India. The family bond was strengthened and every one went revived and refreshed in their spirits. They also went with the challenge of becoming committed prayer warriors in response to the motivation given by one of the speakers, Mr. Patrick Joshua of Friends Missionary Prayer Band. The Tamilnadu Coordinator, Mr. Suthanthirasingh is actively working on forming one thousand prayer cells in the State in a couple of years. The District Coordinators of the State are marching forward with organizing several revival programmes

and missionary meetings, very systematically in the respective areas. The General Secretary Mr. J. Santhakumar is motivating the Church leaders, lay leaders and partners to do all that is possible towards reviving the Church.

Friends, I am sure that the Lord of the Harvest is mindful of His Church in India. He has decreed that He will build His Church. Extension of His Kingdom is His programme. Will He not revive the existing Church in India in order that its territories get extended further? He is willing, but He also wants to know if we are willing to join hands with His mission. Let us respond to His call to fulfil His Great Commission.

Finally, it is my request to you to extend your prayer support to the following major revival programmes planned for the coming months: **Blesso (Jabalpur—October 10-13)**, **Revivo (Pune—October 29-30)**, **Blesso (Hubli—November 1-4)**. Pray that the Lord may pour out His Spirit of Revival upon His Church beyond measure! □

WANTED!

We invite applications from committed Christians for the following vacancies in the Blessing Literature Centre, Chennai—

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(Contn. from page 15)

Pray that many more true disciples may rise in the near future.

Â God blessed the Student Study Programme, conducted in Banswara. 39 students were benefited by the teaching of our missionaries.

Â Seven of our believers fulfilled God's righteousness through water baptism. Pray for their spiritual growth.

Â Pray for Manju and Sanju, the daughters of our believer Kimley in Singhana who got married recently. God met all their financial needs miraculously.

Â The families of Leelaram and Lakshmi Narayan in Hira Nagar are showing keen interest in the Gospel. Pray that God may reveal His wonderful things to them.

TAMILNADU

Â Praise the Lord for Deepa, Annamalai, Teerthi, Vasanthi, Selvam, Mallika, Veera, Raman, Chinnasamy, Meenakshi, Papathi and Eswari, who are ardent seekers.

Â 100 well wishers participated in a partners' meet held in Choolaimedu, Chennai and got motivation to involve in soul winning. The efforts taken by Mr. Herbert needs appreciation.

Â Pray for the Villagers of Kilakkadu, Kuruvakkadu and Chandumalai who are very much hardening their hearts to the Gospel.

Â Kariamalai, Maruthayi, Anjala and Ravichandran have obeyed the Lord in baptism. Pray that they may tell about Jesus to their kith and kin.

Â 40 of our tribal believers' children are pursuing their higher studies in Nagercoil, Kulathukudi and Mudalur. Pray that God may lift up this younger generation.

WEST BENGAL

Â God has granted an open door among the Bengalis in Dabugram; 15 people gather for Bible study and prayer.

Â God enabled our missionaries to share about the missionary evangelism among the families residing in BSF colony in Salugara.

Â Missionary V. Chelliah shared God's Word in Army Church, Sukna. Pray for a spiritual awakening among the defense personnel.

Â Pray for Mr. Banakumar Biswas, a teacher, who has come forward to translate Blessing books into Bengali language. □

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News from Fields

Compiled by E. L. Mathansingh, Field Coordinator

The Blessing Youth Mission has stationed over 300 missionaries in 14 States of India, namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chattishgarh, 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

Â 300 believers joyfully worshipped the Lord in the first anniversary meeting of Tokalapudipalem Church, in which missionary P. Selvam exhorted the participants.

Â Bro. R. Stanley challenged the 250 medical students in an exclusive meeting called "Medicos" held in Kurnool. 120 students committed their lives for missionary evangelism.

Â Bhagyalakshmi and Shankar accepted Christ as their personal Saviour. Pray that they may grow in their faith.

Â Missionary P. Ramana's younger brother Suresh (28 yrs) passed away; pray for God's comfort in the bereaved family.

ASSAM

Â God enabled our missionaries to visit the following towns to motivate the Churches for heaven-sent revival: Jorhat, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Chabha, North Lakhimpur, Nagaon and Tezpur.

Â The Lord blessed the four-day youth camp 'Halo' held in Tezpur amidst Assam bandh. Missionaries V. Chelliah, G.M. Rose Allen and D.P. Joseph Devaraj challenged the 80 youth for holy living.

Â Pray for God's guidance for the future of Prem Tush and Allem, the campus cell members of a Medical college. They want to use their medical knowledge in a cross-cultural situation.

GUJARAT

Â Praise the Lord for the divine deliverance of Jagruti, a young girl of Nadiad from demon possession.

Â In a meeting conducted for our native workers, senior missionaries M. C. Ponniah, S. Regunathan and P. Chezhan taught the practical lessons on evangelism. The participants returned to their villages with a great passion for the perishing souls.

Â The campus cell in Anand is growing; pray for fruitful witnesses to emerge.

Â Pray for Mr. Peter Manickam, who is very helpful in Baroda. Many more lay people should get involved.

JHARKHAND

Â Our missionaries visited Tapini, Kedla, Raijhar, Jamuari, Chatra and Kundari recently and raised subscribers for *Blessing* magazine and promoted Blessing literature.

Â Our lady missionaries regularly visit the prayer cells for ladies and girls. Two new prayer cells were recently started. Sweta, a young graduate committed her precious life to Christ. Pray for her spiritual growth and plead that God may raise many Esthers.

Â Missionary N. K. Kusha preached the Word to the congregations in Pugmil and Hearnganj. Praise God for the growing response.

KARNATAKA

Â Praise the Lord for the good response that our team received for the Gospel in Kathridhatti, Mankapur and Kakkeri villages. Pray for the salvation of those who heard the good news.

Â Patil family of Soundatti is attending our prayer meetings regularly and expressed that there is an inner peace and joy when they hear God's Word; pray for their salvation.

Â Missionaries and believers of Kattur are facing stiff opposition. Pray that God may intervene in this matter.

Â Pray for Lakshmi Narayanan's family, who are facing problems because of their faith in Christ.

Â Parvathi, a new believer is discouraged because of the effects of witchcraft on her. Pray for God's intervention to deliver her.

Â Pray for the believers in Uchigeri to attend the worship service regularly.

KERALA

Â The Alway Church in Alway, was ministered by the Missionary couple Mrs. & Mr. Y. Paul Dinakaran, who challenged the congregation to actively involve in the missionary evangelism.

Â God blessed the revival cum literature programmes in Poovachal and Pottayil CSI Churches.

Â Our Associate missionary Benjamin Moses, shared the good news in a three day Gospel meeting held in Kothalam. Pray that the power of the Gospel may transform the hearers.

Â Bro. R. Stanley, addressed the employees and professionals prayer fellowship in Kottayam. 700 participants were blessed. Missionary K. Jesuragavan has moved to this city to promote literature ministry.

MADHYA PRADESH

Â Lalaibai, a believer in Narayanpura village received miraculous healing from tuberculosis through prayers. Our God is Jehovah-Rapha!

Â God enabled our Jabalpur team to share the good news and pray for the patients of Jabalpur Medical college hospital. Many of them purchased the Gospel packets eagerly; pray for the seeds to grow.

Â Praise the Lord for Bipin of Imlai village, who gave up the habit of chewing tobacco through prayers and counselling. Thousands are corrupting their bodies by several addictions. Pray that the power of the Gospel may set them free.

Â Pray for the qualitative and quantitative growth of the girls' prayer cells in VFJ Colony, Ranji and Jail colony in Jabalpur.

Â The believers in Richai village are facing opposition and threatening from their own relatives. Pray that God may strengthen them during this testing time.

Â Our native worker Ganpath is going through severe physical and family problems. Pray for God's mercy.

MAHARASHTRA

Â Praise the Lord for the power manifestation in the lives of the following: M. D. Kamble got healed from severe fever; Ramba and Rekha Jadhav were set free from demon possession and Pintu delivered from alcoholic addiction.

Â 100 believers joyfully attended a one-day retreat conducted in Gargoti. Rev. Gareth and his team edified the participants with the Word of God.

Â Saraswati, a believer in Jath was healed from anaemia through prayer of faith.

Â In a road accident, one of our believers in Mahad, Bharathi passed away. Pray for her husband and all the family members.

Â Many families in this State have lost their beloved ones and belongings to the flood. Pray for suitable relief operations.

ORISSA

Â God protected our believers Chiknu and Nirmala Jal from poisonous snakes.

Â Padma Khora, a believer in Tentuliguma was miraculously healed from epilepsy and she is attending our worship by walking ten kms from her village.

Â 25 Church elders were trained in an exclusive training programme held in Raighar. Mr. Christopher and Mr. Amos taught the lessons on 'Pastoral Leadership' to lead the Churches effectively.

Â Padma, Yosoda, Narasingh, Sabita and Rabi were anointed with the Holy Spirit. Pray that they may manifest the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.

Â God stretched his healing hands on Budhia of Kadulsai and Sanju Sabor of Mandar and delivered them from mental disorder and cerebral malaria respectively.

Â 41 Ladies were greatly blessed by the retreat conducted in Purla Chouk. Missionary Bimala Samal shared the Word of God.

Â The believers in Kumbharguda and Gountiaguda are facing stiff opposition. Pray for God's protection.

Â Missionary B.N. Samal's mother had her home call. Godly mothers are God-given gifts. Pray for God's peace to strengthen the family members.

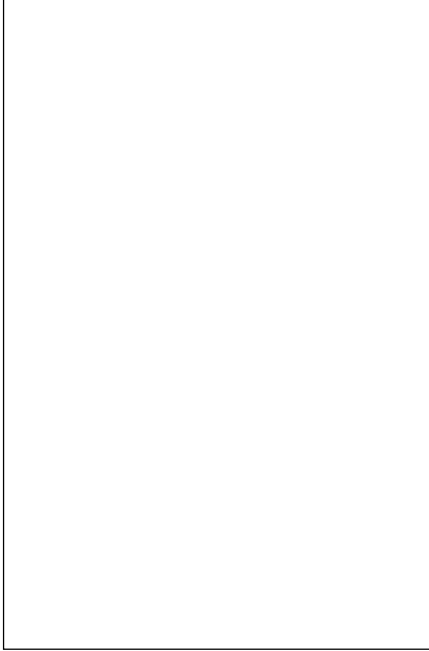
RAJASTHAN

Â Our missionaries organised a prayer gathering in Ajmer with 25 people and earnestly prayed for the salvation of our Nation.

Â 15 people enthusiastically participated in the Discipleship Training Camp held in Neemkathana.

(Contd. on page 12)

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