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# Editorial



Rev. Vijayesh Lal

## JUSTICE AND MERCY: THE HEART CRY OF GOD

It is one year since Fr. Stan Swamy completed his earthly race. He passed away on 5th July 2021 at a Mumbai hospital while

still in government captivity. Fr. Stan, who was 84, was arrested in October 2020 on alleged charges of having links with the banned CPI (Maoist), a charge that he denied till his last breath.

The world watched in horror as the octogenarian, already suffering from Parkinson's disease, was denied dignity and was subjected to abysmal levels of harassment which included denying him something as basic as a sipper, he needed to drink water from a cup which could barely hold in his quivering hand. His many applications to be released on bail were turned down by judges even as his health rapidly declined.

Fr Stan, born in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, did not have

a criminal record. He had spent years as a Jesuit working with the youth in his home state before moving to Jharkhand in central India to live and work among the indigenous Adivasis, teaching their young, working with the men and women and educating them on the rights given to them by the Constitution of Independent India.

In the eyes of the government, and the subordinate judiciary, the frail teacher, poet and writer was a threat to the nation.

In jail, where facilities for the aged and infirm are minimal and the conditions harsh, Fr. Stan's condition worsened and he was unable to walk or feed himself. When he was finally allowed to visit a private hospital, he was diagnosed with Covid. In the course of the treatment, he was put on a ventilator and died of cardiac arrest before his appeal for emergency bail on health grounds could take place.

Furious, many fellow citizens, professing India's many faiths and ideologies, were united in

their belief that it was the "Indian state that had killed him" and that the government owed his loved ones and all citizens accountability" for the "cruel and inhuman treatment at the hands of the state".

The government and the political ruling leadership is unfazed at the national and international outrage over Fr. Stan's death, while still a prisoner. Human rights defenders and social activists continue to be hounded, coerced and imprisoned. In some cases, the arrests were made even before the police determined the reason why it wanted their custody. The latest arrests of Teesta Setalvad, one of India's most well-known human rights activist, and Mohammed Zubair (a co-founder of the fact-finder portal, Alt-News) are two of the most recent reminders that the state does not countenance anyone who stands for the constitutional values of justice, equality and liberty.

Calling out injustice is important. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. reminded us, "Injustice anywhere

is a threat to justice everywhere." Egyptian writer Nawal El Saadawi goes a step further and says, "When we live in a world that is very unjust, you have to be a dissident."

As Christians, we must take into account our commitment to the cause of justice, peace, equality and fraternity. The God whom we worship, the Triune God, is a God of Justice. That is how He has revealed Himself to us. "For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing," God says in Isaiah 61:8. We are told in Psalm 11:7: "For the LORD is righteous, He loves justice; the upright will see His face," and Psalm 33:5 tells us: "The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of His unfailing love." He deeply desires justice in our day-to-day lives as well as within the systems and organizations we create.

While this thought may come as a comfort for those who are distressed by the injustices in the world today, it may also be a reason for self-evaluation on how much are we reflecting God's

character in the times that we live in.

Has fear of retribution paralyzed us so much that we would rather keep quiet? Have institutions become so important that in order to preserve them we choose to look the other way while the values of the kingdom of God and indeed constitutional values are trampled upon? Or do we feel incapacitated to respond at all, thinking what can we do?

Do we remember that when we are willing to be counted in order to do what is right in the sight of God, that He is with us in our struggle for justice?

Justice in Hebrew is called mishpat. It is estimated that the word appears in its various forms over 200 times in the Old Testament. Essentially, it means treating people fairly. It also points to the act of rewarding the good in others, and punishing their evil regardless of their social status or race. Mishpat also means granting the people their rights. In the Old Testament, mishpat is used time and again in

the context of the care and taking up the cause of the powerless and the vulnerable.

Hence, when God demands justice in a society, He not only requires that people be treated fairly, or rewarded or punished suitably, but also that the powerless be cared for and their rights granted despite their powerlessness. God reveals Himself as a lover and defender of the powerless, of those who do not have economic and social power. We are called to do the same.

In Deuteronomy 16:19-20, God warns his people, "Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the innocent. Follow justice and justice alone".

God is also revealed to us as the God of mercy. At the Cross, God's Justice and His Mercy both meet and are fulfilled. John Stott says, "On the Cross divine mercy and justice were equally expressed and eternally reconciled. God's holy love was 'satisfied.'"

The Church of Jesus Christ needs to embrace justice and mercy. Since they are defining characteristics of our God, justice and mercy need to go deeper in the Church than just being programs or projects. They need to become our character and lifestyle both within and outside the Church.

We are also called upon to understand the systems at play in our nation and world today, systems that lead to inequity, injustice and violence. We have, of course, to strive for the cessation of violence, for the building of equity, and for justice to be done, but also for showing love and mercy in a world that has been wounded in this rampant injustice and violence.

God puts it plainly in Micah 6:8, "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Today, more than ever before.

**Rev. Vijayesh Lal**



There is an old story about a king that was coming to visit a certain land. The people in the land were so excited that a king would grace their little village with his presence. They wanted to find a way to honor him, and decided to do so by giving him the best of their wine. Every person was to bring one cup of their best wine from home and they would all put it in one big pot, and when the king came he would taste the best wine from all the people. One person thought if everyone else is bringing their best then I could bring water, it won't make a bit of difference with hundreds of others bringing their best. When the king arrived and tasted the wine, he discovered that it was all

diluted wine. The king was not honored.

How is our giving? Do we give the best wine to the Lord or do we give mere water to him? If we just give grudgingly, the King of kings will not be honored. Mark 12:41-44 talks about a poor widow who gave her best; in fact, she gave all that she had! In this passage, we see that Jesus assesses our giving by watching how we give and what we give.

In Mark 11, we see that as Jesus went to the temple, he began condemning the religious authorities for making the Father's temple a den of robbers. However, he ends his visit to the

temple by commending a poor widow. There is a stark contrast between the greed of the religious leaders and the sacrificial generosity of this poor widow. This story also points to Jesus, who gave his all (his very life) to save sinners. Though this widow's sacrifice needs to be commended, we must also lament the fact that she gave sacrificially to the "den of robbers" (Mk 11:17). She gives to the religious system which actually exploited her. The religious leaders devoured these poor people and lived a life of luxury with their sacrificial offerings. The victims were giving to their oppressors. The temple couldn't really help the poor and the oppressed as it became a "den of robbers." However, the story of this poor widow teaches us important lessons about sacrificial giving.

### **1. Jesus Watches Us as We Give (Mark 12:41-42).**

Jesus sat down opposite the treasury. The treasury was around the court of the women where men and women were allowed to go. Thirteen trumpet-

shaped boxes served as the treasury. People could bring in their offerings and drop them in one of these 13 offering boxes. Jesus literally kept watching (imperfect tense in Greek) the people putting money.

#### **a. Many rich put in large sums of money (v. 41).**

Many rich people gave huge sums of money. As they gave huge sums of money, their offerings probably made a loud clanging symbol because the entryway of the offering boxes was made of metal. They didn't have paper currency in those days. The rich gave a lot of money. But the rich continued to remain rich even after giving a sizable offering. They gave out of their abundance.

#### **b. A poor widow gave two small copper coins (v. 42).**

The poor widow's offering was not loud enough. She was not just a widow, but a "poor widow." Probably, she was one of the widows who was devoured by the scribes (cf. Mk 12:40). She gave two small copper coins (Greek:

*lepta*), which were equal to a penny (Greek: *kodrantēs*), which is 1/64th of a day's wages of a laborer. In fact, the Greek word *lepta* means 'a tiny thing.' It was the smallest coin available in circulation. If the average wage of a person is Rs. 500, 1/64th of it would be about 8 rupees. This poor widow could have kept one copper coin. But she gave everything she had.

Jesus watches how we give and how much we give. Jesus looks at our motives for giving as well. Jesus observes our giving. Jesus sees as we give our money, time, and talents to him. As you give yourself to the Lord by serving him, remember that he sees you. Not only does he observe our giving, but he also ...

## **2. Jesus Evaluates Our Giving (Mark 12:43-44).**

a. Jesus said that the poor widow gave more than all others (v. 43). This poor widow's offering didn't amount to much. Her offering cannot help the religious leaders to maintain the temple. The religious leaders probably didn't care about this poor widow's

offering. Here, Jesus says that this widow didn't just give more than anyone else. Rather, he says that she gave "more than all." But why did Jesus say that she gave more than all others?

### **b. The reasons Jesus said she gave more than all others (v. 44).**

i. Others contributed out of their abundance.

The rich did contribute out of their abundance. But there's no indication that they sacrificed in their abundance. Probably some of the rich people even made a show of their giving (Mt. 6:1-4).

ii. But this poor widow gave everything she had to live on.

Charles Simeon points out that if Jesus had not commended this woman's gift, most of us would have condemned it. The attitude with which we give matters more than the amount we give. Also, God doesn't like it when we give grudgingly or when we give for a show. He wants us to give cheerfully and for his glory. Warren W. Wiersbe says that it's

not the portion, but the proportion that matters.

Also, the value of a gift is determined by how much that gift costs the giver. This point is repeated even in the story of the woman in Mark 14:3-9, who offers a "very costly" gift of a perfume made of pure nard to Jesus. The woman's gift in Mark 14 is far greater than what the widow gives here. Yet, both of them are commended for doing what they could do. Their generosity and sacrifice are the same.

Coming back to Mark 12, the rich gave what they could spare, but the poor widow spared nothing. The poor widow's gift cost her everything. However, we need to maintain balance here. We need to be wise in our giving as well. If you have a family to take care of, God doesn't expect you to give away all you have. Craig Keener writes, "The widow would not starve, given provisions for the poor in Jewish synagogues." Yet, it was a costly sacrifice. That's why Jesus says she gave more than all those who contributed. By

human standards, her offering amounts to nothing; but by divine standards, she gave more than everyone else.

This story also teaches us that what God requires from us is not merely our money. He requires our hearts. Also, this poor widow challenges a common excuse that we will give when we have more. This widow had very little. Yet, she was a giver. So, it's not just the rich, but even the poorest person can glorify God through their giving. Ponder on this: Throughout the history of the church, God's people have read about this poor widow as a model of sacrificial giving. Our sacrificial giving can impact and inspire many lives. The Lord can use our giving to bless others beyond our imagination! The widow's giving teaches that we must be radical in our trust and commitment to God. This widow is a model for a sacrificial disciple (contrast Mk 10:21-22). This widow is a model for true discipleship as she gave all she had (cf. Mk 8:35). The last phrase of Mark 12:44 could be paraphrased, "she lay down her whole life." She imitates Christ

who was about to lay down his life for the salvation of humankind (cf. 2 Cor. 8:9).

The Lord wants us to give cheerfully and sacrificially for his work and to bless the poor and needy (2 Cor. 9:7). But it's not just about money; we must give our very lives to the Lord cheerfully. Some Christians do not give themselves to Christ completely. They withhold some aspects of their life from him. We must completely surrender our lives to God and we must not withhold anything from him.

### **Conclusion**

The main message of this article is: **Give to the Lord's work sacrificially!**

J. C. Ryle rightly observed that "A giving Savior ought to have giving disciples." Let's give to the Lord's

work cheerfully and sacrificially! Let's develop a lifestyle of sacrificial giving. Let's give ourselves to the Lord completely!



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*Greater love has no one than this:  
to lay down one's life for one's friends.  
John 15:13*

# The Generosity of Friendships

Dr. Shantanu Dutta



On one of my recent outstation trips, I was prompted to meet up and reconnect with old friends, not through WhatsApp or Facebook, but in person. Some of the people I met, I had not seen for years, and a few I had lost touch with completely. Using all the social media tools at my disposal, I managed to locate many; in one instance, I could find out the place where a long-lost friend worked and her boss's phone number. I introduced myself and requested that if my friend and also a former colleague were interested to reconnect, my phone number could be passed on. I wasn't sure if a callback would come or not, but it did, and we were able to

meet over coffee. During the weekend, I reached out to about 10 people and not one declined to meet. In one instance, I met with a family over breakfast, just before I left for the airport. Along the way, I rediscovered the joy of generous, friendships where there is no agenda, no motive, no particular expectation, except to be blessed or be a blessing to each other.

The Bible celebrates friendship and yet, there are few sermons that I get to hear on this. 1 Samuel 20:27–42 is one such passage where friendship is described — the one between David and Jonathan — at one level an unlikely one. Jonathan is the son of the reigning King Saul;

David has been anointed as Saul's successor, potentially making the two rival claimants for the throne. But, that did not happen.

After the incidents of 1 Samuel 20, David will never see Jonathan again after this moment, as David must run for his life, and eventually, Jonathan and his father Saul will be killed in battle. From a human perspective, the main reason David survived this difficult time is his friendship with Jonathan, a young man willing to risk his own life for the sake of his friend.

The power of friendship and the generosity it involves is often underestimated. Friendship is a very unique thing, different than family, romantic relationships, and work relationships. Think about it — you don't choose your family: they have to be there, or at least they should be there. And, it is not as glamorous as romantic love — how many songs have been written about friendship as compared to songs about romantic love? Even getting along with work associates is

necessary in order to provide for yourself. But a friend is different.

Friends seem expendable, and it takes such effort and time to build a solid friendship. But as David found out, it's critical to have good friends. Most of us can attest, as we look back in time, that the friends we choose will have an enormous impact on our lives and how wise we become. As Proverbs 12:26 says, "A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray."

In life, we will have troubles and tragedies and you will not make it without friends. David learned that without his friend, Jonathan, he never would have made it through the difficult trials he faced. He very likely would have gone back to a simple life of tending sheep or developed a murderous spirit of retaliation to get back at Saul or been killed. I think back on the hard times I have faced in my life, and how important it has been to have friends encouraging me, walking with me, and sharing the burden. Even in marriage, it isn't the

romantic aspect of marriage that gets you through the long haul; it's the friendship.

Then, we all have blind spots, and we need people who will be true friends to us and point out the character flaws that we cannot see. Without a friend, we will go through life convinced that our view of reality is accurate. We may go through life believing that people are out to get us, or conversely, that the world is a safe place. We may believe we are the greatest thing ever, or the worst. Friends can help us see the world and ourselves from another perspective.

Friendship is a wonderful gift when we have it, and it is increasingly hard to come by. And it's harder and harder to find. Part of it is our mobility. We move to different places, we travel all around. We're all over the place. Technology can help, help us connect, but it can also hurt. Without technology, I would never know where many of my friends are, where they are working, and whether they are in-country or out. Technology helps me to

remain connected to friends who I can never visit because they live too far away, and I do use it and often. But, two years of communication over Zoom and others has taught me one thing ... that social media and tools can do only so much .... Real friendships require a generosity of spirit that extends to many things, demanding possibly the most valuable commodity we have today — our time.

We have acquaintances. Joseph Epstein, in his book on friendship, says “acquaintance is someone you may see often, but there is never an obligation to see them again.” You run into them at a conference, you see them at the office, but you, you don't feel an obligation to go plan something. Of course, acquaintances can become friends too and in my life, many have. That takes some effort and generosity on our part because it takes effort to explore and not all acquaintances will want to be our friends.

I often talk about some of my dearest friends who are those I made in my twenties. They were

not always friends, they all started out as acquaintances. Over the decades, they have chosen to remain friends and stand by me. My strongest friendships are with those who lead me to Christ, not with those who draw me away from Christ. Yes, we want relationships with non-Christians. Yes, we want to be engaging non-Christians. Yes, we can have very good friendships with people who do not know the Lord. But, let our deepest friendships be Gospel friendships. The generosity and

joy of a true God honoring and the enrichment they bring to our lives is truly incomparable.



**Dr. Shantanu Dutta**

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*Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.*

*Romans 6:13*

# HOW TO BECOME GOD-LIKE

Rev. Kuruvilla Chandy

The Devil was the first one to push a manual – a do-it-yourself workbook. He told Eve and Adam that they could become God-like by following his advice. The First Couple got interested because they imagined that they would gain possession of the powers and knowledge of the Lord, their God. They were not interested in any other aspects of godliness.

Satan has been seducing humankind with the idea that people can become like God if they could acquire superpowers. He has got many people convinced that all it takes is a bit of self-realisation.

## **Illusion**

There have been quite a few people in India who have

accepted this. There are a number of people claiming “*AhmBrahm*” – I am god. They come to this conclusion because they start with the notion that they and everything in the world are a part of God. They say that it is an illusion (*maya*) to think that the *atma* (the soul) is other than God. When the *atma comes* to realise that it is *ahmbrahm*, then it experiences moksha (salvation) escaping from the endless cycle of rebirths.

Right now, MX Player an internet TV channel in TV apps is showing a serial called *Ek Badnaam Aashram*. In the fictional city of Kashipur, a self-proclaimed god-man creates an empire deriving his power from the influence he has over the lower socio-

economic classes. They considered him to be their Messiah. However, he is a lecher and a rapist. His henchmen turn a blind eye to his faults because they benefit materially from being part of his empire. They attack those who accuse him and even assassinate some. The god-man and his goons manipulate the police through their political connections. As I watched the different episodes, I was reminded of two real-life godmen who have been convicted and jailed, but there have been more cases: <https://www.scoopwhoop.com/news/self-proclaimed-indian-godmen-involved-in-cases-of-sexual-assault/>

Millennia after Eve and Adam had their failed attempt to become god-like, the Lord covenanted with people and gave them a goal: “Be holy for I am holy” (Lev. 11: 44-45; 19:2; 20:26, etc.). Godliness isn't so much about having superpowers, but about conducting ourselves in such a way as to image/manifest the character of God. However, generation after generation, humans discovered that they just couldn't match the standard of God's character.

Then God came down to earth. He embraced our humanity, subjecting Himself to all that plagues humans. Unlike all the godmen, God didn't hold on to self-realisation. He denied Himself. “Christ Jesus: who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God, something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!” (Phil. 2:5-8)

### **Be Like Father**

In the context of the indiscriminate love and benevolence of God, Jesus said, “Be perfect like your heavenly Father” (Matt. 5:48).

Let's admit it. In ourselves, we cannot be as holy as God. He was holy. He is holy. And He will go on being holy. Whereas, we have already spoilt our record. Our past is unholy, and we cannot undo the past. Even in the present, we cannot claim to be sinless: “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us” (1 Jn. 1:8). At the

time when John wrote this, he was the venerable, last surviving apostle of our Lord. But, he made no claim to be morally superior to all others. He included himself in not being able to claim to be without sin. As for the future, we can, of course, resolve to be holy from now on, but we know from experience, that every year we fail to keep even our small New Year Resolutions.

### **New Norm**

Without denying the validity of God's standard of holiness, Jesus gave us a new norm: imitate the generosity and benevolence of the Father. Yes, we can be like God if we are generous toward others.

Significantly, the very next thing that Jesus talked about in the Sermon on the Mount was about almsgiving (6:1-4). Charity is given to people in need. They don't have to do anything meritorious or deserving. Earlier, our Lord said, "Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you" (5:42). He was saying that giving should be instant, without hesitation and calculation. Exactly what the book of Proverbs advocates: "Do

not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbour, 'Come back tomorrow and I'll give it to you'—when you already have it with you. Do not plot harm against your neighbour, who lives trustfully near you" (3:27-29).

Our Lord said that we should give without any fanfare. The news is that Adani and his family are going to give sixty thousand crores to charity. From time to time, we hear of business tycoons, movie and sports celebrities trumpeting their charitable intentions. I suppose you could excuse them on the ground that they are not followers of Christ Jesus. "...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...sees what is done in secret..." (vv.3-4).

### **Treasure in Heaven**

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus asking what he should do to gain eternal life, the command that Jesus gave him, makes all disciples uncomfortable. Jesus told him to give away all he owned to the

poor and then follow the Lord (Matt. 19:21). Give riches to the poor and become poor yourself? The fact remains that our Lord tied up giving to the poor with following Him. Though everyone is not called to this extreme measure (Matt. 27:57; Acts 5:4), obviously some are (4:36).

Jesus told the rich young ruler that was the way to have treasure in heaven (Matt. 19:21). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said that treasures laid up on earth risk loss by depreciation or theft (6:19). What's invested in heaven is eternal and will bless your soul (vv.20-21).

Proverbs quaintly puts it this way: "Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord..." (19:17). Wow! Imagine having God in your debt and as the saying goes, "God is no one's debtor". He will settle His debts and that too, lavishly. "God will supply all your needs" not according to the smallness of your needs, but "according to His riches in glory" (Phil. 4:19).

### **Equality**

There is another aspect to generosity. It's about equality. In a cycle of seven years, the Lord

God instituted that His people Israel should cancel debts (Deut. 15:1). Land that was pledged to get emergency loans should be returned without debts being cleared. God told Israel that if they lived by this law "there need be no poor people among you" (v.4). As though contradicting Himself, God said, "There will always be poor people in the land" (v.11). The way to reap the promise of there being no poor among God's people was to keep the Lord's commandment: "Therefore I command you to be open-handed towards your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land" (v.11; compare, vv.7-10).

Torah scholar Paul picked this up and restated it for the Church. He set the example of churches in Macedonia before the Church saying, "In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity" (2 Cor. 8:2). That is, Macedonian Christians didn't say, "What can we do? We ourselves have so little that we can't aid you."

Paul urged the Corinthian Christians that they need to keep in mind that "... the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich...desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time, your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality” (vv.9, 13-14). Paul went on to say, “Remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work...Now, he who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only

supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you, their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! (9:6-15).

### **Loving and Giving**

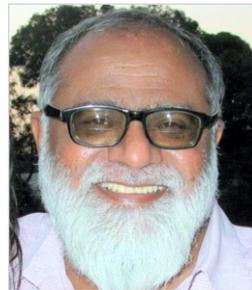
“God so loved the world [with sinful me and you in it] that He gave His own Son” (Jn. 3:16). Paul remarked about God's generosity: “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

We cannot be like God in holiness. We cannot be like God in His superpowers. There's only one thing that can make us like God. When we are generous, that is when we are in His image – becoming like Him.

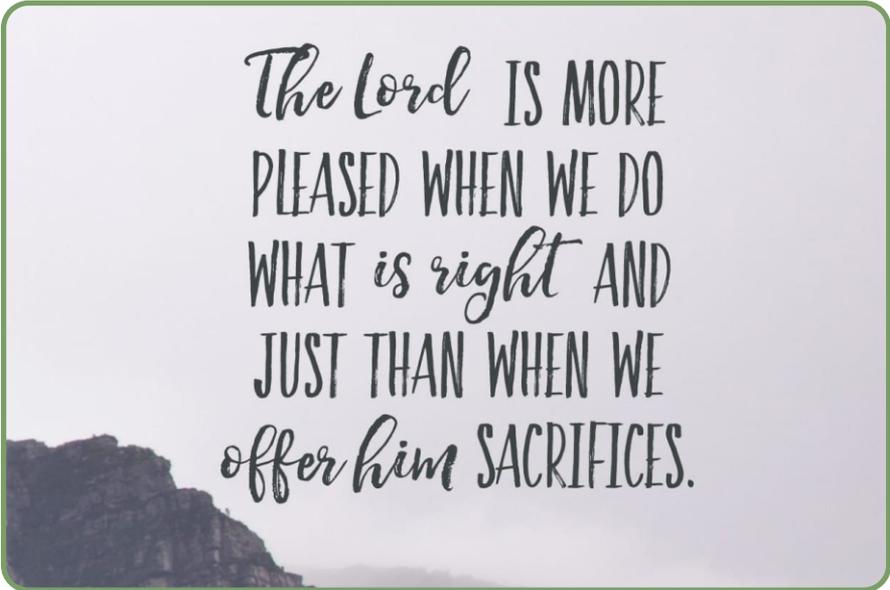
John wrote about God being love

(1 Jn. 4:8). He urged, “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth” (3:16-18). John knew that some would claim that they are willing to lay down their lives for the brethren – if only there is an opportunity to do that. That is why he said that when a Christian sees a brother or sister in need, but doesn't show pity and share

generously, then there is no love at all. The proof of our willingness to sacrifice our lives lies in sacrificing our worldly goods generously. Are you generous – like God, like Jesus?



**Rev. Kuruvilla Chandy**  
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# DOCTORS, I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU! DOCTORS, MAY I PREACH TO YOU?

Rev. Dr. Duke Jeyaraj



I am grateful to God for doctors. Over a dozen of my classmates in Ida Scudder School (Vellore) became doctors! But I did not. I dropped the subject biology in grade 11 as I was afraid of dissecting frogs! There are some doctors I am particularly grateful to God for! Dr. Chandrasingh – when I was reeling in kidney stone pain, he came to the rescue! Dr. Sarat Chandra – he gave me world-class free consultation whenever I have wanted it. Ditto. Dr. Prakash Balasubramaniam. Dr. B. S. Krishnan was among the first to predict that I will do full-time

ministry. Dr. Solomon Satish Kumar has teamed up with me in ministry playing the piano! He remains an amazing friend. Dr. Sheela Ram and Dr. Ram has been ever-available for my family's medical needs and emergencies, for the longest period of time (over a decade). Dr. Shiny and Dr. Asheesh are a sweet, sharp, doctor couple, who are just a WhatsApp message away! God used Dr. Elan and Dr. Shirley to put me on some august stages to proclaim the Word of God. Dr. Murali Potharlanka – during one conference I preached in – doubled up to man

my book stall (such a humble doctor!). Dr. Cheruba Prabakar looks for ways to encourage my work for the Lord! Ditto, Dr. Sneha Kirubakaran. Dr. Raj Peter, Dr. Christy Pradeep Raj Dasari, and many others given me the opportunity to speak to the medicos of many different medical colleges! Dr. Alice Sujatha Livson warmly invited me with my family to witness the breath-taking beauty of Bissam-Cuttack, Odisha, where she serves the poor till date! Dr. Venmathi Adityan – her super skills when it comes to taking care of my teeth, my son's teeth, is unmatched. Dr. Sushmita Joel wonderfully cared for my wife as she got ready to preach to young people this January (2020). Well, I am sure I left out some names of doctors – the EU fellowship doctors of Ludhiana who invited me to preach to them in 2019 is just one group of this lot – who have impacted me! But I am sure you can see my heart – I am absolutely grateful from my heart to God for the gift called doctors! What shall I do in response for all the doctors who have been such a blessing to me? I will do what I

have been doing from the age of 16 – do a Bible Straight Talk to them (to all doctors in the world who will read this). Well, doctors! I tell you the truth from the Bible, because I love you! Would you be kind to give me a hearing without wearing any spectacles of prejudice?

### **THE SAVED DOCTOR!**

In 2 Chronicles 16:12, we read this: “In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet, even in his disease he did not seek the LORD, but sought help from physicians” (ESV). Just as there are patients who do not seek the LORD but only seek help from physicians (doctors), there are doctors who are stubborn in gleaning knowledge/life purpose only from science without acknowledging the obvious presence of the living God! Dear doctor friend, I appeal to you to consider the claims of Christ, the proofs he has given for his uniqueness and to give your life to him! In Mathew 9:12, we read this: But when he heard it, Jesus said, “Those who are well

have no need of a physician, but those who are sick” (ESV). Jesus said that only the sick need doctors! He implied all of us are sick with sin – including those of us who are medical doctors! And all of us have to repent from sin and turn to him for salvation, for He claimed to be the Only way!

### **THE SILVER-CONSCIOUS DOCTOR!**

In Mark 5:26, we read this: “and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse” (ESV). The bleeding woman, it looks like, was exploited for financial gain by some crooked doctors (in Jesus' time). Have you become a doctor, just to make a quick buck? Even if the need is great, would you steadfastly refuse to serve in a backward area – even for a short period – because, you will have to compromise on comforts and cash-flow?

### **THE SHALLOW DOCTOR!**

In Job 13:4, we read this: “As for

you, you whitewash with lies; worthless physicians are you all” (ESV). Job's friends were called 'worthless doctors' by him! Why? They assumed the reason why Job was sick, and suffering was this: he was a wicked man. They came to this conclusion without proper diagnosis (Well you can't come to that conclusion about anybody even after a detailed diagnosis)! Dear doctor, do you prescribe medicine without doing the hard work of proper, logical, lingering diagnosis just because you have to go home quickly and catch up on Netflix?

### **THE SERVING-GOD DOCTOR!**

In Colossians 4:14, we read this: “Luke the beloved physician greets you, as does Demas” (ESV). Dr. Luke was a medical doctor who joined the travelling ministry team of Apostle Paul. Dear Doctor, what will you do with the one life you have? Will you still race to the United States despite having heard God's call to you to serve in the shutting-soon Christian Mission hospitals in the Northern States (of India)? Will you, my doctor friend refuse to

equip yourself in apologetics even though you pretty well know that you have the aptitude to pick up quickly (more quickly than the not-as-sharp non-doctors) and use it in evangelism as you work in that posh corporate hospital?



Jeremiah 8:22 reads this way: “Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of the daughter of my people not been restored?” (ESV). Today, the problem is not the non-availability of the believer doctor! The problem is this: the believer doctor is often deaf to the call of God for missions! Will you the believer doctor be different?

It is my prayer that doctors will heed to what the God says to them enabled by the Holy Spirit!

**Rev. Dr. Duke Jeyaraj**

*is the founder of Grabbing the Google Generation from Gehenna Mission, the G4 Mission. He is the author of the book that brings Bible Teaching on Sex, Love, Marriage, Porn, Phone-addiction, etc. called Straight Talk. Reach him via 918886040605 to order this book that has blessed many. Duke has ministered by invitation in over 20 Indian states and in 5 nations. He presently lives in Chennai with his wife, Evangelin. His son Dale is a student of St. Stephen's College while his daughter is in Class Nine*

*For even the Son of  
Man did not come to be served,  
but to serve, and to give his life  
as a ransom for many.*

*Mark 10:45*

BIBLICAL

# Generosity

Dr. Eappen John

A group of elders at Pastor Ravi's church were proposing a new fundraising drive to address their mission budget gap. They were collectively discussing a common solution for getting more people to give more money to the church. They were also exploring how people from other churches, states and countries can contribute to their budget gap. Some of the elders proposed how to communicate the church's mission budget in a more compelling way, seasoned with more discipleship language. Others suggested to look for new funding models, best practices and foundations that would be interested to support. They tried to run church fundraising

campaigns and within months with a few failed attempts, started losing the passion and intensity for fundraising. This kind of a story may not be new to most leaders.

We have many leaders with multiple ideas and proposals on various mechanisms to local fundraising campaigns. These could work at times and may result in seasonal charity and sponsorship drives, but a long-term giving starts with believer's deeper understanding of the Word and personal walk with God. Meanwhile, Pastor Ravi heard about "Stations of Generosity" (SOG) workshop being conducted in his town and

decided to attend the two-days' workshop. During the workshop, he was confronted with the question, whether he and his church are releasing all they have, with joy, to God and others. SOG workshop enabled Pastor Ravi to recollect that "God owns everything" and "we respond to various needs lovingly." The workshop facilitated him to examine his relationship with God, how he recognizes God's provision and how he is growing in gratitude as a result.

With two days of interaction and reflection during the workshop Pastor Ravi realized that his church needs generous leaders who walk with God and are generous themselves to start with. He understood that only when the key leaders/elders themselves experience transformation in the area of generosity, and model it, not just talk about it, would they build a foundation of generosity on which the house of fundraising can be built. Only when the Pastor and the elders walk the talk, to start with, can they have the moral authority to lead others

in giving and gradually change the church's culture of giving. When leaders, church members, and elders experience this new vision of generosity, their focus can shift from the immediate need to boost giving for a particular project, to cultivating deeper connections with God and the believers around them. Rather than trying to exaggerate the project and thrusting impulsive campaigns and use the people in their church, they can sow a vision for a richer relationship with God and cultivate grateful disciples who will want to release all they are to bless others.

That is exactly what is taking root in Pastor Ravi's church, in the last six months. After attending SOG workshop and reflecting on the lessons learned Pastor Ravi decided to engage his church with messages and teaching on biblical generosity. He started weaving the ideas and values of biblical generosity to influence the leaders around him and members in his church through richer relationships. As a result, he started seeing early signs of

good fruit. Many leaders and members in the church were gradually able to integrate generosity as a main pillar of biblical truth and no longer see giving as an occasional short-term program of the church. Pastor Ravi's short-term and unsustainable fundraising campaign, was replaced by biblical generosity, which in the long run has the potential to transform the giving culture of the church.

Although Pastor Ravi's church has further to go as they integrate biblical generosity, early signs of holistic fruit show exciting promise. One story from SOG workshop that touched Pastor Ravi was the "Handful of Rice" from Mizoram.

The pursuit of "Handful of Rice" started in 1910, when the Church wanted "Bible women" to spread the gospel in Mizoram. But those "Bible women" needed money to sustain their ministry. So, they planned "Handful of Rice" project where women take a handful of rice before cooking a meal and collect it in a jar. At the end of the

week, they go to church with the jar of rice. Each family brings the rice they have set aside for God. They give it to the church and the church sells the rice and that money is used to support and send out missionaries. Though they had a humble beginning, this initiative continues to this day with a much higher turnover, as they continued to experience the joy of giving to God.

Today the church is proud of the "Bible women" who took the initiative for "Handful of Rice" project. The Mizo people say "We are not rich, but we can still send out missionaries, just like the people did in the early church." Many learned from their parents and continue to be involved with the "Handful of Rice" project joyfully even today. It's a way to thank God for giving everything they need. Some people give other things to the church, like vegetables, firewood or cash. Members tithe to God on their income, and then give "Handful of Rice" consistently. In the process they have grown in faith and trust in God to provide. Some of them may be poor from worldly

perspective, but they are rich toward God. They have a saying in their village, "As long as we have something to eat every day, we have something to give to God every day." Pastor Ravi was moved with this story and saw the possibility to replicate this in his church. He encouraged and challenged his congregation to initiate an "act of love" initiative. The principles of generosity were discussed in the cell groups and various other occasions. As a result, today members of his church are practicing "Handful of Rice" to support other pastors.

Likewise, through the reflections of SOG workshops conducted in the last one year, many participants have started applying principles of generosity and are sharing their stories within their congregation and networks. As a result, one leader has decided to give part of his property to the mission. One of the mission CEO decided to forgo the sale of his used motor bike in order to give it to a family in need. Another mission leader has decided to conduct 90 SOG workshops for his network

leaders. Some are providing assistance to neighbors during an illness. In another context, there was a noted increase in the number of people giving for the first time as a result of speaking on generosity. Some senior leaders have decided to create budget for more of their emerging leaders to attend SOG workshops. A leader from Nepal decided to translate the material in Nepali so that his people grow in generosity and spiritual matters. Some have informed that there is a paradigm shift in their giving attitude as a result of understanding God's generosity. Another leader informed that his worldview from "Giving is difficult" has shifted to "Giving is an opportunity." He clarified by saying earlier, "I was not very wealthy, so I found giving difficult but I choose to do it occasionally because I know it pleases God. So, to me giving was an obligation." But after attending SOG workshop he said, "I was created in the image of the ultimate Generous Giver and by His indwelling presence I am empowered to live a joyfully generous life. So, to me giving

has become an opportunity." Several participants keep expressing the transformation they experienced in multiple ways.

Quite often we engage in fundraising without laying the foundation of generosity. The longest teaching on generosity in the New Testament is in 2 Corinthians 9. In it, Paul is fundraising! But instead of running a campaign by saying, "here's what I need" he instead is teaching a healthy, joyful theology of generosity. On the rock of generosity, he is calling us to build the house of fundraising. So, engaging our congregation with messages on generosity consistently can create radical change in area of giving.

Todd Henry while attending a business meeting was inspired to write a book titled "Die Empty." During that business meeting the director asked the audience: "Where is the richest land in the world?" One from the audience answered: "Oil-rich Gulf states;" another added: "United States of America;" another said:

"Diamond mines in Africa;" another added: "Luxembourg in Europe;" while another declared: "Singapore in Asia." Then the director said: "No, it is the cemetery!" People were dumbfounded. The director continued: Yes, cemetery is the richest land in the world, because millions of people have departed, they have died and they carried many valuable ideas that did not come to light and benefited others. It is all in the cemetery, where they are buried.

Inspired by this answer, Todd Henry in his book, explains about the forces that usually keep people in stagnation. He further motivates people to pour out their ideas, resources and potential energies in their communities and turn them into something useful before it is too late. The most beautiful of what he said in his book is: "Do not go to your grave and carry inside you the best that you have - always choose to die empty." The meaning of this expression is to deliver every possible good thing to the needy, before you leave this world. That is to die empty of

all the goodness, that is within you.

In other words, the call is to be fruitful in how you sow your time, skills, influence, creativity, relationships, forgiveness and money, while in this world.

Biblical Generosity is a call to release "all we are" and grow with the fruit of the Spirit. Biblical generosity applies equally to every person in the church—the rich, the poor, and everyone in between. All are valued because everyone has something valuable to contribute, not just those "entrusted with much." Everyone is called to excel in the grace of giving. Pastor Ravi and many others are convinced that this vision is paramount to the souls of church leaders and members. SOG team applaud the growing desire to engage many more through the

generosity workshops. It's time to rethink why shortsighted and ultimately unsustainable funding campaigns need to be replaced by introducing biblical generosity which is enduring and transformational.



**Dr. Eappen John**

*serves as an adjunct professor with DAI teaching a few subjects in organizational leadership. He regularly facilitates workshops on "Stations of Generosity" and "Sharpening Your Interpersonal Skills" based on andragogy. He trains facilitators in Interactive Adult Learning Methodology. He lives in Hyderabad with his family.*

*“Abba, Father,” he said,  
“everything is possible for you.  
Take this cup from me.  
Yet not what I will, but what you will.”  
Mark 14:36*

# CEEFI Teachers' Training at South Gujarat report



Christian Education Department of the Evangelical Fellowship of India (CEEFI) conducted a three-day residential "Sunday School Teachers' Training" at Lakhali, South Gujarat from 24th to 26th May, 2022 . 90 participants attended the training enthusiastically. The resource persons were Rev. Madhusudan Das, Rev. Dr. Joshi Jonas and

Rev. Jimmy Damore. As an outcome of the training, many leaders have committed to start Sunday School with proper format and regularity.

We praise the Lord for enabling us to organize this training and we look forward to see many children in Gujarat, being blessed through this program.

# EFI Family Retreat



Evangelical Fellowship of India organized a Family Retreat from 23rd to 25th June, 2022 at Chail, Himachal Pradesh with the theme 'A Minister's Family is a Model Family'. A total of 19 families (60 participants) attended the retreat. Rev. Vijayesh Lal, Rev. Dr. Richard Howell and Rev. Issac Dutta were the resource persons.

We had separate sessions for women and youth as well which were led by Rev. Johnson Chidda

and Rev. Rohit Mattoo. There was a group discussion also on - "What are the causes that my family is not able to become Model Family before others?".

Participants have appreciated the retreat and reported changes in children's behaviour too. It was an effective retreat and the memorable joyful moments were already missed.

We had a blessed time of fellowship. We pray that God

would grant strength to the families, especially the families of God's servants' so that they

would be a role model for others in the community.



# Media and Advocacy Training



All Glory to Lord Jesus Christ !

and the incidents that took place.

A two-day training on Media and Advocacy was organized by EFI South Gujarat for the Advocates, Journalists, Media persons, Social Activists and Church leaders of South Gujarat on 2nd and 3rd of June 2022 at Navjivan Aadhyatmik Kendra, South Gujarat.

All the participants were very encouraged and motivated by the training they received. Everyone made commitments to be united and work together during the time of crisis and persecution. We formed an action team of the volunteers to act in the time of persecution. In the coming days, more such trainings are required to equip the volunteers. A good movement has been initiated and needs to be made stronger.

The two-day training saw a participation of 52 people from different churches. Advocate Nempal Singh, Journalist Vishal Arora, Human Right Activist Surendra Pokhal, the resource-persons imparted excellent teaching on lots of current issues

We had great success in organizing this seminar with the help of the EFI South Gujarat Regional Committee.

## COURSE IN EXPOSITORY PREACHING AND PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

*Invest a year in learning for a life  
time of service*

### About the course

The aim of the course is to equip men and women for expository Bible ministry in the local church so that they can preach and teach God's word faithfully, clearly and effectively.

### Who the course is for?

We serve men and women from different cultures, ethnic groups, ages and academic backgrounds. You need to have a firm commitment to the trustworthiness and sufficiency of Scripture for ministry in the local church. The 'heartbeat' of the course is the teaching of a wide range of books of Scripture, coming to grips with them in order to be able to preach and teach them.

### Who can apply for the course?

- ❖ Men or women who are committed to the ministry of teaching and preaching the Bible.
- ❖ Written recommendation by the pastor or organisation leader of the candidate.
- ❖ Candidates who have appeared or passed class XII with ability to communicate in English.
- ❖ Prospective students will have a personal interview with a member of admission committee.
- ❖ Candidates from economically underprivileged background can apply for work scholarship.
- ❖ Candidates living in Delhi and NCR can apply as day scholars.
- ❖ Once a student is granted admission he or she will not be given leave to go home except for emergencies.
- ❖ The church programmes and events are designed to be practicals for the students. Sermon notes, prayer meetings, care group meetings, outreach and mission trips are compulsory. Those who are willing to commit for the descriptions above may apply.

### Internship

Internship can be applied for and deserving candidates will be accepted.

### Schedule:- (July 2022 - April 2023)

English as Second Language (ESL)

Basic Course on Expository Preaching Three months

Advanced Course on Expository Preaching Six months

**Health Check-up:**  
Ensure you are  
healthy and prepared for a three to  
nine months of studying uninterrupted  
by health issues. Fitness certificate  
must be sent along with the  
application form.  
**We adhere to COVID PROTOCOLS**

In light of the COVID situation, the course is available, offline and online,  
and only those who attend offline will get the tablets.



## Grace Academy

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*Grace Academy invites applications from born again, evangelical teachers who are looking forward to a challenging, fulfilling and a promising vocation in teaching children with a Christian World View*

### TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS REQUIRED FOR SESSION 2023-24

#### **VICE-PRINCIPAL**

**Minimum Qualification:** A post-graduate with B.Ed. Should possess minimum five years of teaching a main subject to Senior Secondary Classes. 02-03 years of Administrative Experience as Senior School Coordinator/Vice-Principal in a CBSE Senior Secondary School. Computer savvy and well conversant with online teaching technology.

**Pay Scale: 37400-60000 with Grade Pay of 9000**

#### **PGT (GEOGRAPHY)**

**Minimum Qualification:** M.A.-Geography with B.Ed. and minimum five years of experience of teaching preferably in a Senior Secondary CBSE/ICSE school.

**Pay Scale: 9300-34800 with Grade Pay of 4800**

#### **PGT (HISTORY)**

**Minimum Qualification:** M.A.-History with B.Ed. and minimum five years of experience of teaching preferably in a Senior Secondary CBSE/ICSE school.

**Pay Scale: 9300-34800 with Grade Pay of 4800**

#### **TGT (IT CUM COMPUTER SCIENCE)**

**Minimum Qualification:** Diploma in Computer Science/Information Technology OR Bachelor's Degree in Computer Application/Science/Information Technology (BCA, B.Sc. Computer Science/Information Technology) OR Graduation with PGDCA/DOEACC 'A' level certificate.

**Pay Scale: 9300-34800 with Grade Pay of 4200**

**Only Candidates who have done their Schooling & College Education in English Medium need to apply.**

Interested candidates please apply with your Curriculum Vitae to the Principal, Grace Academy, 21-C New Cantt. Road, Dehradun-248 001, Uttarakhand in a sealed envelope clearly stating the post applied for at your earliest or can send their application by e-mail to [principal@graceacademyindia.com](mailto:principal@graceacademyindia.com). Only shortlisted candidates will be called for a personal interview.

**Candidates applied earlier need not apply please**

# Intercessory Prayer Points



July 2022

**1 FRIDAY** National Doctor's Day. Thank God for the medical fraternity who serve the sick and the needy. Continue to pray for them to be a channel of blessings to people around them.

**2 SATURDAY** Pray that we may recommit our lives and services to God. Pray for more opportunities to serve God in the coming months.

**3 SUNDAY** Pray for God's Word to spread even more by using you and your fellow worshipers as you meet people throughout the week.

**4 MONDAY** Pray for school/college children as they return after summer break. Pray for protection as they commute and interact with people outside of home.

**5 TUESDAY** Pray for Indian Evangelical Mission (IEM), Bangalore. Pray for sufficient funds as they are in the middle to constructing a new office building. Pray also that they would continue to equip people to fulfil the Great Commission effectively.

**6 WEDNESDAY** Pray for

Evangelical Fellowship of India Commission on Relief (EFICOR), New Delhi as they engage in Development, Advocacy, Disaster Response and Training, serving the poor, socially excluded and the marginalized in situations of poverty, injustice, and disaster irrespective of caste, creed, or ethnicity.

**7 THURSDAY** Pray for India Missions Association (IMA), Hyderabad. Pray for God's guidance and leading in all the things they do. Pray for all the staff to be equipped and guided by the Holy Spirit.

**8 FRIDAY** Pray for Disha Foundation, New Delhi. Disha Foundation works with a vision to encourage and empower the economically weaker sections of the Indian society, particularly girls and women. Pray for courage, strength, and guidance for those involved in this ministry. Pray for God's blessings upon them.

**9 SATURDAY** Pray for children who are economically weak that God would provide for their needs. Pray for them by name.

**10 SUNDAY** Pray for your daily personal quiet time. Pray that you would be able to spend quiet time with the Lord despite the loud outside world.

**11 MONDAY** Pray for Bible Bhavan Christian Fellowship that the Word of God preached and practiced in this Church would draw many hearts to God. Pray also for Delhi Bible Institute, their para ministry to be used by God to change, equip, and strengthen leaders to serve His kingdom.

**12 TUESDAY** Pray for all the EFI staff based in different parts of the country. Pray that they may serve the need of the churches, institutions and individuals with their best capacity that would glorify God.

**13 WEDNESDAY** Pray for Ashish Foundation, a school for differently abled children. Pray for innovative and creative ideas as they teach the children. May God bless the ministry abundantly.

**14 THURSDAY** Pray for CANA-India, New Delhi. Pray that as they minister to HIV/AIDS affected people, they would be filled with compassion. Pray that their services would bring changes in people's lives and glorify the Lord through their services.

**15 FRIDAY** Pray for Emmanuel Hospital Association. Emmanuel Hospital Association works across nine states of central, north, and north-east India through its hospitals

and numerous community programs. Pray that every opportunity they get would be God honouring.

**16 SATURDAY** Pray for those whom you know are struggling with health issues that God would have mercy on them and bring healing to them.

**17 SUNDAY** Pray that your love for our Lord Jesus Christ would increase and that you would be saturated in His love.

**18 MONDAY** Pray for North East India Committee on Relief and Development (NEICORD), Meghalaya. NEICORD renders assistance, love, care, relief, & rehabilitation to disaster affected people. They also assist in leadership development and capacity building of the communities and help the needy and the poor achieve self-reliance through project initiatives.

**19 TUESDAY** Pray for the political leaders of our country. Pray that they may be able to pursue and accomplish goals that would bring growth to the country and peace with neighbouring countries.

**20 WEDNESDAY** Pray for Evangelical Financial Accountability Council (EFAC), an initiative of EFI. Pray that God may use EFAC to strengthen His Church in India as they provide accreditation and capacity building services and promoting transparency, accountability, and excellence in governance.

**21 THURSDAY** Pray for Tearfund-India as they work with communities to help them develop secure and productive livelihoods. Pray that the Lord would continually lead, guide, and show them different ways to address issues such as human trafficking, poverty, natural disaster, etc.

**22 FRIDAY** Pray for St. Stephen's Hospital. Pray that the hospital would continue to serve the sick and the needy with their motto "In Love Serve One Another". Pray that it would continue to serve and treat patients with best facilities.

**23 SATURDAY** Pray for the children of God's servants that they would encounter God personally and grow in holiness. Pray that they would pursue and value personal relationship with God.

**24 SUNDAY** Continue to pray for your pastor and his family. Pray that the Lord would strengthen them and use them effectively in His vineyard.

**25 MONDAY** Pray for Delhi International Christian Fellowship. Pray that God would work in the hearts and minds of the congregation members who are from different and diverse backgrounds that God would bring the joy of being united in Christ.

**26 TUESDAY** Pray for the ministry of Interserve India at Pune, Maharashtra. Interserve is a cross-cultural, inter-denominational

evangelical fellowship of Christians committed to each other in partnership and in service to the people in the field of education, medical services, community & spiritual development in India. Pray for God's protection. Pray that Christ's love may be displayed to the world with their works.

**27 WEDNESDAY** Pray scripturally for the youth groups in your churches and neighborhood. Pray that they may remember their Creator in the days of their youth. Pray for them that they would use their time, energy & skills effectively for God's glory.

**28 THURSDAY** Pray for Bible Centered Ministries International – India (BCM-India) based in Chennai. Pray for the needs of the staff and families that the Lord would provide all their needs so that they would fulfill their callings.

**29 FRIDAY** Pray for Jesus Bless Ministries, Odisha. Pray for integrity and excellence in their service to God through this ministry. Pray for the Holy Spirit to come along with them in their challenges and

**30 SATURDAY** Pray for your church to be an ambassador of reconciliation. Pray that many broken lives will be mended and healed.

**31 SUNDAY** Thank God for the fruitful month. Continue to pray for God's protection for you and your family.

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Now while Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, and she poured it on his head as he sat at the table. But when the disciples saw it, they were angry and said, "Why this waste? For this ointment could have been sold for a large sum, and the money given to the poor." But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you trouble the woman? She has performed a good service for me. For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me. By pouring this ointment on my body she has prepared me for burial. Truly I tell you, wherever this good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her."

*Matthew 26:6-13*



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