



BETHEL BIBLE COLLEGE
GUNTUR



A COMMITMENT TO SERVE



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  **BETHEL BIBLE COLLEGE**



MISSION STATEMENT

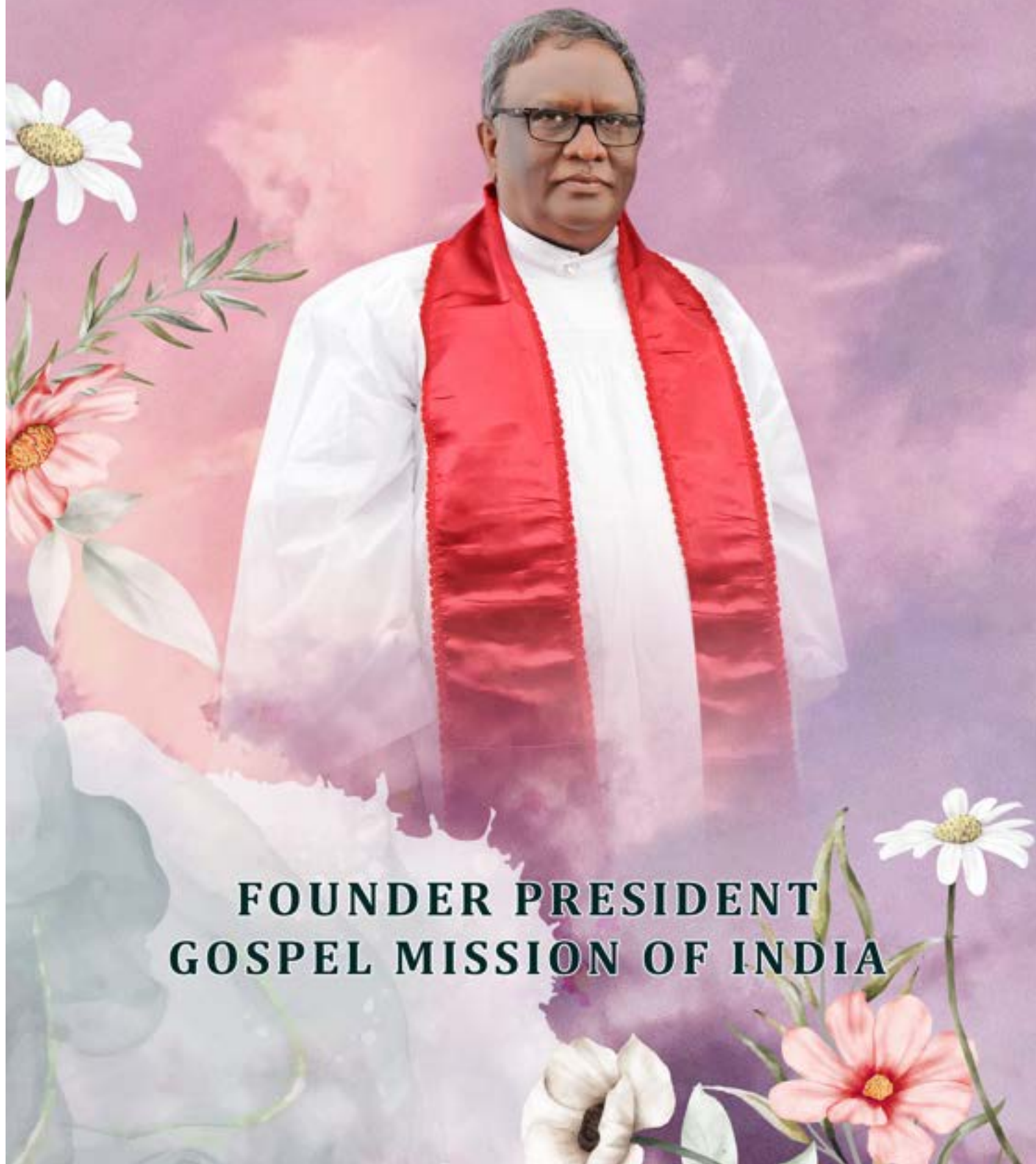
BETHEL BIBLE COLLEGE IS A VISION PURSUED, A VENTURE OF FAITH, WITH THE MISSION OF EQUIPPING YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN TO SHARE THE GOSPEL, PLANT NEW CHURCHES, AND PROVIDE PASTORAL AND OTHER SERVICES TO THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

THE COLLEGE, ITS FACULTY, BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AND SUPPORTERS ARE INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND ECUMENICAL IN ORIENTATION, UNITED BY FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND ROOTED IN THE BIBLE.

SOLI DEO GLORIA!



**IN REMEMBRANCE OF
REV. DR. P.N.S. CHANDRA BOSE**



**FOUNDER PRESIDENT
GOSPEL MISSION OF INDIA**

MAGAZINE COMMITTEE



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PRINCIPAL



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FACULTY IN-CHARGE



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MATHEW**
BD IV

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FACULTY MEMBER



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BD II



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GREETINGS FROM THE FOUNDER OF GMI

Dear Friends

Bethel Bible College affiliated to Senate of Serampore is one of the prestigious colleges in India having the only goal of commitment to serve. We desire to prepare servant-leaders who will go into the world in pastoral, missions, and church related missions to preach the Gospel, establish churches and to serve humanity that brings God's glory.

It's a great challenge to train Christian leaders for the church today. Opportunities to minister and lead people to Jesus became minimal because of lack of leaders. Since the foundation of Bethel Bible College (BBC) in 2000, we have been guided by the vision to train young men and women to commit themselves for Christ's work through planting churches, preaching the Gospel. Students are also well equipped to serve the people at large holistically.

The motto of BBC, "A Commitment to Serve" is taken as theme for the academic year 2023-24. It has been the foundation on which BBC is built. As our Lord Jesus Christ has given us the commission to preach and to serve, the management, administration, faculty, staff and students work in unison to live up to the commitment passed down from generations.

Bethel Bible College has been an endeavor of faith and service since its beginning. BBC is a perfect fit for anyone looking for serious Bible study and ministry preparation. BBC is committed to providing a quality education in order that we may impact the world, one student at a time.

That all may hear
Rev. Dr. Scott Alan Norling
Founder President of GMI

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF GMI



Dear Students, Faculty, and Staff:

I am excited to hear about the upcoming Bethel Bible College magazine, ALEPH-2024! The previous year's magazine ALEPH-2023 with the theme SHEKINAH has brought so much joy and inspiration to the Bethel community, and I am sure that this year's edition will be no different.

The theme of this year's magazine, "A Commitment to Serve," holds deep significance for me personally. It not only resonates with the values and dedication of the Gospel Mission of India and its subsidiary institutions like Bethel Bible College and Shalome English Medium School but also pays homage to the late Rev. Dr. P.N.S. Chandra Bose, the founder of Bethel Bible College and the visionary who penned the motto "the Commitment to Serve."

The verse from Matthew 20:26–28 reads: "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." This verse is a powerful reminder that true greatness lies in selflessly serving others. It reminds us that we came into this world with a purpose: to serve and make a difference.

As students and staff of Bethel Bible College, we have a responsibility to live out this theme in our daily lives. Whether it's through volunteering in our communities, offering support to fellow students, or actively participating in ministry opportunities, we have the chance to make a real difference in the lives of others. Our actions should reflect our commitment to serving God by serving others.

Let's embrace this theme and allow it to guide our actions and words throughout this year. May this magazine serve as a source of inspiration and motivation for us to continue living out our commitment to serve. Congratulations to all the contributors and staff involved in creating this year's magazine. May it bring joy and inspiration to all those who read it.

Rev. Dr. Leela Chandra Bose,
President, Gospel Mission of India.

GREETINGS FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF GMI



Greetings to the Staff and Students of Bethel Bible College

I extend my warmest greetings to the entire staff and students on the occasion of the release of College Magazine Aleph 2024. The theme of this prestigious publication is "A Commitment to Serve." This theme resonates with the motto of the Gospel Mission of India, under which Bethel Bible College operates.

The theme of "A Commitment to Serve" holds deep significance in the teachings of the Bible. Jesus himself emphasised the importance of serving others and treating them with respect and compassion.

Serving others is not merely a moral obligation but a calling that every follower of Christ should embrace. As believers, we are called to live a selfless life of service, sharing His love and blessings with others.

We are all privileged to be a part of the Gospel Mission of India, an organisation that values service and emphasises its importance. Your commitment to serving others through your studies and daily activities is an example of the values and principles that Bethel Bible College holds dear.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Robertson, the principal, and the entire faculty and staff for their tireless efforts in putting together the Aleph 2024 College Magazine. Your dedication and creativity have truly brought forth a publication that reflects the commitment to excellence and service that is at the heart of Bethel Bible College.

As you embark on another year of academic and spiritual growth, I encourage you to continue embracing the theme of "A Commitment to Serve." May this magazine serve as an inspiration to all of you, reminding you of the impact you can have on the lives of others through your acts of kindness, compassion, and service.

Once again, congratulations to all those involved in producing the Aleph 2024 College Magazine. May it continue to inspire and equip you to make a lasting impact for Christ!

Sincerely,
Jeevan Sylvanus Bose,
General Secretary, Gospel Mission of India,
President, Bethel Bible College.

GREETINGS FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK



It gives me immense joy to greet you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, and wish you a pleasant and meaningful reading of Aleph 2024.

We remember on Maundy Thursday the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus' agony at Gethsemane, and the arrest of Jesus. It is indeed a great joy to remind the readers of this magazine and ourselves that Bethel Bible College's motto is "a commitment to serve." This was developed from the event of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, which is one of the four events that took place just prior to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

This was also a live demonstration of Jesus' teaching about serving others. How appropriate it is when so many discussions are around us on the servant model of leadership to present a panoramic view of the college's motto. The very existence of the BBC is founded on the principle of developing servant leaders for the future church and society at large.

The principle of servant leadership is based on love and service. It goes along with the saying that faith without work is dead. The servant leader is the one who serves others. She or he is recognised as the leader because of the service. Jesus, in John 13:14-15, said to his disciples, "If I, then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you an example that you also should follow, just as I have done to you."

Jesus told his disciples, who were indignant because the mother of James and John requested special places for both of them, that "you know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:25-28).

St. Paul writes in Philippians 2:5-8, "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

Paul writes in Galatians 1:10 about himself: "For am I now seeking the approval of man or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ."

Jesus Christ and St. Paul have so vividly presented and exemplified the pattern of a servant leader that we all need to emulate in our lives and ministries as we commit ourselves more and more to serving God, the church, and wider society.

The life and ministry of a real servant leader are not without a suitable reward. According to John 12:26, Jesus said, "If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honour him."

Such an honour requires from a servant leader humility, integrity, stewardship, availability, and an exemplary and respectful life, among many other virtues.

Indeed, it is my privilege to appreciate the BBC magazine committee for embarking on the theme "a commitment to serve" for Aleph 2024.

The BBC is the epitome of a plurality of regions, cultures, languages, traditions, churches (denominations), and interpretations. I affirmatively state that exploring servant leadership in all these contexts can become a vibrant process of learning and understanding Jesus Himself and His teachings.

The present issue of the magazine is a genuine effort to help the contributors to and readers of the magazine emulate leadership qualities that were so authentically demonstrated in the life of Jesus and that will be appropriate to the wider church and society.

It is not nostalgic, but rather an earnest quest to inspire committed women and men for a very responsible future vocation.

While I wholeheartedly congratulate the magazine committee for this timely and relevant consideration of the theme, I warmly invite every one of you to become part of our commitment to serve the Lord through the BBC. It is my prayer that all your prayers, good wishes, and involvement in theological education through the BBC will definitely have an enduring impact on theological education and ministerial formation, and consequently, its outcome.

Thanks
Rev. Dr. S. Robertson
Principal, BBC



GREETINGS FROM FACULTY IN-CHARGE

Bethel Bible College is delighted to publish the 2nd edition of Aleph Magazine under the theme 'A Commitment to Serve.' The theme 'A Commitment to Serve' is also the motto of the college, which stands as a testament that Bethel Bible College serves and contributes to the well-being of others and the community at large.

A commitment to serve means dedicating oneself to leading others with compassion, love, and faith. It is a solemn dedication to lead with integrity, humility, and a heart of service, guided by the principles and teachings of Christ, who demonstrated servant leadership by putting the needs of others above his own. Therefore, the theme for Aleph Magazine, 'A Commitment to Serve' becomes apt as Bethel Bible College is dedicated to serving others.

The Aleph Magazine portrays an exhibition of deliberations regarding the past, present, and future of Bethel Bible College. Aleph Magazine is divided into three different sections. The first section includes reports from the co-founder, president, general secretary, principal, and articles from the community. This section would enhance the community. The second section displays the vibrancy of Bethel Bible College with images taken from various events that were organised during the academic session 2023–24. Undoubtedly, Bethel Bible College is a place where we see unity in diversity in its fullness. The third section features various advertisements from the community and well-wishers of Bethel Bible College.

The Aleph Committee places high value on the autonomy of expression. All opinions of the members, friends, family, and well-wishers of Bethel Bible College will be oriented, provided that they do not provoke individuals or the community. The committee has no intention of modifying the core meaning of the articles. But at times, the committee, if needed, must edit articles for transparency and clarity.

The Aleph Committee is grateful to the entire Bethel Bible College community, sponsors, and well-wishers for supporting and funding Aleph Magazine. We hope that the readers will be delighted to go over it.

Mr. Neuto Kiho
Faculty in-charge, Magazine

FACULTY MEMBERS

OLD TESTAMENT



REV. CHITTI BABU CHILAPARAPU B.SC., B.D., M.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION: BAPTIST

REV. A. KOTESWARA RAD B. TECH., B.D., M.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
INDIAN PENTECOSTAL CHURCH



NEW TESTAMENT



REV. DR. REJI GEORGE B. SC., B.D., M. SC., M. TH., D. TH.,

CHURCH AFFILIATION: ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

MS. K. KEZIAH GLORY B. SC., B.D., M.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
METHODIST CHURCH OF INDIA



FACULTY MEMBERS



THEOLOGY

REV.DR. P.A. SETH B.COM., B.D., M.TH., D.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
BETHEL CHURCH OF GOD



REV. SANTOSH KUMAR B.SINGH B.A., B.D., M.A., M.TH

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY



REV.N.S.J SUDHIR B. SC., PGDBA., MBA., B.D., M.TH., M.A.

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
ANDHRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



MR. NEUTO KIHO B.A., B.D., M.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION: BAPTIST

FACULTY MEMBERS



RELIGION

REV. DR. S. ROBERTSON B.TH., B.D., M.A. (PUBLIC ADMIN),
M.A. (SANSKRIT), M.TH., D.TH. (SERAMPORE)

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA



MS. DAISY SOLOMON KUMARI
PALLIKONDA B.SC., B.D., M.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
EL-SHADDAI CHURCH MINISTRIES

COMMUNICATION/
CHRISTIAN MINISTRY/
COUNSELING



DR. P.K. REEJA B.COM, B.D., M.TH., D.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
BETHEL CHURCH OF GOD



MR. RAJU DUNNA B.COM., B.D., M.TH.

CHURCH AFFILIATION:
ANDHRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

FACULTY IN STUDY LEAVE



REV. PAU ZA KHUP B.TH., B.D., M.TH.

LIBRARIAN

MRS. SELIN RANI ROBERTSON D.C.E., D.L.I.S.

**CHURCH AFFILIATION:
CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA**



COVER STORY

Candle: By burning out, it removes the darkness and gives light which also relights many candles that have been exhausted.

Hand Shake: It denotes the symbol of commitment.

Building: It mentions the places where we can serve Christ. It can be Churches, houses, schools, colleges, hospitals and etc.

The Sheaf of Wheat and the Man Lying upon the Two Rocks: It represents the foundation laid by missionaries who sacrificed their lives, so that many might come to know about Christ and reach higher heights by the life and works of martyrs.

Four People: The man lying on the two rocks also acts as a bridge by liberating scholars, doctors, entrepreneurs and women (the four people crossing the bridge) from the bondages of oppression and marginalization.

The Candle and Hand Shake: It symbolizes the cross on which Christ died, through which he showed us the extreme level of committing one's life to serve God for the welfare of others.

• MS. HENA JANCY MARY
B.D. IV

ANNUAL REPORT-2024

- REV. DR. S. ROBERTSON, PRINCIPAL

Indeed I am honoured to welcome all of you, on behalf of BBC family, to the 14th Bachelor of Divinity graduation ceremony and the third of extension studies, this day. Your gleaming presence illuminates and inspires all of us. First and foremost, all Glory and honour to God for enabling us to have this ceremony today.

This day, we sincerely remember with gratitude, the founding fathers of BBC – Late Rev. Dr. P. N. S. Chandra Bose and Rev. Dr. Scott Alan Norling.

BBC is the fulfilment of the vision of Late Rev. Dr. P. N. S. Chandra Bose to equip the least in the church and society with a valid theological degree to serve God in various capacities. We thank God for his life, witness and commitment.

We profusely thank Rev. Dr. Scott Alan Norling for standing with us shoulder to shoulder from the inception till today and for leaving no stone unturned to ensure the growth and stability of BBC. His beloved wife Mrs. Melody Norling and their lovely children deserve our profound appreciation for their love and passion for the ministry of BBC.

BBC sincerely thanks Rev. Dr. P. Leela Chandra Bose, the president of the Gospel Mission of India for her guidance, care and support.

Our appreciation and prayers to Mr. P. Jeevan Sylvanus Bose, the General Secretary of GMI and the President of Bethel Bible College and his wife Dr. Raga Deepika for their concerns and contributions to BBC. We thank Rev. Pau ZaKhup and Mrs. Dorathy Khup along with Zomi Baptist Church, USA for their prayers and support.

Ms. Lois Schaefer- Amazing Grace Lutheran Church USA, Dr. Joseph Paturi, (Trans-world Ministries) and Mr. Oyisteen- Eagle Mission Norway have been associated with BBC. We wholeheartedly thank them. Our sincere thanks to ISPCK, Delhi for the continuous partnership in promoting theological education through its gifts (books) to the graduating students.

We are also grateful to the Bible Society of India for their gifts (Bible and Books) to the graduating students. We remain grateful to all the churches, organizations and individuals who sponsor and recommend students to BBC. Hearty thanks to all the other dignitaries, graduating students, guests, parents, friends, professors and BBC family.

Congratulations to all graduating students who have successfully completed all the requirements pertaining to BD, BCS and DCS degree/diploma studies and are eligible to the award of Bethel Bible College Diploma, this day. I also congratulate the recipients of special awards.

GRADUATION SPEAKER AND SPECIAL DIGNITARIES

We are grateful to the Rt. Rev. Dr. P. Isaac Vara Prasad, Bishop in CSI Rayalaseema Diocese, Kadapa for consenting to deliver the graduation address and we look forward to hear from him. BBC is thankful to the most Rt. Rev. Dr. Frederick Paradesi Babu, the Moderator-Bishop of Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Rt. Rev. Dr. George Cornelious, Bishop in Krishna-Godavari Diocese for accepting to be guests of honour and to grace the

occasion with their greetings.

STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

51 new BD students (11 female and 40 male) were given admission for BD studies during the academic year 2023-24. The academic session started with an opening service on the 11th June 2023. The total number of students in the BD degree studies during the academic year is one hundred seventy one.

Our external-studies program is gaining ground. We enrolled 10 MCS, 32 BCS and 36 DCS students in 2023-24.

BBC faculty members are dedicated, enduring, cooperative and exemplary. Their efforts are behind our celebration today. They hold different responsibilities in addition to their regular teaching schedule to ensure the smooth functioning of the college.

We are grateful to all the external studies coordinators who helped the college. We look forward to their continuous partnership to extend these programs to all parts of Andhra Pradesh. We welcome all the Churches in Andhra Pradesh, particularly which are in and around Guntur to make use of all the resources available at BBC.

We sincerely acknowledge the dedicated services of all the non-teaching staff of BBC and the student leaders who together made our life moving.

SEMINARS AND PROGRAMS

Rev. Dr. M. T. Cherian, the Executive Director of Christian Institute of Management, Chennai, conducted a seminar to BBC family on the 23rd June 2023 on Principles of Management.

Rev. Santosh Kumar Singh, our faculty member, attended a seminar on 'Theological Educators on Gender and Human Sexuality' a joint program of the Senate of Serampore College and National Ecumenical Forum for Gender and Sexual Diversities, NCCI from 18 to 21 August 2023 at Serampore.

Another faculty member, Ms. Daisy Solomon Kumari Pallikonda attended a Seminar on "Refresher Course for Science and Religion Subject" organized by the Senate of Serampore College (University) from December 4-7, 2023 at United Theological College, Bangalore.

For the first time our third year BD students went for a practical work trip to Silliguri (West Bengal) from 20th November to 2nd December 2023. I am grateful to Mr. Neuto Kiho, our faculty member for proposing such a new and challenging initiative and executing it with precision with the support of Mr. Raju Dunna our practical work in-charge faculty member. We are grateful to all the BD III students for taking care of the entire expenses. The practical ministry involved, leading and preaching in the churches, house visiting, open-air preaching, prayer meetings, youth gatherings and children ministry. BBC remains grateful to Missionary Pikato, who is in-charge for Living Hope English School (Dimapur Sumi Baptist Church) for making all the arrangements for our students to have a real practical work experience.

Bethel Bible College in collaboration with Society for Biblical studies in India and partial support from the BTESSC organised a one day seminar on the 8th March 2024 on the theme "Ecological Sensitivity During Religious Festivals: Call for Ecumenical Partnership and Praxes". It was attended by BBC family and a few guests.

COLLEGE MAGAZINE

The theme for the 2nd issue of the college magazine Aleph 2024 is "A Commitment to Serve". We are in the process of releasing it soon. All of you can participate in this endeavour by advertising your Church, Institution, organization and personal compliments.

GRADUATES

BBC, till date, has prepared 501 dedicated BD graduates to serve the society and church. These graduates represented 18 different states, 32 different churches/denominations and different language groups. 67% of BBC graduates are doing pastoral ministry, 17% of them are in teaching/ higher studies (M.Th. and D.Th) and 6% serve as missionaries. Others are engaged in different forms of ministry including pioneering works.

Within a short period of time BBC also trained 181 BCS graduates and 209 DCS.

We thank God for the life and commitment of the graduating students. They are fully equipped to serve God in all situations. It is our joy that they are moulded to usher in a new creation for the glory of God. We wish them God's blessing as they step out into the wider arena of ministry with multiple challenges and opportunities.

LOOKING AHEAD

For the growth and stability of BBC we look forward to establish partnership with right people, churches and organizations. Please join us and continue to pray for us.

Thanking You
Guntur, 22nd March 2024

CHAPEL REPORT

- DR. P.K. REEJA, CHAPLAIN

'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and love your neighbour as yourself' (Matt. 22:37-38). In other words, love the Lord your God with your entire life. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, total commitment finds expression in loving the Lord with our whole being. It is a charge to be completely committed to God alone to serve our fellow beings.

Bethel Bible College focuses on equipping young men and women to be committed servants of God. The BBC always aimed at the spiritual and ministerial progress of the students, along with academic matters. Our focus, based on the mission of the BBC, is to mould our students into committed servants for the ministry of God according to their call. I am thankful to our Almighty God for being with us and helping us through this academic year (2023-24). We aim at the holistic and harmonious development of our students. The chapel department basically helps the students to exercise and experience the practical dimension of what they are learning from God's word and from the class. In the midst of many ups and downs, God enabled us to grow in Him throughout the year.

In BBC, each day we begin and end with a devotion conducted in the mornings and evenings. We have our morning service at 8 o'clock and our evening service at 6.40 p.m. every Monday to Friday. During the morning service, all faculty and students attend the service and renew their spiritual life, hope, and strength in the Lord. Teachers and B.D. third- and fourth-year students used to preach in the morning sessions. In the evenings, BD first-year students are sharing their personal experiences and testimonies, and second-year students are sharing from the word of God. Weekly twice, in the final year, students will conduct evaluation sermons, and Fridays we have sermon evaluation class, which helps the students understand different ways and approaches and improve their preaching skills. They realise the need for contextual sermons. Weekly, we conduct bible quizzes, praise and worship sessions, and separate time for learning hymns and new songs. We conducted the Bible examination twice this year.

We have worship services on Sunday evenings from 6-7 p.m. Since our community members belong to different denominations, we follow their order of worship in our services so that the students can practice their church's worship pattern and also conduct creative worship services. This year, we started an intercessory prayer session every afternoon. Students take initiative and pray for various concerns.

I am thankful to Mr. K. T. Beikhochai and Ms. Hena Jancy Mary, the chapel secretaries, for helping the department function smoothly. Also, I extend my thanks to Ms. Maria Jenisha, Mr. Solomon S., and Mr. Yacob Praveen. Mr. Simson Raja, Mr. Charles, and their voluntary help in the day-to-day affairs of the chapel. Above all, I thank God Almighty for all the blessings and guidance in this academic year.

PRACTICAL MINISTRY REPORT

- MR. D. RAJU, PRACTICAL MINISTRY IN-CHARGE

I feel truly honoured to update you on the practical ministry work of Bethel Bible College. It is notable to inform you that Bethel Bible College is a denominational-free theological college founded to invite all the candidates from various church traditions who are called and committed to God's ministry. The college functions by fulfilling its vision to train young men and women in theological and biblical richness.

The college is deeply committed to nurturing the students in biblical knowledge as well as their contemporary knowledge of the world, drawing the relevance of the biblical text to contextual realities. The college orients the students in terms of theoretical as well as practical exposure. To make it possible, Bethel Bible College is deeply dedicated to sending the students to the local parishes, congregations, churches, and NGO's in fulfilment of practical work designed by the Senate of Serampore College (University).

The chief objective of this practical ministry programme is to advance the skills of students in pastoral care and church administration. The practical ministry programme enables the students to reach the local churches and parishes during the weekends. The strategic role of the students in visiting churches, parishes, and congregations enables them to develop a spirituality that is both personal and community-centred.

The students are allotted to the churches and congregations based on their God-given talents and interests. They engage in teaching at the Sunday school, conducting youth fellowships, and leading praise and worship sessions. They also assist the pastors in liturgy and administration of the sacraments periodically.

The active participation of the students in the church services enables them to learn the worship patterns of different church traditions. The students are welcomed by the church pastors and church officials to gain ministerial exposure through preaching, singing, worshipping God, and conducting Bible study.

The practical ministry programme empowers the students to gain rich experience in pastoral care, church organisation, and pastoral administration. The churches to be acknowledged in the Guntur city premises are Jehovah Shalom Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, St. Martin's Lutheran Church, St. John's Church CSI, Telugu Baptist Church, St. John's Lutheran Church, ECI Gethsemene Evangelical Church, United Christian Church, Carmel Gospel Ministries, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Jeevadhpathi Gospel Ministries, St. Thomas Lutheran Church, and the Local Church of India. We are grateful to the above-stated churches, congregations, and fellowships for helping us reach out to the people and communities through your ministry opportunities.

A great sense of coordination and initiation is anticipated from the Christian communities to share our vision of shaping God's men and women for God's kingdom. We would like to be associated with churches to build relationships with Bethel Bible College through the network of practical ministry programmes.

Yours in Christ,
Mr. Raju. D
Bethel Bible College

LIBRARY REPORT

- MR. NEUTO KIRO, LIBRARY IN-CHARGE

We are delighted to present the report of Bethel Bible College Library for the academic year 2023–24. Our library is equipped with all the important facilities, and we also update our library by adding new books and journals every year.

Library Staffs

We have three working staffs at present in the library: one librarian and two service staff.

Library Timings

Monday through Saturday, 8:30am–1:00pm, 2:00pm–5:00pm, and night library 7:30pm–9:30pm. The library is closed on Sundays and all college holidays.

Books, journals, periodicals, and unpublished theses

Our library has 17,500 volumes of books for this academic year (2023-2024). This year, we have added around 1,500 books to the library. These books are contributed by faculty and well-wishers of Bethel Bible College.

Our library has 6,000 journals, periodicals, and unpublished theses. This year, we added 10 B.D. and 3 M.Th. unpublished theses to our library.

Facilities

Our library has all the required facilities that are required for a modern-day library, which include a computer system, printer, photocopier, internet, and Wi-Fi connection.

1. **Computer System:** Our library has five computer systems, in which one main server is connected to the entire server through which all other systems are connected. The students can access the study materials and download information about the existing books in the library, and they can also use the computer for their paper presentation.
2. **Internet and Wi-Fi Connection:** Our library has both internet and Wi-Fi facilities for the students for academic purposes.
3. **Printer and Photo Copier:** Our library also has two printers and a photo copier, which is very useful for the whole BBC community.
4. **Power Backup:** Our library is equipped with a power backup facility so that the students do not find it difficult or distracting during library hours when the power goes off. This also provides safety and security for the library.

MEDIA REPORT

- MS. K. KEZIAH GLORY, MEDIA IN-CHARGE

Bethel Bible College Social Media Committee actively updates the ongoing events in the Social media platform on regular basis. Our Committee members are Joshua Solomon, Ritchie Joshua, Goldwin Jebaraj and Ranjay Narzary. Our committee cordially works together so that through the Social Media, our alumni along with the present BBC community shares the joy in the growth and wellbeing of BBC.

Here are some areas where the Social Media committee works on actively.

Photos and Videos: Our committee has always been behind the scenes in all of the events of BBC in capturing and video graphing the memorable moments of our students. Worship and sermon evaluation service was photographed and video-graphed by our committee members.

Website: Bethel Bible college website was again redesigned and updated with anew theme. Website is regularly updated with the ongoing courses and the upcoming college activities for the welfare of the students.

Facebook and Instagram:The college also maintains an official Facebook account and Instagram account, in which the photos of all the events such as Sunday Evening Service, Sermon Evaluation Service and other college programs throughout the academic year are uploaded regularly. College events are also updated in these platforms regularly.

Youtube: Our College also has YouTube account where the videos of Sunday Evening Service, Sermon Evaluation Service are regularly uploaded. In addition to that certain videos or glimpses of main events that happen in the college are also uploaded.

Designing the Magazine: Like last year, our committee also helped in designing the Aleph Magazine 2024.

At the outset, I thank Almighty God for his guidance and enabling our Social Media Committee to accomplish all the works entrusted to us. I sincerely thank our Principal, Rev. Dr. S. Robertson for his constant encouragement and support to our committee. I extend my utmost sincere thanks to S. Joshua Solomon (BD II) for assisting me constantly in redesigning the website and maintaining the Social Media of BBC. I thank Ritchie Joshua (BD I) for extending his help in editing the videos for the YouTube Channel. I would like to appreciate Goldwin Jebaraj (BD IV) and Ranjay Narzary (BD IV) for their support and help. In all the endeavours of our committee, I thank the BBC Community for their support towards our committee.

GRADUATION SPEECH-2024

- MS. HENA JANCY MARY, B.D. IV

This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

I take this privilege to express my sincere gratitude on behalf of the graduating students of Bethel Bible College for the year 2024. We have almost come to the end of our BD journey. We have made thus far, and I believe that all of us are filled with joy and gratitude. Together, we express our gratitude to God, administration, faculty members, parents, family, friends, the church, and well-wishers who have supported us all along.

First and foremost, I extend my utmost thanks to Almighty God for his call, guidance, and enduring grace throughout our stay and study at this beautiful institution. God has considered us faithful and appointed us to his ministry, and he has chosen us to be collaborators in his mission to extend his reign.

On this auspicious occasion, we remember our founder president, a great man of God and a man of vision, the late Rev. Dr. PNS. Chandra Bose. We also thank our co-founder, Rev. Dr. Scott Alan Norling, and his family for their constant help and support of the college. Our sincere thanks to the president of GMI, Rev. Dr. Leela Bose, and the general secretary of GMI and president of BBC, Mr. P. Jeevan Sylvanus, for their love and care towards us.

We are also grateful to the principal, Rev. Dr. S. Robertson, and all the faculty members of the BBC for their support and encouragement. Today we can say that you have made and shaped us, keeping in line with our college motto, 'A commitment to serve'. In BBC, we have been blessed with friends and families from all over the country, India and abroad. It is a great opportunity to have fellowship with friends from different cultural backgrounds, churches, and linguistic backgrounds.

We also take the privilege of remembering and thanking all the non-teaching staff for their help and support.

We extend our gratitude to all our continuing friends. It has been a delightful theological journey. Though we are different, we are a family, and together we have been studying, worshipping, working, playing, and having fun and fellowship. Your kind and encouraging words and love towards us will be in our memories forever. We are blessed and will always cherish our experiences with grateful hearts. We will like to encourage all our continuing friends to set their hearts on the sovereign Lord's plan and continuously focus diligently on the training we are receiving. Put God first, work hard, help and encourage each other, pray daily, read the Bible, and commit your way to God. Let nothing discourage you during this difficult period.

My dear graduating friends, Graduation is not the end of our journey. It is the beginning of our next step. We have a long way to go. We are on the road to success.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Let us get ready to face many challenges, hardships, painful times, and rejections from different corners. But remember, we have God who is there for us in all our situations, wherever we go, and whatever we are going to do. Let's go and do everything with all our hearts and commit to the Lord. "Success is not the key to happiness... Happiness is the key to success."

If we commit our work or plans to our God, we will be successful. My dear friends, some of us are worrying about our next step or future. Jeremiah 29:11 says, For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Nothing can stop God's plan for our lives. So, My dear friend, let us not worry about our future or how we are going to accomplish our dream. God has



already prepared what we need. Let us trust Him and His great plan and be a change both in church and society. Let us reach the unreached and be the good ministers of Jesus Christ.

“Knowledge is not power until it is applied.” Learning never stops. Learning is only useful when we apply it in our day-to-day lives. If we don't put into practice what we learn, then learning loses most of its value. Keep in mind that a new skill is not learned until it is practiced and implemented successfully. Otherwise, we will just be wasting our precious time. Therefore, let us seek opportunities to utilize all that we have learned during our studies at the BBC. Work hard and continue to learn. Endure suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

Finally, on behalf of all my graduating friends, once again, I thank all of you for giving me this privilege. We request that all of you remember us in your prayers.

It is our prayer that Bethel Bible College will grow from strength to strength and may continue to prepare many more women and men for Christ's ministry and make many disciples, theologians, and great leaders.

Thank you.



FAREWELL SPEECH - 2024

- MR. PAUL SUVARNA RAJ, B.D. III

As I stand here before you, overwhelmed with joy and honour, I am reminded of the incredible journey we have all embarked upon within the nurturing confines of Bethel Bible College. For our beloved seniors, this journey has been one of dedication, perseverance, and unwavering commitment to your calling as ministers of Christ. Today, we stand together to celebrate the culmination of this chapter in your lives.

As the sun sets on this chapter of your journey at Bethel Bible College, it is with a mixture of joy and nostalgia that we gather to bid farewell to our graduating seniors. Your presence tonight fills the room with a sense of pride and admiration, for you have not only completed your academic tenure but have also left an indelible mark on our hearts.

Reflecting on the countless cherished memories we have shared, it is with a sense of nostalgia and gratitude that we recall your warm welcome as our seniors. From the very beginning, you embraced us as family, guiding us with wisdom, and imparting invaluable lessons that extended far beyond the classroom. Your exemplary leadership, unwavering support, and genuine camaraderie have left an indelible mark on each of us.

We fondly remember the moments of worship, fellowship, laughter, and even the challenges we faced together. These memories will forever hold a special place in our hearts, serving as a testament to the bond we share as members of the BBC Family. As you embark on the next phase of your journey, know that you carry with you the love and admiration of an entire community.

With hearts full of pride and admiration, we bid you farewell, knowing that you are destined for greatness. As you step into the world beyond these hallowed halls, remember the lessons imparted within these walls:

- Walk faithfully and humbly before God
- Embrace your calling with steadfast spirit
- Champion righteousness and stand for justice
- Seek wisdom and pursue excellence
- And above all, let your lives be a testament to the transformative power of Christ.

Reflecting on our time here, I'm reminded of the words of Proverbs 16:3, "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans." Each step we've taken, each lesson learned, has been guided by our commitment to faith and the pursuit of knowledge. It's this foundation that will carry us forward into the next chapter of your lives. But as you embark on this new chapter of your lives, remember that your journey doesn't end here. In fact, it's only just beginning. Armed with the knowledge and wisdom you've gained here, go forth and shine your light in the world. But perhaps most importantly, never forget the impact you have the potential to make. Each and every one of you has been called to a purpose greater than yourselves. Whether it be through ministry, service, or simply living out your faith in your everyday lives, you have the power to make a difference in the lives of those around you.

As you venture forth, may you continue to uphold the values instilled within you, bringing honour to our almighty and glory to His name. As a family, we offer our sincerest prayers for your continued success and fulfillment in all your endeavours. So, as we bid farewell to this chapter of your lives and look towards the future with hopeful anticipation, let us carry with us the memories, the friendships, and the teachings that have shaped us into the individuals we are today.

Congratulations, graduates. God bless you abundantly as you soar to new heights and may your futures be filled with joy, success, and fulfillment. Farewell, dear seniors, and May the path ahead be illuminated by the divine light of God's grace.



REV. CHITTI BABU

REGISTRAR

MESSIANIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE *Suffering Servant*



At the outset, I am delighted to write an excerpt from our college motto, "a commitment to serve." Keeping this motto and the stated title in mind, I would like to expound on the socio-religious understanding of a servant in Hebrew society in the first section. The messianic perspective of the suffering servant from Isaiah 52:13–53:12 is discussed in the second section, and in the subsequent section, the relevance of the messianic suffering servant to the present context is dealt with.

Socio-Religious Dimensions of a Servant in Hebrew Society

Generally, the socio-religious dimensions of the servant are noteworthy. In the social dimension, we notice the functional aspects of a servant. Moreover, we observe that society was classified as freemen, semi-free population, and slaves in ancient West Asia. The Hebrew term *ebed* basically denotes a relationship or belonging, especially to the master. Belonging to the only master in whose service we find true freedom. In Jewish understanding, since Israel was selected and the nation will be decided by Yahweh, each individual can become a servant to continue the content of the covenant. The Hebrew law provides a certain amount of liberty to slaves. By being Yahweh's servants, they will neither be enslaved to others nor subject others to the yoke of slavery.

The Suffering Servant in Isaiah 52:13–53:12: Messianic Perspective

Isaiah 52:13–53:12 narrates about the witnesses, divine and human, sin-bearer and living, and victories servant. The theme is very complex; it consists of the success, agony, and execution of the innocent person, and finally, it is resolved at the end of the 53rd chapter. This can be divided into three sections: (a) an introduction (52:13–15), (b) the main content (53:1–10a), and (c) a conclusion. 53:10b–12. The main section speaks about the

suffering servant who is supposed to undergo death, and the introduction and conclusion speak about the exaltation of the servant. If the servant is understood in a corporate way, the introduction denotes a miraculous transformation in the lives of ancient people. By using the feeble plant metaphors, the prophet vividly depicts the condition, sickness, and plight of the servant. It also narrates how repulsive this servant is to others (vv. 2-3), and he is going to suffer for others and on their behalf (vv. 4). Further, the usage of the past tense in the introduction and conclusion denotes that the servant might have lived in the past. In 53:13–15, we see the future glorification of a servant, which implies he will have the joy of seeing children, enjoy a long life and satisfaction, and the purpose of God will be met. To understand this concept from the book of Isaiah, the historical situation of the prophet is important. While speaking of servants, a prophet might have in mind some historical figures like Jehoiachin, Zerubbabel, Cyrus, Sheshbazzar, and Meshullam. Another dimension is that when the word of Yahweh is united with the body of the servant Israel, the servant will be despised and rejected by humanity. This suffering that is not merely substitutionary but participative is actually God's suffering (52:13ff, 53:4, 7, and 10). In addition, there were different interpretations concerning the servant in Deutero-Isaiah found in Palestinian Judaism in the first millennium: collectively applying to Israel, applying to prophet Isaiah, and messianic exegesis. This third section of interpretation must be understood as "Jesus only allowed himself to be the servant in his esoteric preaching. Since he goes to death innocently, voluntarily, and patiently to fulfill the will of God (Isa. 53), his dying has great atoning virtue, and from it life flows and life in God establishes." (J Jeremias) These are the possibilities for understanding the suffering Servant in Isaiah 52:13–53:12. By having this messianic perspective in

Jesus' Identification with the Sufferers

The Greek equivalent terms for slaves are *pais* and *doulos*. The Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds of the servant are powerful, and they assert (metaphorically) that we are children or slaves of God. Further, from Palestinian Judaism, it is clear that Jesus was an exemplary who died on the cross to give life. Through the innocent death of Jesus, justice is served, not by vengeance and retribution but by allowing death to be a means of atoning reconciliation in order to build a foundation for cooperation, peace, and salvation. The three-fold exaltation stated in the introduction to 52:13–15 (raised, lifted up, and very high) refers to the identity of a servant. Jesus taught servant leadership to bring about positive changes in society. It is the unique aspect that urges us not to have power over others but rather to serve others. With love and a sincere heart, Jesus' disciples were taught to serve (Mk. 10:45). The early church also understood this figure of the suffering servant as a shadow of Christ's saving work: 'He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds, you have been healed' (1 Pet. 2:24). The exemplary model of Christ must energize the community to embrace the needy. St. Paul also exhorted the Philippians to have unity by having a Christ-like mind among them. He also pointed to having the humility to strive for the betterment of the church.

Relevance of the Suffering Servant

God's address to the prophets, 'Behold my servant, reminds us of God's protection, care, and encouragement. When we are deeply involved in fulfilling a divine mission, we face ill-treatment, ridicule, rejection, suffering, and death-like situations by others because it involves exposing the evil and injustice of those in power and speaking a divine message that is unpalatable to them (E. C. John). We are reminded of these aspects when we identify with sufferers. With the same motto, "a commitment to serve," we are striving for servanthood leadership and to be servant influencers for the future. As we live in a busy and market-driven society with a lot of ideologies, a concrete commitment is required from God's servants to serve others voluntarily. Under the shadow of death and violence (the war in Gaza and Ukraine), the task of suffering as a servant has to be taken seriously in order to fulfill the purpose of God. This aspect will lead to sincerity and holiness. Wherever we find such leaders, we find freedom and progression at all levels. We must take useful lessons from the messianic aspects of the Servant in order to fulfill the divine will.



REV. DR. P.A SETH

BURSAR

DO YOU LOVE ME more than these?

A QUESTION FOR SELF-EVALUATION OF OUR COMMITMENT

God's loving call through Jesus Christ compels us to do his ministry with full commitment. God's ministry is not a partial one but a dedicated and wholehearted one. Jesus asked a significant question to Peter when he met them on the seashore of Tiberias. Peter understood the meaning of the question. The same question is still relevant in our era too. Whether we love Jesus more than anything? Let us examine some of the notable personalities attracted by the life and work of Jesus who selected the Indian soil as their mission field.

Bartholomew Ziegenbalg (10 July 1682–23 February 1719). He is known as the first western missionary to India from the Protestant community. Ziegenbalg and his friend Henrich Plutschau accepted the proposal from King Fredrick IV of Denmark to work in India as Christian missionaries. They had faced a number of challenges in their mission journey.

On November 29, 1705, both the missionaries boarded the ship "Prizezza Sophia Hedwiga" from Copenhagen. The captain of the ship behaved very harshly towards these young men because of their profession. They reached Tranquebar on July 9, 1706. At first, the Danish authorities were not given permission to land on the shore. Moreover, the authorities did not arrange a proper house for these royal missionaries. The hostile officials almost deserted them in the initial days. However, they did not give up their mission focus.

Language was one of the stumbling blocks to their mission. However, they mastered the Tamil language within a short span of time. Later, Ziegenbalg composed a Tamil dictionary with more than 40,000 words.

Though they had been sent by the King of Denmark, they experienced a financial crisis. Danish business people and

authorities in India did not give much financial assistance to their German missionaries.

Ziegenbalg was troubled with ill health; the condition was aggravated during the mission field in India. General J. C. Hassius, the governor of the Danish settlement at Tranquebar, jailed Ziegenbalg for around four months due to his involvement in the non-Christian world. A group of Brahmins tried to kill him because of his work. In the midst of all these crises, he learned Tamil, composed dictionaries, Tamil hymn books, catechisms, started schools, orphanages, constructed paper mills, etc. For the first time in any Indian language, the entire New Testament, as well as the Old Testament up to the book of Ruth, were printed and published at Tranquebar using Tamil presses sent from Halle. Furthermore, Ziegenbalg founded a seminary for preparing Indian people for ministries in AD 1716.

William Carey (17 August 1761–9 June 1834) As a young cobbler, God called and raised him to be one of the pioneers of modern mission movements in India. Knowing the commission of God, he selected India as his mission field. He came to India as a Danish missionary, having gained British citizenship in April 1793. However, the British East India denied his missionary work in their territory. Hence, he moved to Serampore, one of the Danish trading colonies of those periods.

He has witnessed many challenges in his mission endeavours. His wife, Dorothy Plackett, was anxious to come to India, leaving her own people and culture. She became a mental patient. His second youngest son, Peter, died due to a fever at the age of five. This incident intensified the mental disorder of his wife, and she never returned to a normal life. The local people hesitated to bury the dead body; Carey himself buried his child's body.



The financial crisis troubled him a lot, yet he marched forward with the zeal of translating the Bible into various Indian languages. He also translated one of the Indian epics, the Ramayana, into English. Along with this, Carey and his team established 100 schools across India and a renowned college for Indian youths in 1810. William Carey founded a botanical garden in 1820 in Kolkata. Carey introduced the idea of savings banks to India to fight the all-pervasive social evil of usury.

He established the first newspaper ever printed in any Oriental language. His English-language journal, *Friend of India*, was the force that gave birth to the social-reform movement in India in the first half of the nineteenth century.

He was the first man to stand against the ruthless murders and widespread oppression of women. Women in India were being crushed through polygamy, female infanticide, child marriage, widow burning, euthanasia, and forced illiteracy, all legitimised by religion.

At last, Serampore missions—almost all works—got into fire. The Bible Printing Press was consumed by fire; they lost their huge and innumerable works. Nevertheless, William Carey and his colleagues continued their journey by looking forward to the call. Really, Carey was shocked but never disappointed. Carey and his team crossed through all the difficult situations bravely, knowing the love of Jesus, and dedicated their love for His mission.

Mother Teresa (26 August 1910–05 September 1997). She was born in Albania. At the age of 18, she moved to Ireland in 1928 to join the sisters of Loreto at Loreto Abbey. She arrived in India in 1929 and took her first religious vows on May 24, 1931. There, she had chosen to be called Teresa (her original name was Anjeze Gonzhe Bojaxhiu).

On September 10, 1946, Teresa experienced what she later described as "the call within the call" when she travelled by train to the Loreto convent in Darjeeling from Calcutta for her annual retreat. The Lord asked her to begin a new religious community among the poorest of the poor. She began her missionary work in 1948, replacing her traditional Loreto habit with a simple, white cotton sari with a blue border. Mother Teresa adopted Indian citizenship.

The first year was fraught with difficulty. With no income, she begged for food and supplies and experienced doubt, loneliness, and the temptation to return to the comfort of convent life. On October 7, 1950, Mother Teresa received Vatican permission for the diocesan congregation, which would become the Missionaries of Charity. In her words, it would care for "the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, and all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, and uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to society and are shunned by everyone."

In 1952, Mother Teresa opened her first hospice with help from Calcutta officials, the Home of the Pure Heart (Nirmal Hriday). Those brought to the home received medical attention and the opportunity to die with dignity in accordance with their faith. "A beautiful death," Mother Teresa said, "is for people who lived like animals to die like angels—loved and wanted."

She opened a hospice for those with leprosy, calling it Shanti Nagar (City of Peace). The Missionaries of Charity established leprosy-outreach clinics throughout Calcutta, providing medication, dressings, and food. The Missionaries of Charity opened Nirmala Shishu Bhavan in 1955 as a haven for orphans and homeless youth.

By 1997, the 13-member Calcutta congregation had grown to more than 4,000 sisters who managed orphanages, AIDS hospices, and charity centres worldwide, caring for refugees, the blind, disabled, elderly, alcoholics, the poor and homeless, and victims of floods, epidemics, and famine. The inner call that Mother Teresa received compelled her to live in India till her last breath. She served Jesus, helping the needy, forgetting her people and land.

Murlidhar Devidas Amte, known as Baba Amte (26 December 1914–9 February 2008), He was born into a wealthy Brahmin family and trained as a lawyer. He abandoned a comfortable life in favour of serving the poor and marginalized. He inherited Mahatma Gandhi's spirit of standing up for injustice in society and serving the downtrodden classes. He participated in almost all major movements led by Gandhi and organised lawyers to take up the defence of the jailed leaders all over India during the Quit India Movement.

Baba Amte relinquished his ceremonial dress and started working with the ragpickers and sweepers for some time in Chandrapura district. He worked to organise the untouchables, the lowest of the low, and for nine months he worked as a scavenger carrying baskets of human excrement on his head, enduring the filth and the stench. He thought of himself as a man of the people, one who knew no fear.

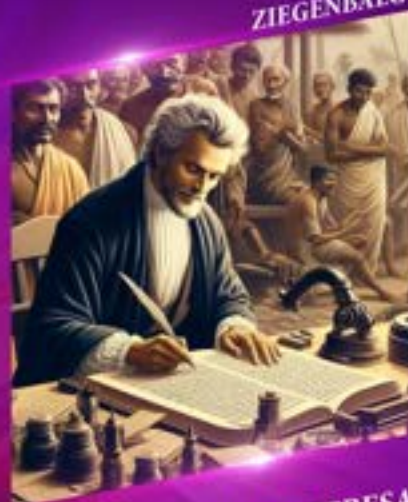
Baba Amte was moved by the plight and social injustice that leprosy patients faced in Indian society. Suffering from a dreadful disease, they were discriminated against and driven out of society, which often led to death due to a lack of treatment. In 1949, he started working towards building the Anandwan, an ashram dedicated to helping leprosy patients. From under a tree in 1949 to a 250-acre campus in 1951, today, Anandwan has grown to 450 acres and is a thriving community of people affected by leprosy as well as others with disabilities. Anandwan Ashram has two hospitals, a university, an orphanage, and even a school for the blind. It is a testament to the power of Amte's motto, "Charity Destroys, Work Builds." His institutions remain models of how such things should be done.

He had a deep and abiding respect for Christianity, and particularly for Jesus. The sacrificial love of Jesus attracted him a great deal. He has seen Christ's face among the most despising ones. He never claimed that he was a Christian, but he was more than a Christian.

Conclusion

"There is no crown without the cross" is from a famous song by Mrs. C.H. Morris. Jesus offers crowns to those who are deeply committed to carrying their cross with love and compassion. We have seen three foreign missionaries who came to India and died in our land, realising the love of Christ. The last one is an Indian (a Hindu but more than a Christian in practice) who understood the meaning of the cross that Jesus carried. All of them have gone through many hurdles in their mission. They contributed a lot to humanity. They loved Jesus (God) more than anything.

ZIEGENBALG



MOTHER TERESA



BABA AMTE





DAYA BAI

AN ASTOUNDING WOMAN OF COMMITMENT



DR. P.K. REEJA

CHAPLAIN

Introduction

We live in a time where genuine commitment has no value. Most people don't want to be committed to someone for their entire lives. People switch jobs very often without commitment. In the ministry field, committed people are also very rare.

Daya Bai was a faithful, committed nun and is now a social activist who has worked for the welfare and upliftment of tribal people in central India for more than 50 years. Daya Bai is a woman committed to God for serving the destitute. Her obligation is not with a group of people nor with an institution but with a 'one-person army', i.e., the solo protester.

Daya Bai's childhood and education

Mercy Mathew comes from a prosperous Christian family in Pala, Kerala. She was born in 1940 as the eldest of 14 children of Mathew and Elikutty. She had quite a happy childhood and a firm belief in God. Her desire was to become a nun. She had her primary education in her home town of Kerala. Mercy dropped out of her pre-degree studies and decided to become a nun. She came to Bihar; while she was doing ministry among the Adivasi's there, she earned her B.Sc. degree. Later, she secured an MSW and LLB from the University of Mumbai.

Her unusual call was confirmed.

Mercy realised her call was not to become just a nun but to spend her life in the convent. She did not like the comfortable life of a nun in Kerala. She went to north India with the commitment that she could do something for the deprived people. She came to the Holy Convent in Hazaribagh, Bihar, at the age of 16. Mercy was touched, and she realised the suffering and compaction of the tribals. She asked the convent authority for permission to

She asked the convent authority for permission to go to the villages for social work, but was ignored. She realised her dream to help the destitute was not going to happen. Later, she gave up her convent life without completing her training as a nun to work for the welfare of tribal people as a committed servant of God according to her call.

Mercy came out of the convent and started working as a teacher in Mahoda, a tribal area of Palama district in Bihar, for less than two years. She then moved to Madhya Pradesh and became a teacher in one of Jabalpur's English-medium schools, where she worked for one and a half years. She moved to Kerala and worked for the poor in an institution run by the church. She was not content with that ministry and also came to Mumbai. She worked at Mother Teresa's Children's Home and Old Age Home. She had a good experience with the mother, but she did not want to follow in her footsteps. She then moved to Bangladesh, where she served the refugees during the war. She realised that her path was not the one structured according to the church's orientation. She then decided to find her own path and calling in life. She strongly felt that her true calling for ministry was different from the tradition of the church. Mercy believed in Christ but not in the church's systems and authority.

Her search for understanding the right calling in life brought her to the Chintwada district of Madhya Pradesh. She reached the tribal regions of Madhya Pradesh for fieldwork as part of her MSW project. Later, she chose this region as her workplace. Tinsai, a village in Chintwada, is a tribal area. The natives of the region were the descendants of the Gond dynasty. These tribals are known as gonds. They were living in absolute poverty; their needs were never addressed by governments or rulers, and they were totally neglected.

Depth of her Commitment

Commitment means the act of committing oneself, pledging, engaging, or promising oneself to another. Commitment contains self-sacrifice, which is an act of letting go of the self and the willingness to sacrifice personal pleasures or suffer personal trials in the pursuit of the greater good of another. The Bible affirms commitment is not passive; it is proactive, an eager listening for God's call, a searching for God's will, and an involvement in God's cause. We can see this commitment in the life of Daya Bai.

The depth of commitment is a reflection of integrity, not effort or service. In Proverbs 16:3, "Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established." Daya Bai, as a single warrior, had come across several hardships in her ministry. She committed her work to the Lord, and God established her ministry. Her unwavering dedication and focus, and her tireless work to uplift the tribals, are immeasurable. She set her soul, mind, and body for the emancipation of the tribal community.

Identified with the People

Mercy accepted the new name 'Daya'. The name Mercy is difficult for the tribal people of north India to pronounce. The meaning of the word 'mercy' in Hindi is 'Daya' and 'sister' is 'Bai' is provided as a mark of respect. Because of this name, many people never realised that she was a Keralite until today.

Mercy recognised that the villagers would only accept her when she became one of them. She adopted their dress, language, and food and lived among them. She could earn their trust and love. Thus, Mercy became Daya Bai. In her appearance and lifestyle, she identified with them. This was not something that came easily to Mercy; it was in fact the result of much conscious effort.

She has been living in Barul for many years and has been fighting along with the tribals for their rights, often risking her life in the process. When she came first to Barul, she was determined to share the life of the tribals with all its trials and tribulations so that she would be able to serve them effectively. Daya Bai's life today reveals that she leaped further into the process with her extreme commitment and determination. She could bridge the gap between the tribals and herself by

order to raise them.

Miseries in Journey

The successes in uniting the people and helping them win their rights have not come without facing hurdles and difficulties. During the protests, Daya Bai was beaten up by the police many times. Once she went to register a complaint at the police station without any provocation, she was beaten up and badly injured by the police in 1999.

Once, she did not have money to travel up to a small town in Madhya Pradesh and walked several kilometres until she could not keep her feet one more step. She lived with the tribal communities, sleeping on the verandas of those who let her in at night and eating whatever they gave her. That's how she fought for the rights of the tribal people. On some occasions, she had only a piece of jaggery and water when she could not afford a meal.

Committed Ministry

Daya Bai's speeches, *satyagrahas*, campaigns, and work to pressurise the local government to start schools have helped a lot in uplifting the living standard of the villagers of M.P. She strived for the improvement of the self-image of the tribals. She made them aware of their rights and joined with them in the struggle till they achieved their rights. One of the tribals' main exploiters was the Forest Department. Forest officials were not giving their wages on time, and some amounts were cut. Daya Bai encouraged the local people to insist that full wages be paid on the same day after the work, not after a few days. The brokers and money lenders had been plundering their money and putting them in debt. Daya Bai established the "self-help group" in the late 1990s, long before the idea became popular as a tool for poverty alleviation. She urged female bank officials to use their positions to help these people. Her tireless efforts drew the attention of the NABARD, and other banks came up to help the people of this village.

Bringing the people together in unity over such issues was not an easy job for her. She took the challenge in order to make them understand the need for and value of unity. Daya Bai started a school to educate the tribal children in Barul village. She visits each village and teaches them how to care for themselves.

Daya Bai's Ministry outside Madhya Pradesh

She was not only fighting for the rights of the Gonds of Madhya Pradesh but also involved in another issue in which she was totally involved in the fight against communalism. Daya Bai joined in the march with the National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM), along with grassroots movements all over India. She has been associated with the *Narmada Bachao Andolan* and the *Chengara agitation* of the backward people for land rights. She led solo struggles, representing the forest dwellers and villagers of Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and West Bengal. In October 2022, she went on a hunger strike, demanding justice for the 'endosulfan victims' of Kerala until she got the assurance of constant medical assistance and other help for the victims from the government.

Conclusion

Daya Bai's life shows her real commitment. She had gone through many hurdles and problems in her journey, but she confronted them all with patience. Her deliberate identification, authentic self, and subordination helped her reach the goal. Her commitment is consistent with humility, integrity, accountability, and vulnerability. Her focus was on what others got out of her efforts. Though the world does not acknowledge her, the growth of the tribals is equal to her success.

In short, commitments shape and define a person; we become what we are committed to. Daya Bai continues her devoted ministry with the same commitment even today, at the age of 83.



DAYA BAI





SERVING OTHERS OR SUBVERTING

A PSYCHOSOCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE
TRUE MEANING OF DIAKONIA



REV. DR. REJI GEORGE

MEN'S HOSTEL IN-CHARGE

"If anyone serves (*diakonē*) Me, he must follow Me; and where I am there shall My servant (*diakonos*) be also; if anyone serves (*diakonē*) Me, the Father will honor him" (John 12:26).

Introduction

The majority of the world population is going through several socio-economic, spiritual, and psychological crises in their lives. Economic globalization has resulted in wide-ranging socio-cultural and economic effects upon people. Sociologically speaking, human relations are commodified and bound to the selfish ambitions of the corporate world. It is tempting for our generation to evade the responsibility of serving others by throwing the blame on general evil in the world. I do begin to imagine that the majority of the church members would also agree with my observation. Serving others is the fundamental activity of the church. It has to be the focal point for the church's responsibility towards people.

To give our minds a nudge in the direction of the fundamental purpose of this article, let me present two verses in Acts 6 where the term *diakonia* appears. As we understand the meaning, there is a need to reinterpret the word biblically rather than from a Greco-Roman slavery system. Over the years, theologians have tried to interpret how the word has been used for 'service' in the hard slavery system of the first century. Jesus (John 12:26) and first century Christians totally transformed the meaning of *diakonia*.

All believers are "committed to serve." When we hear such a slogan, normally we ponder over the question "whom we have to serve?" The Bible is very clear about the answer to this question. Moreover, the Holy Bible emphasizes the preferential option for the poor and deep

concern towards the people who are suffering. The Lord Jesus always has a profound solidarity with the poor and all living creatures in suffering. But the true meaning of *diakonia* cannot be adequately understood without connecting the prophetic call to tell the truth about the importance of repentance to enter God's kingdom. Jesus always stressed the importance of doing good, along with preaching and teaching everyone.

Therefore, the big question is "'What' do we have to serve?" The answer is connected with the 'substance' of *diakonia*. This article basically analyses the relationship between "ministry (*diakonia*) of the Word (*toû logou*)" (Acts 6:4) and "ministering (*diakonein*) the table (*trapezais*)" (Acts 6:2c). It is also translated as "serving the word" and "serving at the table." The ministry of the Word is tied to all the other kinds of services. Thus, there is an interconnection between the biblical ministry of the Word and all the other ministrations of love. Moreover, the ministrations of love is a general ministry among all the saints. Thus, the tendency to adopt a biased and reductionist form of the interpretation of the semantics of the *diakon-* words must be avoided. Here, the Psychosocial approach helps us to explore the true meaning of this word in the New Testament. However, the purpose of this article is not to enter into the discussion of *diakonia* as an "office."

Biblical View of service

We all recognize that proclamation of the word as the most important part of church life. In Acts 6, service of the Word is initially contrasted (6:2) with service at table. Initially, the Apostles were doing both 'works' at the same time. But they were unable to bear the work load (6:3-4). Thus, it is likely that the original meaning of 'service' adheres to the former concept of service as well as to the



latter in this context. Most people normally understood *diakonia*, basically, as service at a table and *diakonoas* as a table servant. Stephen and Philip, two of the seven, were so faithful in preaching the word of God along with serving at the table. Stephen spoke the word with full of wisdom and Spirit (6:10). Acts 8:5 says "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them."

The apostle Peter highlights that God alone is the source of strength to do all kinds of services. He wrote "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever speaks, as one who utters the oracles of God; whoever renders service as one who renders it by the strength which God supplies"(1 Pet 4:10-11). The varied grace of God seems to resolve itself into the utterance of His words, on the one hand, and the rendering of service, on the other. Thus, Peter believes that they are two sides of the same coin. One without the other is meaningless.

Who can Serve others?

For a Christian, belief is to be reflected in behavior. Only a true follower of Christ can truly serve others. Jesus affirmed that "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me" (John 12:26a). As God is the source of everything, service should start with God's will and approval. In 1 Cor 12:5, Paul says "There are differences of ministries (*diakonion*), but the same Lord." The word *diakonion* is not designating here the ordinary everyday deeds of those Christians, but the special ministries for building the church. Before coming to the use of *diakonia* in verse 5, Paul mentions it in verse 3, where he affirms the confession of the Lord Jesus as the benchmark of the community. All the members should respond authentically to the spirit of God for any kind of ministry. This points to the endorsement of the teaching of the Lord in John 12:26.

Those who have personal salvation through an encounter with Jesus are called to serve others. Paul and apollo were *diakonois* for the members of the Corinthian community. In 1 Cor 3:5 reads "What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants (*diakonois*) through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each." Paul's emphatic use of the self-designation *diakonos* would not be undermined here. Christ has given His servants to the church for three closely coordinated reasons: "for the equipment of the saints,"

and "for the work of the ministry," and "for building up the body of Christ." This argument is again affirmed in Eph.4:11-13, which says "And His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"

In *diakonia* we are both serving God and participating in his loving service of humanity. Perhaps it is helpful to remember that God's gift of his Son as the spark for all services. When God looks at people they are like "sheep without a shepherd" (Matt 9:36). God is the waiting Father, filled with "compassion," in order to rush out and embrace his prodigal son (Luke 15:20-24).

Word Study of *Diakonia*

In the New Testament books, we encounter instances of this word amid strong contextual aids. The New Testament is particularly rich in synonyms for the act of serving. The characteristic Greek word for "ministry" is *διακονία* (*diakonia*). In acts 11:29; 12:25; Rom 15:30 and 2 Cor 8:1-6, the word *diakonia* is connected with the collection of money for the needs of the Jerusalem congregation. Here, the congregations were helping each other. The verb *diakonein* is used for service at the table. But the noun *diakonia* is used for the ministry of the Word. There are differences of opinion about the meaning and the translation of this word. The Greek word *diakonia* has often been interpreted in the limited sense to mean 'humble service' or active Christian love for the neighbor. But it includes preaching the word and doing compassionate action to others.

Conzelmann tells us that *diakonai* is pointing to 'everyday acts of service' and that these acts of service are directed, in his words, "to the community as the goal of the Spirit's working." Furthermore, *diakonia* can be seen in Paul's mission to the Gentiles. Gentile churches came forward to support the poor and hungry in Jerusalem and Judea (Acts 11:29; 2 Cor. 8-9; Gal. 2:10). Paul says "Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. In as much then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry (*diakonian*)" (Rom 11:13). Paul used the plural noun 2 Corinthians 11:23. He says "Are they ministers (*diakonois*) of Christ? I am talking like a



madman-- I am a better one: with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless floggings, and often near death." As a diaconal community, the church is called to preach the gospel and help others at the time of need. It heals relationships and nurtures partnerships for the sake of God's good creation.

As we have seen in this article, this word is used widely in the Bible not only in Paul's letters but in the synoptic gospels as well. Jesus contrasted the practice of *diakonia* in the surrounding cultures with the attitude of his followers. Jesus said "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them" (Mark 10:42). Indeed, it is of striking significance that the controlling inspiration for preaching and deeds of compassion appears to be Jesus' reinterpretation of *diakonia*. Therefore, the apostle is a *diakonos* (2 Cor 11:23; 1 Cor 3:5; Col. 1:25) and so is Timothy (1 Thess 3:1-3), Epaphras (Col 1:7) and Tychicus (Eph 6:21; Col 4:7). In his epistle to the Colossians, Paul likewise describes himself as a "diakonos of the Gospel."

Transformational *Diakonia*

Serving others involves inner transformation. Service is not to please but to help others. Moreover, service should not come out of a selfish motive to get appreciation from others. For Jesus, motive is everything. Instead of doing good with the motive to getting the glory to God (Matt 5:16), one can selfishly work to get recognition for oneself (6:1). Therefore, Jesus said "Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven" (Matt 6:1).

The emphasis lies in the deed of active love. It is absolutely essential for the church. However, this study invites us to envisage the early Christians' understanding of this word. Apostle Paul gives adequate evidences to the usage of this term. It is not an episodic deed of kindness. Today, unfortunately, we are under the myth created among us in our time that the *diakonia* only talk about some special kind of social service. However, the term *diakonia* is more than mere service to the needy. Thus "all Christians are *οἰκονομοί*, ministers, called to a ministry" We need to understand that "the church ordains ministers to do" certain sacraments, "but this in no way exalts them to status

different from others." Hurtado observes that "only in second Century writings that one can see clearly the influence of Hellenistic ideas and the loss of the pneumatic-eschatological viewpoint of the earliest church" concept of ministry as servanthood.

I do not mean to imply that a servant must be a doormat to others. There is a need for authority and admonition in the body of Christ. Yet, that authority and strength must arise from a concern to serve people faithfully and not any misguided use of power. Paul's understanding of this act was very clear that all the members of the Church "are gifted with *diakonia* of one kind or another." While helping others is important, never consider "those in need as [mere] objects or recipients of *diakonia*." God has created them in his own image. It is our divine call to help others. It is a fact that nowadays many "philanthropic or humanitarian initiatives are also guided by such" an erroneous understanding towards the needy. Such an understanding is totally against the biblical meaning of *diakonia*.

Conclusion

Diakonia in the New Testament Church is not an activity undertaken by a privileged group to help any needy group. Rather, it is the ministry of all whom God raises up through born-again experience to play a role in the extension of the Kingdom. Because of its focus on the distinctive beliefs in Jesus and values of the followers of Christ, it provides the Church with a forum in which a more authentic *diakonia* can flourish. God realizes their "royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2.9) status.

The kind of servitude practiced in the first century was hardly ever keeping with God's will. Therefore, the Holy Scripture regulates the institution without commending it. This article offers a proper notion of the church's commitment to *diakonia*. God's expectation of a born-again follower is conceptualized through the ministry of *diakonia*. It would be wrong to assume an absolute division between deeds of kindness and preaching the word. The acts of the Apostles shows (Acts 6) that there was no distinct difference between the work of seven and the Twelve.



PREFIXES AS THE Commitment to Serve



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In my role overseeing distance education at our college, I have encountered numerous inquiries from individuals wondering if they can be ordained upon completing our courses. Consistently, I have had to clarify that the Senate of Serampore solely oversees academic matters, while ordination falls under the jurisdiction of the respective church. The motivation behind their desire for ordination post-course completion often stems from the prevalence of various so-called Bible universities and colleges offering ordinations for a fee.

Ordination, a practice found in various forms across Christendom, lacks a precise biblical parallel. The term "ordination" is not found in the Hebrew Old Testament, but English translations of the OT and the LXX use "ordain," "ordained," and "ordination" to translate approximately 25 Hebrew words and phrases. This study aims to explore these words and their influence on the practice of ordination in late Judaism, early Christianity, and modern Christianity. Interestingly, many of these Hebrew words translated as "ordain," "ordained," and "ordination" in English have no direct connection to religious rituals. Instead, they refer to various ceremonies and rituals, such as appointing individuals to roles or tasks, inaugurating religious leaders, consecrating places or institutions, anointing, commissioning, and the laying on of hands. These words also touch on broader concepts like divine purpose, providence, calling, and choice. The "laying on of hands" for Joshua and the Levites appears to be the closest biblical parallel to modern ordination practices.

The term "ordination" has its roots in the Latin word "ordo," which means "order," "class," or "rank." In ancient Rome, "ordinatio" referred to the process of installing or inducting someone into a new rank or position. Roman society was organized into distinct

classes or "orders," such as the "ordo senatorum" (senators), "ordo equester" (knights), and "plebs" (commoners). Movement between these orders was possible through a process called "ordinatio," which was also used to install imperial officers. The concept of ordination was also applied in the context of pagan Roman religion, where individuals were appointed to cultic offices by the gods. In the ancient world, ordination signified a promotion in rank and status, granting the ordained individual authority over others. These ideas were later adopted by the Christian Church, particularly through the writings of Tertullian, and the Church adapted the structures of the Roman Empire for its own governance after the time of Constantine.

Biblical terminology for induction into office, especially in the Old Testament, includes anointing and laying on of hands. For commissioning or induction into office, the New Testament uses additional words, none of them associated with "ordination" in the ecclesiastical sense. While the English verb "ordain" can mean to "issue an order," its ecclesiastical meaning is "to invest with ministerial or priestly authority." Such a meaning is not present in the New Testament.

The traditional ordination ceremony for bishops, priests, and deacons has included the laying on of hands along with a prayer calling for the grace of the Spirit since the time of the Apostolic Tradition, which is credited to Hippolytus. The bishops' installation in their cathedral was especially important because of their responsibility to preserve apostolic teaching. Subsequently, churches in the East enhanced the practice of imposing hands at bishop ordinations by placing the gospel around the ordinand's neck in addition to investiture and public applause. On the other hand, Western churches, especially those founded in the early Middle Ages, adopted a



sacramental and priestly understanding of order through the use of instruments, investiture, and anointings.

Ordination is the formal process by which an individual is appointed to a specific role or office within a religious institution, granting them the authority to carry out their duties. It involves the appointment, consecration, or commissioning of individuals for a particular service. In essence, an ordination ceremony is a public acknowledgment of the authority granted to a person to work for the betterment of the church within its defined boundaries. It is important to recognise that the church is an institution, and a local church, in contrast to the universal church, is a religious organisation or congregation that gathers in a specific location. The prefixes used for ordained individuals serve as clear indicators that they have been appointed by the church to fulfill their responsibilities.

It is unfortunate that the spiritual practices within the church have led to the ordainment of individuals being seen as holier, even to the point of deification. This excessive spiritual elevation has led many believers to desire this deification, resulting in the emergence of numerous independent churches on nearly every street. Additionally, the rise of these independent churches serves the purpose of economic self-governance.

Ordination is a formal procedure where an institution appoints individuals to manage its day-to-day operations. The various titles associated with ordination represent distinct roles within the institutional church. The Evangelical Free Church of America, in its statement of faith, explains that the term "free church" historically refers to churches in Europe that were independent of state control. Theologically, it means that each local church is autonomous and not subject to ecclesiastical or hierarchical control. This implies that free churches require leadership, not the ordained.

Unfortunately, the Eurocentrism of certain churches has contributed to an increased demand for ordination, thereby diminishing the significance of ordination today. This has led to the emergence of numerous fraudulent spiritual academic institutions offering courses and ordinations with prestigious titles such as Reverend, Bishop, Apostle, etc.

In contrast to the above view, a doctorate degree is the highest academic achievement, symbolising mastery in a specific field or profession. It necessitates extensive research and articulation, with graduates expected to have

thoroughly investigated a subject, conducted original research, and proposed new interpretations or solutions. An academic doctorate is a research-focused degree typically requiring a dissertation. Those pursuing a PhD may aspire to work in academia or research. For many, obtaining a doctorate is a lifelong personal ambition.

There is no inherent issue with a PhD holder becoming a pastor and using the title "Doctor" alongside their church's authorised prefixes. However, it is concerning when many spiritual leaders seek the "Doctor" prefix without earning it through rigorous academic work. Additionally, there are few institutions offering so-called theological doctorates for money, leading to the perception that these titles are being bought rather than earned.

On one hand, these so-called doctorates are being sold, and on the other, ordinations are also being sold without proper qualifications. There is a misperception that ordination and academic titles are easily obtained and cheaply available. This has led to a situation where ordained individuals are eager to have the "Doctor" prefix, and theological academics are also interested in the prefixes of the ordained, even if they are not directly involved in church administration.

In conclusion, a number of fraudulent spiritual academic institutions that give ordinations for a price and the misconception that ordination and academic titles can be cheaply gained have led to a reduction in the value of ordination in various situations. This has resulted in a scenario where people apply for ordination without the necessary qualifications and where theological scholars pursue the titles of ordained people, even if they are self-identified or do not work in church administration. The use of prefixes such as "Doctor," "Reverend," or "Bishop" in ecclesiastical or academic contexts should not be seen as mere fashion statements but rather as symbols of a deep **commitment to serve**. These titles represent the authority and responsibilities entrusted to individuals within their respective institutions. It is important to remember that these titles are not to be taken lightly and should be earned through rigorous academic work or through the formal process of ordination. Maintaining the integrity of these titles ensures that they continue to hold meaning and significance within their respective fields.



NISHKĀMAKARMA

AS A COMMITMENT TO SERVE



MS. DAISY SOLOMON

WOMEN'S HOSTEL IN-CHARGE

Everyone has a commitment to serve. Being a Christian, after being born again everyone wants to commit themselves to serving God and serving others. But what does the commitment to serve mean? What does it take for the commitment?

It would be enlightening to look at this aspect of commitment to serve not only from biblical perspective but also other scriptures' voice about service.

Nishkāmakarma

The word *nishkāmakarma* comes from three Sanskrit words which connote- performing of works without desiring its fruits thereof. It is a desireless action or selfless action. The word can be found in Bhagavad Gita III. P.M. Thomas explains the word and says it doesn't mean performing actions without interest or having a kind of expectation from the action done, it means performing actions without desire.

Bhagavad Gita asserts that while performing ceaseless actions one should not have prideful thought that s/he shall bring about good to others rather service should be done merely as a duty. Gita not only teaches about performing ceaseless actions but also the motive behind the actions. In Bhagavad Gita III.25, Krishna says Arjuna that "Act without any attachment, but with the desire for *lokasamgraha*." Non-attachment is the key to perform any action. Hope of reward must be given up completely. The concept of *nishkamakarma* is being highlighted by every *neo-vedantin*. For Radhakrishnan, the enlightened person or the one who has commitment towards service should work without expecting anything in return (*nishkāmakarma*) for the welfare of humanity. Though the wise person who is in light or who has knowledge has accomplished everything that life holds for him/her, s/he should involve in doing works for societal well-being. This cosmic action without attachment to the desires

(*nishkāmakarma*) would eventually bring inter-connectedness to society.

Mahatma Gandhi agrees to what Radhakrishnan says about *nishkāmakarma*. He brings the concept of "spirit of yoga" in relation to *nishkāmakarma* in which he says that one has to perform duty in the "spirit of yoga" without being attached to the actions (*nishkāmakarma*) so that people would be inspired to work like them. Gandhi unlike other *neo-vedantins* uses the word "spirit of yoga" which implies that one has to do his/her actions as a sacrifice. *Yajna* (sacrifice), for Gandhi, is laying down one's own life for the sake of others, and *ahimsa* (non-violence) is the highest *yajna* (sacrifice). *Yajna* chiefly means body labor for service and it is not animal sacrifice. He indicates that *himsa* will not take place if the actions done are performed with desirelessness (*nishkāmakarma*). And so, the desireless actions ultimately bring *ahimsa*. The true commitment to service for Gandhi is giving up the ego ('I-self') and being devoted to the service of others which can be found in his doctrine *sthitaprajna* (selfless service).

Based on the thoughts given by the *neo-vedantins*, the concept of *nishkāmakarma* acts as a commitment to serve which further brings up interconnectedness, non-violence in the society.

Not to be Served but to Serve

Mark 10.45 clearly portrays how one has to be beneficial to the people around them, even at the cost of their life. It indicates Christ's humiliation in the place of and for the benefit of his people. It is quite hard not to think about a ransom in the place of many would not be for their benefit. Besides, the text vividly states in so many words that by means of his ransom, Son of Man serves the many. Jesus' commitment to service is unveiled here in his giving of himself and the ransom metaphor sums up the purpose for which Jesus gave his life and defines the

purpose for which Jesus gave his life and defines the complete expression of his service. Jesus' service is offered to God to release humanity from their indebtedness to God. By doing so, the Son of Man takes the place of the many and there happens to him what would have happened to humanity. It implies that the sacrifice of Jesus is presented as his service to God and benefit for the world. Therefore, Christ's service completely revolves around his humiliation, giving of himself, elementary of voluntariness or self-sacrifice and a ransom. Jesus is the greatest example of *nishkāmakarma*. Jesus' motive behind his voluntariness to sacrifice is to obey the will of God by saving others.

We can find the concept of *nishkāmakarma* even in the teachings of Jesus. In Matthew 6.3-4 "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret will reward you." The verse talks about the works that are to be anonymous and the motive behind which a person gives or acts. Jesus teaches the crowd and says that a person shouldn't act or perform works in order to be seen and praised by others or expecting a reward in return. Jesus says, if the motive behind the action is to draw the attention to the self, then that person is pondering more on a temporal reward than an eternal one. The actions should be done in order to bring peace, healing, happiness to other person not for getting name for the self.

***Nishkāmakarma* as A Commitment to Serve: Implications**

Both the *neo-vedantins* and the Bible agree to the fact that the one who treats others as superior to themselves even to the extent of giving his/her own life shows their complete commitment. A Christian understanding of sacrifice could be seen in the example of Jesus Christ who is the epitome of a perfect sacrifice. He was beaten by his own, rejected by his own, yet he didn't open his mouth to speak false against others. His life is the best example of a *nishkāmakarmin* (the one who practices *nishkāmakarma*) who establishes peace and harmony in the spirit of *yajna*. He showed how to respect other fellow beings, especially the marginalized. Healing of the sick, taking care of the destitute, providing food to the needy, and exorcism are some of the kingdom principles he taught. He taught people to work towards solidarity knowing that everyone is created in the image of God. In a society where low caste people and women are ill-treated, looked down upon, and rich and powerful dictate terms, Jesus' statement in Mark 10.45 that "I have come not to be served but to serve and to become a ransom for many" provides counter-cultural paradigm. It provides a framework within which *nishkāmakarma* as commitment to serve could be practiced.

Comparing both the texts, Bhagavad Gita doesn't here speak of the awaited reward from the Lord rather in Jesus' teachings one comes across Lord rewarding those who perform actions desirelessly. But the motive behind both the teachings is performing actions without desire (*niskamakarma*) even to the extent of sacrificing one's self (*yajna*).



BREAKING BARRIERS

WOMEN'S CHALLENGES AND UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO SERVE JESUS



MS. KEZIAH GLORY

MEDIA IN-CHARGE

Introduction

In a world where self-centeredness and pride often prevail, the call to serve Jesus stands as a beacon of selflessness and humility. However, within Christian communities, women who answer this call often encounter formidable challenges rooted in patriarchal structures. Their unwavering commitment to Christ remains steadfast despite facing obstacles that affect their recognition, identity, and participation in ministry.

Throughout history, women have played pivotal roles in spreading the teachings of Jesus Christ and serving their communities with unwavering dedication and faith. Regardless of facing numerous challenges and obstacles, women around the world continue to exemplify extraordinary commitment to their spiritual calling, embodying the principles of love, compassion, and service championed by Jesus.

1. Challenges Women Encounter in the Commitment to Serve Jesus

1.1 Identity Concealment

Women who dedicate themselves to serving Jesus often deal with the loss of their individual identity, overshadowed by societal expectations that define them solely in relation to male family members. That is women's identities are closely tied to their familial relationships, often being referred to as daughters, wives, or mothers of male family members. Their talents and abilities remain hidden as they are perceived primarily through the lens of familial roles and this associative identity can overshadow their individuality and diminish their sense of self-worth outside of these relational roles. Despite efforts to assert their identity, many women continue to struggle against ingrained patriarchal norms that diminish their autonomy. As a result, women struggle to assert their unique identity and talents within the church and broader society.

1.2 Lack of Recognition

Despite Jesus' affirmation of women as equal partners in ministry, they frequently encounter discrimination within hierarchical church structures. Their invaluable contributions are often overlooked, and they are marginalized from sermons, theological discourse, decision-making processes and leadership roles. Thus women find themselves excluded or unrecognized.

Not only that women in ministry often encounter institutional barriers that limit their access to leadership roles within religious organizations. Many denominations still hold onto patriarchal structures and interpretations of religious texts that explicitly restrict women from holding positions of authority.

Thus they have limited opportunities for advancement compared to their male counterparts. They are overlooked for leadership positions or offered lower salaries and benefits. This lack of recognition not only undermines women's confidence but also perpetuates gender-based disparities within the church and create a glass ceiling for aspiring female leaders.

1.3 Gender Bias

Gender bias remains a significant obstacle for women in ministry. Despite their qualifications and capabilities, women face distrust and resistance from congregation who are accustomed to male leadership. Stereotypes about gender roles and perceptions of female inferiority can undermine a woman's credibility and effectiveness as a spiritual leader, leading to constant scrutiny and doubt.



1.4 Balancing Family and Career

The expectation to balance family responsibilities with the demands of ministry adds an additional layer of challenge for women in their commitment to serve. Societal expectations regarding caregiving and domestic duties often place undue pressure on women, forcing them to juggle multiple roles without adequate support. This imbalance can lead to burnout and hinder women's ability to fully dedicate themselves to their calling in ministry.

1.5 Spiritual and Emotional Struggles

Serving Jesus in ministry often involves navigating spiritual and emotional struggles that can take a toll on women's well-being. From grappling with theological questions and doubts to experiencing burnout and compassion fatigue, women face internal battles that test their faith and resilience. Cultivating a strong support network, engaging in regular spiritual practices, and seeking professional counseling are essential for women to maintain their spiritual and emotional health amidst the challenges of ministry.

2. Overcoming Challenges by Breaking Barriers

Women throughout history have demonstrated remarkable devotion to Jesus even in the face of adversity and persecution. From the early Christian martyrs who faced imprisonment and death for their beliefs to modern-day missionaries risking their lives to spread the gospel in hostile environments, women have shown unwavering commitment to their faith. Their courage and steadfastness serve as a testament to the transformative power of Jesus' message of love and redemption.

Regardless of historical barriers and patriarchal norms, women have risen to positions of leadership within the church, empowering others and effecting positive change. From pastors and theologians to social justice activists and spiritual mentors, women are leading by example and challenging stereotypes about gender and authority in religious contexts. Their leadership is marked by humility, wisdom, and a deep commitment to serving Jesus and His people.

In facing persecution, rejection, or hardship, women draw strength from their deep-rooted faith in Christ, emerging as overcomers who testify to the power of

God's grace and love to sustain them through every trial. Women's unwavering faith and commitment to serving Christ serve as powerful examples for believers of all ages and backgrounds. Their stories of faithfulness, sacrifice, and perseverance inspire others to live out their faith with courage and conviction, reminding us that God's call to discipleship knows no bounds and that all are called to be co-workers in the kingdom of God.

Conclusion

In spite of encountering numerous challenges, women persist in their calling, serving as inspiring examples of selflessness and sacrifice. As the church endeavors to reflect Christ's love and inclusivity, it must actively break down barriers that impede women's involvement and acknowledgment in ministry, empowering them to fully actualize their God-given potential.

Women called to serve Jesus continue to make invaluable contributions to the life of the church and the advancement of God's kingdom. Their commitment, courage, and resilience inspire us to confront gender bias, dismantle institutional barriers, and create inclusive spaces where all believers can serve according to their gifts and calling. Women have consistently stood as steadfast pillars of unwavering faith, their commitment to Christ's service radiating through the annals of time. Thus, a woman's commitment to serving Jesus transcends her gender, identity, or educational background; rather, it is demonstrated through her actions and deeds inspired by faith in Christ.





MS. LIBNA MATHEW

BD IV

A SACRED VOW:

EXPLORING THE THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF COMMITMENT TO SERVE GOD AND HIS PEOPLE



The notion of making a sacred pledge is firmly entrenched in religious traditions across the globe. From religious vows in monastic organisations to marriage vows in ceremonies, the act of devoting oneself to a higher power or helping others is regarded as a holy and life-changing commitment. In this article, we will look at the theological implications of committing to serve God and His people, including the meaning of a sacred vow, the obstacles and sacrifices required, and the transformational impact it has for individuals and communities.

A sacred vow is vital in religious traditions because it indicates an intense dedication to a higher power or supernatural being. Whether taking religious vows as a priest or nun or making wedding vows in a religious ceremony, the act of committing oneself to a divine vocation is viewed as an act of complete submission and commitment. In many religious traditions, a holy vow is regarded as a covenant or contract between the individual and God, indicating an ongoing commitment to live according to specific ideals and principles.

When one commits to serving God and His people, they begin a road of selflessness and sacrifice. Serving God and His people demands a high level of devotion and dedication, as it frequently entails putting others' needs ahead of one's own. This devotion can be shown in a variety of ways, including through religious service, philanthropic work, and active participation in community service. Serving others is viewed as a method to honour and demonstrate one's love for God, since it represents the teachings and ideals of one's religion.

Making a commitment to serve God and His people is not without hardships and sacrifices. Individuals must give up some of their own interests and goals in order to

prioritise the needs of others. This might entail giving up financial possessions, worldly pleasures, or personal aspirations in order to completely commit to a life of service. Furthermore, helping others may be emotionally and physically challenging, forcing people to push themselves beyond their comfort zones and confront the world's suffering and injustices.

Despite the difficulties and sacrifices required, making a holy pledge to serve God and His people has the potential to result in deep transformation, both for the individual and the community they serve. The act of committing to a higher purpose can result in a profound sense of fulfilment and meaning in life. It enables people to match their behaviour with their beliefs and to feel a strong connection with God and mankind. Individuals who dedicate their lives to serving others can help bring about good change in their communities and have a long-term influence on the lives of others around them.

In conclusion, making a sacred vow to serve God and His people holds immense theological implications. It signifies a genuine faith in a higher power as well as a commitment to a life of service and sacrifice. While this dedication may require obstacles and sacrifices, it has the ability to bring about development and fulfilment for both individuals and communities. Individuals can have a deep connection with God while serving others and contributing to constructive change in the world.





EMT. REV. DR. NIRMAL MINZ

*A Commitment of Life Dedication to
Truth, Justice and Education*



MS. SARAH AMENICA LAKRA

BD IV

Born on February 11, 1927–2021, into a simple Lutheran family in Arwaratoli, Gumla district, Jharkhand, Emt. Rev. Dr. Nirmal Minz's life journey unfolded as a remarkable tapestry of education, theological exploration, community service, and activism. Father, Abraham Minz, and Mother Parsadi Minz have eight siblings. He married Parakhata Khes of Barsatoli, Ranchi, and is blessed with four daughters. He was the first bishop of North Western Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church and the founder (an Adivasi theologian) of Gossner College (Degree College) in Ranchi, Jharkhand (Bihar).

Education:

In the face of financial hardship, Nirmal Minz emerged as the most educated among his siblings. Excelling in studies from the start, he navigated through Hindi-medium schooling, overcoming challenges. His determination led him to secure admission to high school after passing an ability test. From 1942 to 1946, he consistently achieved first division in every standard. His proficiency extended beyond academics as he learned English, enabling him to pass his matriculation with a first division.

Theological Education:

He was awarded a government scholarship, and Dr. Nirmal Minz pursued a Bachelor of Arts at Ranchi College, showcasing his prowess in mathematics and geography. In 1950, a job offers from the Bihar government prompted him to seek family advice. Opting for church service, he was sent for spiritual formation to Serampore College, a constituent college of the nation's first university, the Senate of Serampore College, where he studied from 1951–1953. Later, he pursued science studies at a research institute in Jabalpur and authored a research paper published in 1957. His theological journey continued in the U.S., earning an M.A. in theology at

St. Paul Lutheran Seminary in Minneapolis and later studying social science at the University of Minnesota.

Ph.D. and Academic Contributions:

Invited in 1962 to pursue a Ph.D. at the Lutheran World Federation, he completed it in 1967, focusing on 'Mahatma Gandhi and Hindu-Christian Dialogue.' Returning to India, he joined Gossner Seminary as a professor in November 1958. He is the founder of Gossner College Ranchi, a historic achievement with careful consideration for education through the establishment of Gossner College in 1971, emphasising the admission policy that prioritised the weakest and poorest students. During his tenure, he became the president of the North Western Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church (1972–73).

Works, Research, and Journeys:

Nirmal Minz's diverse contributions extended beyond academia. In 1996, during a trip to America, he authored 'Rise Up My People and Claim the Promise.' He wrote extensively, including translating the Bible into his mother tongue, Kudukh, a significant achievement for Kudukh Christians. He engaged in social and political activism, advocating for tribal identity, and he was a pivotal role model in the formation of Jharkhand State in 2000.

Contributions to Church, Community, and Tribal Society:

He played a pivotal role in the formation of the North Western Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church, served as its first bishop from 1980–1996, and contributed to the tribal awakening through his writings. His activism extended to participating in the Jharkhand Movement and representing Jharkhand at the United Nations in Geneva.



Small but Beautiful Achievements:

Nirmal Minz's impact extended to societal upliftment, including opening a college hostel for girls in 1960 and pioneering works such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Ranchi. His efforts in inter-church development led to the creation of "Vikas Maitri" in 1967, focusing on the socio-economic development of Jharkhand. In 2015, he got 'Bhasha Samman' by 'Sahitya Akademi' for his works in Kudukh.

Some of His Writings:

1957, A Christian Community in a Culture,
1957, The Messiah or the Prophet in Nativistic Movements,
1960, The Industrial Parish,
1961, Approach to Tribal Communities Today (with Dilbar Hans and B. M. Pugh),
1968, A Memorandum on the Adivasi Problems in the Central Tribal Belt of India and Their Permanent Solutions (with Joel Lakra),
1970, Mahatma Gandhi and Hindu-Christian Dialogue,
1997, Rise Up, My People, and Claim the Promise: The Gospel Among the Tribes of India,
1980: Transforming Effects of Christianity on the Tribals of Chotanagpur
1987, A Theological Interpretation of the Tribal Reality in India,
1994, Dalit-Tribal: A Search for a Common Ideology

Influential Figures and Legacy:

Throughout his life, Nirmal Minz was influenced by and collaborated with numerous individuals, including Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. M.M. Thomas, and local leaders. He acknowledged the support of family, teachers, and peers, expressing gratitude to those who contributed to the development of the Kudukh language and culture.

Message and Legacy:

In his parting words, Nirmal Minz bequeaths his autobiography, titled "The Struggle for Truth and Justice," to future generations. His life, dedicated to God, truth, and justice, stands as a testament to the enduring impact of a committed individual in shaping the narrative of his community and society.

Conclusion:

Through the lens of Dr. Nirmal Minz's inspiring life, the young generation is offered a profound lesson in commitment to service. His journey, beginning in a simple Lutheran family, unfolded into a tapestry rich with education, theological exploration, community service, and activism. From the challenges of Hindi-medium schooling to excelling in studies, His commitment to education, marked by pursuing higher studies despite tempting job offers, reflects a choice guided by a higher purpose. Choosing church service over a government job, he embarked on a theological journey that spanned continents. A significant contribution to the cultural and spiritual identity of Kudukh Christians. Advocating for tribal identity and epitomising the intertwining of intellectual pursuits with commitment highlights his dedication to the socio-economic upliftment of Jharkhand.

For me, Dr. Nirmal is always an inspiration, and I believe for the young generation, Dr. Nirmal Minz's life is a beacon, illuminating the path of commitment to service. Until now, the Church has celebrated his consecration day as 'Youth Day' of the Church. It underscores the idea that true service transcends personal gain and involves active participation in shaping the narrative of one's community and society. The enduring impact of an individual committed to God, truth, and justice serves as an inspiration for the young to engage with purpose, resilience, and a broader vision for the common good, and transformation happens in commitment to serve.



A Call for COMMITMENT TO SERVE



MR. ARUMAIRAJ

BD III

In this world, everyone has different kinds of commitments, and we are all trying to fulfil those commitments. Are you committed? This question indirectly has a hidden question, that is, do you love someone? So, we can't separate both love and commitment. If there is love, then definitely there is a commitment that follows. In John 3:16, we read that God loved the world, so automatically what follows is the commitment from God's side. Thus, to fulfil that commitment, God gave his only son. The same God says that we have to love our neighbours as ourselves. Do we love our neighbours? If our answer is yes, then automatically what follows is the commitment. That is our theme: A Call for Commitment to Serve.

Let us start with a question: What is the meaning of commitment? Commitment is a psychological state representing dedication and obligation to a particular cause, goal, or relationship. It involves a willingness to invest time, energy, and resources to achieve or maintain something significant. Commitment often implies loyalty, perseverance, and a sense of responsibility towards fulfilling one's promises or obligations.

In Luke 10:27, Jesus says, "You shall love ... your neighbour as yourself." Now we may have a question. Who is my neighbour? The same question was asked by the lawyer, who is speaking with Jesus in Luke 10:29. For that question, Jesus answered him by telling the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Neighbour in the sense of not being a neighbour with us. But who is the neighbour of the needy person? We all stay with many people near us, but how much distance do we keep when they are in need? Do we really love our neighbour's? So, the person who helps the one who is in need is a true neighbour.

In this parable of the Good Samaritan, for that injured person who travelled from Jerusalem to Jericho, the priest and Levite are neighbours by distance, neighbours by community, but they are not neighbours by their hearts and their actions. Both of them wanted to be called reverends, but not servants. They were very busy doing service in the temple and following the commandments. But they failed to do the service in society. They failed to address the issue that happened along the way. Commitment to serve is not only in the sense of serving God in the church but also to serve people in society, not only to the creator but also to the creation. Do we have that kind of commitment to serve?

Are we still searching for our neighbour to love or to serve? If we open our eyes and see, we can identify many neighbours in our society. They are waiting to be served. There are people who need to be served with their needs—physically, mentally, spiritually, financially, etc. Are we ready to commit ourselves to serving? That Samaritan was there with a serving heart. He committed himself to taking care of that injured person. No one instructed him; he himself took the initiative to serve by sacrificing his time, sacrificing his property, sacrificing his comforts, and sacrificing his money. In our commitment to serve, we also have to be ready to sacrifice our comforts or some things for the sake of others.

Matthew. 25:35–36, 40. 'Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome strangers, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit those in prison. Are we providing the above services? Let us examine ourselves. In recent days, these things have been going down day by day.



Jesus was not born in the palace to be served, but he was born in a manger to serve. He did not take the form of the king to be served, but he took the form of a slave to serve. In the same way, Jesus, while teaching his disciples in Matthew 20:26–28, says, “Whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; this is how a leader should be. Not only that, but he also showed the model of service by washing the feet of his disciples. Just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.” And also, he wants his followers to be like him as servants. Are we following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ? We are also preparing ourselves to be called reverends, but not servants.

There are many missionaries who have set an example of how they have committed themselves to serve in many ways. They were not only sharing the gospel and establishing churches, but they also built schools, hospitals, homes, etc.

They were providing service beyond their capacity. Even though they faced many struggles, they never gave up on their commitment to serve. They were always ready to serve. Those days, missionaries sacrificed their properties and comforts to purchase properties for churches, schools, colleges, hospitals, etc. because they were committed. However, now most church properties are being sold to acquire properties for personal gain. Where have we gone wrong in our commitment to serve? It is high time for us to reflect on our commitment to serve.

We faithfully participate in communion service as Jesus Christ instructed us, “do this in remembrance of me.” However, the same Jesus Christ also instructed us, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself,” and yet we have failed to fulfil this command.

As a called-out community, we are called to serve, so we should always have the commitment to serve God and society by loving them unconditionally, because where there is love, commitment is always there.





A CUP BEARER'S COMMITMENT TO RECONSTRUCT THE FALLEN AND RUINED WALLS OF JERUSALEM



MR. M. CHIRANJEEVI

BD III

Commitment is an action on our part in response to God. There is no point in talking about commitment unless we have at least the intention to commit. According to the Bible, commitment means making decisions in advance, regardless of the circumstances. It also means prioritising God and giving Him first place in one's life.

Committing oneself or one's spirit to God means to entrust oneself entirely to Him. Psalm 37:5 says, "Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act."

There are many who committed to God to serve him in the Bible.

Here is the man, Nehemiah, whose life is committed to rebuilding the fallen walls of Jerusalem, which are burned with fire and lie wasted.

Some 1,000 years after the time of Moses and some 400 years before the birth of Jesus, the nation of Israel and the Jewish people were in a desperate state. Their nations were destroyed, first the northern Jewish kingdom of Israel and then the southern Jewish kingdom of Judah. The city of Jerusalem was completely conquered by the Babylonians, and the once glorious temple of Solomon was destroyed. When the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem, they deported almost everyone from the city and the region. For some 70 years, Jerusalem was something of a ghost town, with the potential to end up like many ancient cities—completely forgotten except for history.

When the Jews were deported to Babylon, they began to make homes for themselves there. They settled down, and many still followed the God of their fathers, but they did it from Babylon, with no desire to return to the land God

had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Some of these faithful Jews were raised in places of prominence in the governments they were deported to. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego became leaders in Babylon; Esther was made queen in the courts of a Persian king. But after 70 years of captivity in Babylon, they were given the opportunity to return to their homeland, the Promised Land. Out of some two or three million Jews deported from the land, only 50,000 decided to return to the Promised Land. But they did return, and in the days of Ezra, they rebuilt the temple and laid a spiritual foundation for Israel once again.

Almost 100 years after the first captives came back to the Promised Land and 150 years after the city of Jerusalem was destroyed, after this long time, the walls of the city of Jerusalem were still in rubble. Before this, the citizens of Jerusalem had tried to rebuild the walls but had failed. In Ezra 4:6-23, we see those 75 years before, they tried to rebuild the walls but were stopped by their enemies. No one thought this obstacle could be overcome, so the walls lay in ruins and the people were still vulnerable.

So, when Nehemiah heard these words, the wall of Jerusalem was also broken down, and its gates were burned with fire. He sat down, wept, and mourned for many days, fasting and praying before the God of Heaven. This led to his commitment to rebuild the fallen gates of Jerusalem.

He used different phases to prove his commitment in order to rebuild the fallen gates.

1. **Assessment:** Nehemiah assessed the situation first based on reports from a distance and then based on a personal inspection. Once he got to Jerusalem, he conducted an in-person assessment. Nothing substitutes



for a face-to-face dialogue with a client or an in-person visit to a city. He went to Jerusalem, and after staying there for three days, he set out during the night with a few men to examine the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah was anything; it was realistic. He had faith-based pragmatism and was not deluded about the extent of the task. He quickly defined reality, but he did so through the lens of faith.

2. Preparations made: The abrupt appearance in this verse of the queen sitting beside the king may indicate that this conversation was a separate, more private occasion than the one described in 2:1–5. In any case, the king wanted to learn a few additional details about Nehemiah's plan. In particular, he wanted to know how long Nehemiah would be away and when he could expect Nehemiah to return to Susa. Nehemiah specified a time of return, a fact that underscores the careful planning he had done over the previous months. We aren't told the time of return in this verse, but we learn from 5:14 and 13:6 that Nehemiah spent 12 years in Jerusalem before returning to Susa. Constantly thinking ahead, Nehemiah sought to obtain written documents of authority that he knew he would need to travel safely through the outlying provinces and to complete his work in Jerusalem. History had already shown that non-Israelite groups around Judah would try to sabotage any attempts the Jews made to rebuild their covenant heritage (Ezra 4:11-23). Nehemiah anticipated that he too would encounter resistance from the enemies of God's people. Then Nehemiah requested a specific letter of authority from the official who had responsibility for the king's forest (likely the great cedar forests located in Lebanon, where prized timber was cut and sold all over the ancient world). The Jews under Zerubbabel had acquired timber from there to use in the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 3:7). Nehemiah wanted the timber for constructing the gates, stabilising the wall, and building his residence. The king granted all these requests. Yet Nehemiah, like Ezra, knew that neither he nor the king of Persia were the decisive players in the restoration of God's people. God was providentially at work, strengthening and using His willing servant, Nehemiah.

3. Rebuilding has begun. After arriving in Jerusalem and privately examining the conditions around the city (see 2:11–16), Nehemiah spoke to the citizens and challenged them to rebuild. He identified with them and

with the distress the city was experiencing. They needed the wall's physical protection for security. But it was the spiritual reality that distressed Nehemiah the most. The holy city was a disgrace. The crumbled wall was a reproach to the name of God, a matter of scorn and ridicule by Jerusalem's pagan neighbours. The honour of God's name was at stake. In his effort to rally the people, Nehemiah reminded them of God's providence, protection, and sufficiency. God's hand, symbolic of His guidance and action, was evident. The king's words of permission and authority came next. This was acknowledged in the right order. The people were encouraged and committed themselves to the task ahead. Nehemiah's leadership, the people's partnership, and God's authority inspired them to work.

In this way, he had succeeded in his commitment. May God find us dedicated to the work for which he has called us and to which he has commissioned us. May we be those who "see the welfare" of people near and dear to God's heart. And may God grant us the diligence of Nehemiah to constantly watch out for those aspects of commitment that have strayed out of alignment with God's best and the grace to quickly reconcile them to the ways and truths of God.





READY TO RUN AWAY OR READY TO WALK WITH THE LORD?

MR. ROJKUMAR

BD II

According to Mark 8:27-38, Jesus Christ travelled to Jerusalem to hand himself over. At that moment, he asked his disciples what the men said about him. They said that some say he is John the Baptist, some say he is Elijah, and for some, he is one of the prophets. Then Jesus Christ questioned his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?". This is a common tradition for "Rabbis" to ask this question to their disciples. To this, Peter replied, "You are Christ."

This is a great thing; even though people did not take him as "anointed," his disciple Peter took notice. Peter knew the opinion of the crowd. Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus complimented Peter, telling him that God revealed this to him. Later, 'Christ' predicts the crucifixion and resurrection he will go through with his disciples. Peter then rebuked Jesus. To that end, Jesus rebuked Peter with, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me." (Mark 8:34)

Carrying the cross means, we have to choose Christ over the worthless world with all our lives. Peter was with Christ for over three and a half years. He was the one who observed Jesus very closely. He was very close to Jesus, and he also witnessed his powers. But right after a few hours, this incident took place, and the Roman soldiers arrested Jesus. The government had taken the decision to crucify him. Peter then ran away from Jesus. He hid like a thief.

On the day Christ was being crucified, there were no disciples with him except John. Peter, who saw him as "anointed," was not there to console him, wipe his blood, carry his cross, quench his thirst, or even put his body in a grave.

To the ones who are reading this, when difficulties strike you, insults are thrown at you, and troubles make you miserable, do you have the experience of walking with Jesus? If not, are you with Jesus only when everything in life is cupcakes and rainbows, only when everything is comfortable and happy? And in the remaining time, are you growing distant from Him? Only those who struggle to the end are wanted by Him.

When the Lord was carrying the cross, when he was exhausted, Simon of Cyrus, who was not close to him, one who did not have any relation with Him, helped carry the cross. So, who is this, Simon? History tells us he is 'gentile' from North Africa. He came to witness the Passover in Jerusalem. When soldiers forced him to carry the cross, though he was initially resistant, he did help lessen Jesus' burden. Even though he did not benefit materially from this, he still cooperated.

Dear readers, in this world are many who are carrying their cross', some of poverty, sickness, family issues... Just as the Lord said, will you take up the cross and leave everything behind, have the hunger for righteousness, and give away your life for service? Or will you hold on to your comfort zone because you have a 'good' church and congregation? Prioritise worldly things, safeguard your well-being, and indulge in luxury living. The decision is yours.

My desire is that you stand with the Lord and receive eternal life. Your well-wisher.





COMMITMENT TO SERVE



MR. K. SHALMA PAUL

BD II

In today's world, as a human being, everyone has their own commitments. As I mentioned earlier, we are human beings. The basic needs of humans are food, shelter, and clothing. When we see the existence of a human being or the creation of humans, it has been done with a purpose. The purpose is designed by a creator, who is God alone. From the Bible in the book of Genesis, we will see that God made humans in His own image, which represents the qualities of God: love, kindness, peace, joy, etc.

God wants us to be His friends, but by our deeds, we lost that connection, and God wants to rebuild that connection, which was broken by the first humans, Adam and Eve, so to rebuild that connection, God by himself came to this world as a human being, as it was mentioned in John 1:1 NRSV. [1] In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [14] And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

So, commitment to serve is a fundamental tenet in Christianity, rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and exemplified by his life. The essence of Christian commitment to service lies in its selfless dedication to others, mirroring the love and compassion that Jesus embodied during his earthly ministry.

Central to the Christian faith is the concept of servant leadership, a paradigm that contrasts with worldly notions of power and authority. Jesus, as the ultimate example, declared, "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, NIV). This profound statement encapsulates the Christian ethos of sacrificial service.

Christian commitment to serve extends beyond mere acts of kindness; it encompasses a holistic approach to life that seeks to uplift others in various dimensions. The Bible encourages believers to love their neighbours as themselves (Mark 12:31, NIV), emphasising the interconnectedness of service, love, and commitment. This command implies a profound responsibility to actively engage in the well-being of others, embodying a commitment that goes beyond the superficial.

Furthermore, the New Testament frequently addresses the importance of using one's spiritual gifts for the benefit of the community. The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, illustrates the diversity of gifts within the body of Christ, emphasising the necessity of each member contributing to the collective welfare (1 Corinthians 12:12–27, NIV). This underscores the idea that commitment to service is not a solitary endeavour but a communal responsibility.

The Christian commitment to service also finds expression in charitable acts and social justice initiatives. Throughout history, Christian individuals and organisations have played pivotal roles in addressing societal injustices, caring for the marginalised, and championing the cause of the vulnerable. This commitment is deeply rooted in the biblical call to seek justice and show mercy (Micah 6:8, NIV).

In Christian theology, service is not a means of earning salvation but a response to the transformative love and grace experienced through faith. It is an outpouring of gratitude for the unmerited favour received from God. The Apostle James articulates this connection between faith and works, asserting that genuine faith naturally results in deeds of service (James 2:14–26, NIV).



Ultimately, the commitment to serve in Christianity is a reflection of the Christian's desire to emulate the selfless love of Christ. It involves a dedication to lifting others up, sharing the message of hope, and actively participating in the betterment of the world. Through a life of service, Christians embody the essence of their faith, fulfilling the biblical injunction to let their light shine before others so that they may see the good deeds and glorify their Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16, NIV).



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JESUS CHRIST: THE EXEMPLAR OF COMMITMENT TO SERVE



MR.K. RITCHIE JOHN SUMETH

BD I

Introduction

Jesus Christ the Author of Life, who showed the Love of the father by coming into this world as a Human like us, and lived like us except in the matter of Sin. In his life he himself set an example for "Commitment to serve," that we also to follow the Exemplar of our life to commit ourselves to Serve God and his People. This article deals with the life and ministry of Jesus Christ our Lord as an Example for "The Commitment to Serve."

1. Serving others as the True Commitment

"..... but whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all." Mark 10:44-45 when James and John asks Jesus to grant them to sit one at right and other at left with him in his glory, then Jesus asked them Will you able to do whatever I do (to drink the cup, and be Baptized like Jesus)? They said yes we are able, then Jesus also said it will be, but to sit with him is not in his hands but for the prepared one, then the other 10 were angry on them, so Jesus said to them in that way. Further he says that "for the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." Mark 10:45. This gives us the example that whoever wants to be the greatest, they must serve others and wants to be first, they have to be slaves of all. Even the Son of Man came to serve but not to be served. This means we have to commit ourselves to serve, and then the Lord who called us to serve will exalt us. This is the true commitment.

2. Being Compassionate towards Others as the True Commitment

"As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things," Mark 6:34. When the disciples came from the mission and they met Jesus, from there they were going to

a deserted place many people saw him and from all the surrounding towns, they went ahead of them, there when Jesus saw them he had compassion for them, he found that they were like sheep without a shepherd, means they were longing for the word of God which comforts them, so Jesus began to teach them. Even in Mark 1:40-45, in his Galilean Ministry a leper came and asks Jesus, "if you choose, you can make me clean," then Jesus moved with compassion and healed him, and he became clean. This shows that Jesus had compassion towards people, which comes through commitment, when we commitment ourselves to serve, we must be compassionate towards others, so, by our words and deeds we have to heal others. This is the true Commitment.

3. Loving our Neighbour as the True Commitment

".....You shall love your neighbour as yourself" Matthew 22:39. A neighbour can be anyone, that doesn't mean that he/she who is next to the door, but it means that it can be anyone, like in Luke 10: 25-37, where a lawyer asked questions to Jesus, when he asked "who is my neighbour?" he tells the parable of the (Good) Samaritan, who helped a man while he was passing by. The Samaritan helped the injured man and medicated him and took him to an inn and took care of him. But the other two who are the Priest and a Levite didn't helped the man, then who is the true neighbour?, the Samaritan. Because in distress of that man he helped, this is what the commitment is, even though the man was an unknown person but as a neighbour he showed his love.



. So, if we are committed to serve we must love our neighbours first. This is the true Commitment.

4. Humbleness as the True Commitment

“So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, and so you should do as I have done to you.” John 13:14-15. Before the Festival of the Pass-over, Jesus and his Disciples met together and there he already knew that his time has already come to depart from the world, so he loved his who were with him and they gathered for the Last Supper. There in that supper Jesus got up from the table and prepared himself to wash the feet of his disciples and they were amazed of what Jesus was doing. This work is casually done by servants to their masters, but here we found that the Master is washing the feet of his disciples. This signifies that Jesus humbled himself to the lowest level of a servant. Feet washing is not easy as it looks like. And Feet washing doesn’t mean to do the same how Jesus did, However it signifies that we must commit ourselves to be humble to the level of how much we can reach, just like how St. Theresa of Calcutta (Mother Theresa) did in her life time by serving the Lepers in Kolkata, So by committing ourselves to be Humbled this is what the true Commitment is.

5. Sacrifice as the True Commitment

When we look in the last days of Jesus on Earth, we come to see his Crucifixion, where the greatest aspects in human history took place. We learn that the sacrifice that Jesus did for all humans us unimaginable.

“He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.” Philippians 2:8. This we come to know that Jesus Christ the Son of God humbled himself and became obedient to the death signifies that he was committed to do, not by force to death, but the true commitment which he showed on the cross. That commitment changed the life of the people, through the cross we got salvation, through resurrection a new hope in life, this is all because of one commitment to serve that renewed many lives. This tells that sacrifice is what the true Commitment is.

Conclusion

Finally we come to know that the true Commitment to serve is by serving others, being Compassionate towards others, loving our Neighbours, being humbled, and becoming a living sacrifice. This we learnt from Jesus Christ our Lord who is Exemplar of our lives, showing that he is also the Exemplar of “the Commitment to Serve.” Let us commit ourselves to Serve God and his People in fullness of Commitment like how our Lord Jesus taught us to do. Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

**FOR EVEN THE SON OF MAN
DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED,
BUT TO SERVE,
AND TO GIVE HIS LIFE A RANSOM FOR MANY.
MARK 10:45**



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE COMMITTED TO SERVE?



MR. Y. RITCHIE JOSHUA

BD I

History tells of many heroes and sheros, people just like everyone else who spent their whole lives to bring changes in the society, some who even gave away their lives for. They go down in history for ages to come. They will forever be remembered for their works, the changes they fought for. Their contributions and service remain forever too.

I questioned myself, why? Why waste away their precious lives? Why did they serve others? Why not live carefree enjoying their own lives like others? Malala Yousafzai who was shot by the Taliban for advocating for girls' education, became the youngest Nobel laureate at age 17. She continues to fight for the right to education for all children, especially girls, around the world. Nelson Mandela, the first black president of South Africa was imprisoned for 27 years for his fight against apartheid. Mother Teresa dedicated her life to serve lepers. Apart from these well known personalities, if we look around ourselves, we are sure to find such people fighting for justice, serving the people, working for the welfare of others.

Why should We Serve?

We find many characters in the Bible who also gave away their lives to serve the people. Moses was a good leader, David was brave, Joseph had gift of interpretation, Solomon had wisdom, Deborah was gifted with leadership and discernment. They used their gifts and skills to serve the people which equals serving God. Jesus affirms in Matthew 25:40, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

The question "Why should we serve?" is answered by our own existence, "why do you exist?", "why are you given this body, mind and soul?". To Love and Worship God for it is the greatest commandment and to reflect God's image by imitating God's character through qualities like love, compassion, creativity and service. "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

Everyone can use whatever skills they have to serve God, and in case if anyone believes they lack special traits, Ruth served God through her commitment to her mother-in-law, and embraced the God of Israel. Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak started Apple in their garage with commitment which now grew to be one of the leading smartphone manufacturers, 2 Chronicles 16:9 therefore says "For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him."

What is Stopping Us?

Even after seeing many such great personalities fighting for various causes, why are we still idle? Why are we still selfish? Knowing something wrong is happening right in front of us, we don't respond to it because we are social beings, we care about what the society thinks about us. We fear that if we ask for a change, the society excludes us. Even if we stand for something, others might try to trample us only because they don't want the change.

As much as they are beautiful, humans are also disgusting and terrifying. I remember when my biology teacher when explaining the human anatomy said, "Humans are terrifying than Ghosts since ghosts have only spirit, but humans have both spirit and body."



Nehemiah faced opposition and discouragement while rebuilding the Jerusalem's walls, Daniel continued worshipping God despite people around him worshiped the King. Jesus himself was mocked, insulted, not just by the people but also by his own family, but they all showed unwavering commitment to their work assigned by God.

Society expects us to be just as we are, maybe more like how it wants us to be. One of my favourite novel character says, "We all have a personal image that is dictated by others, it is always off the mark. We wish to remain true to ourselves, But who gets to decide who we are as people." All the well-known personalities we know who fought for a change actually fought against the system, the society.

And as we stand for a good cause, we will definitely go through failures, they might be sour pills, but they help towards our development. Let us overcome our fears, be unique, fight for a cause and light the way for others just like Jesus did.

Lastly, I would like to give a big shout-out to all my teachers, non-teaching staff and all the students who are contributing towards the betterment of our college.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." – 1 Peter 4:10



EVANGELISM AS I UNDERSTOOD!

Rev. Bontha Moses Sudheer

(Spiritual and Legal Adviser of Madhira Field Association of Telugu Baptist Churches)

We do believe that Evangelism is a continuous process usually originates in the individuals, as a result of the Holy Spirit's spur (Jn.16:8, Rom, 2:4) amidst the personal or corporate needs or problems and culminates in the act of replacement of the deceitful heart (Jeremiah.17:9) by the mind of Christ (Philippi.2:5-11, 1 Peter.4:1). In this process the believers repent, accept and commit themselves to Jesus Christ, who by His grace justifies the ungodly that trust him even without meritorious works (Rom.4:5).

The process of Evangelism further helps the individuals to grow into the image of Jesus Christ (Gal.4:19) by hearing and proclaiming, observing and manifesting His sacrificial love exhibited on the cross at Calvary and His promise of heaven (Jn.14:3), His compassionate love for the meek and His holy anger against the hypocrites by the way of thought, word and deed, relevant to the current age with scriptural foundation. In this process of Evangelism, the individuals never cease to participate in the fellowship of the believers (Koinonia, Heb.10:24) which is the vanguard of the Kingdom of God.

By God's grace every true believer will certainly reach the last phase of the process of Evangelism i. e, without ceasing to participate in the fellowship of believers. Such believers are exhorted by the word of God to spur one another on towards love and good deeds (Heb. 10:24, 25). There is no fellowship without love. There may be sharing without love but there is no love without sharing. There is no sharing without pain and struggle. That means there is no fellowship without pain and struggle. A true believer alone can share with his neighbour who is in need, because he trusts that his redeemer lives, (Job.19:25) and believes that his redeemer is able to lead him to safety. He rejoices whenever he happened to undergo suffering unto death, because he firmly believes

that he will see God in the flesh even after his skin has been destroyed. Since God raised Jesus from the dead, He will also raise us by His might (1 Cor.6:14). He will never fear scarcity. His watch word will be, 'thy need is yet greater than mine'. The incident of a poor widow and her son of the village Zarephath during the days of famine will be an appropriate example to understand this (1 Kings.17: 8ff. RSV). When Elijah the prophet asked that woman to bring a little cake to him first, she did not grumble but had brought accordingly even though there was only a hand full of meal in a jar and a little oil in a cruise. When the prophet asked her for a little cake, she might have brought it for the prophet thinking that whether they take their last meal or not they were going to die. She also might have thought that his need was greater than their need. Hence, she could share meal with Elijah. Realising that we are mortals and believe that even if we throw our food on the waters in the name of our Lord it will be returned to us in the day of need (Ecc.11:1), prepares our minds to share our little resources with others. Had the young rich ruler thought in this way about whom it was mentioned in St. Luke's gospel (18:23, 24), he would have shared his possessions with the poor and needy as advised by our Lord Jesus Christ. True love never seeks personal benefit (1 Cor.13:5; 1 Jn.3:17).

The pain and struggle that arise in the life of a believer out of voluntary sharing with the poor and needy people of the society, will be like a weapon to protect himself and his fellow people from the dangers and temptations emanated from the present violence stricken, selfish and consumerist society (1 Peter 4:1).

No idea of exploitation or domination is permissible into the heart of a true believer because his heart was already occupied with God who is love – a love that knows only "sacrificial giving and thankful receiving" (Philipp.2:7,

Heb.6:10). When Zachaeus received Jesus Christ joyfully and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully extracted ought of any man, I restore fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, today is salvation come to this house, for as much as he also is a son of Abraham." (Luke.19:10, ASV). Through his faith, repentance and commitment Zachaeus was given the privilege of becoming the son of Abraham. So, a true heir of Abraham is the one who receives Jesus into his/her heart joyfully, confesses his/her sins and takes a decision of sharing the possession with the poor, intelligently. That means this donation should not make the beneficiaries lazy and dependents, but should make them creative workers.

Because,
A true Christian is a hard-working person, (II Thessalonians.3:10);
A well-planned hard work yields profitable production (returns);
A well managed surplus helps to strengthen the administration of the organization;
A healthy organization is an instrument of God for the expansion of His peaceful and just kingdom on this earth, where the privileges and responsibilities are disbursed equitably with love and understanding among all the members who are gripped by the sacrificial love and the resurrection power of Jesus Christ.

As William Temple observed,
"Church is the only Co-operative society that exists for the benefit of non members."



BEST WISHES FROM

REV. P. SOLOMON RAJU & FAMILY

(FOUNDER & PRESIDENT, EL-SHADDAI CHURCH MINISTRIES, CHALLAPALLI, AP)

COMMITMENT TO SERVE

- REV. J. JAWAHAR WILSON ASIR DAVID

We live in an age where commitment is deteriorating. A commitment usually takes much of your time because of an agreement you have made or because of the responsibilities that you have. It is the unwavering promise you make to yourself or others, expecting nothing in return. Divorce rates are increasing as many are not committed to their partners. Many switch jobs very often because they are not committed to their jobs. Even commitment to the church is waning. Only a person committed to God can be committed to one's surroundings; God requires wholehearted commitment. Prioritize commitment in life. Everyone is gifted with a commitment to serve. Many are entrusted with one or more gifts, and one has to find out what it is, polish it, develop it, and use it for His glory. God gives gifts only to serve others. As it is said in Ece. 9:10, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might. We need not wait for a golden opportunity to serve. It is time to stop staring at the steps and start steadily stepping up the stairs. Make a commitment to serve society and start where you are. As Peter 10 says, If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides." Don't look at your imperfections. Instead of faithfully analysing what God wants you to do, seek the Lord and Determine to serve. Start doing small things with great love. God wants us to perform our responsibility and serve Him by serving others with integrity, frankness, and respect. Whatever service you do, do it. Remembering that Christ is the master. Serving God and others should not come out of compulsion or pressure but out of gladness and joy. Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of Christ" (I Corinthians 10:31). We are called to serve God by serving others. Those who serve Cred will be rewarded generously and graciously. Our service should be Christ-like, like in our actions and in our commitment to service, I must be committed to serving as Christ did, and I must be committed to serving as long as we have breath in us.

SINCE
1974



PRASE THE LORD

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Ingredients:
Peanut, Jaggery, Liquid Glucose



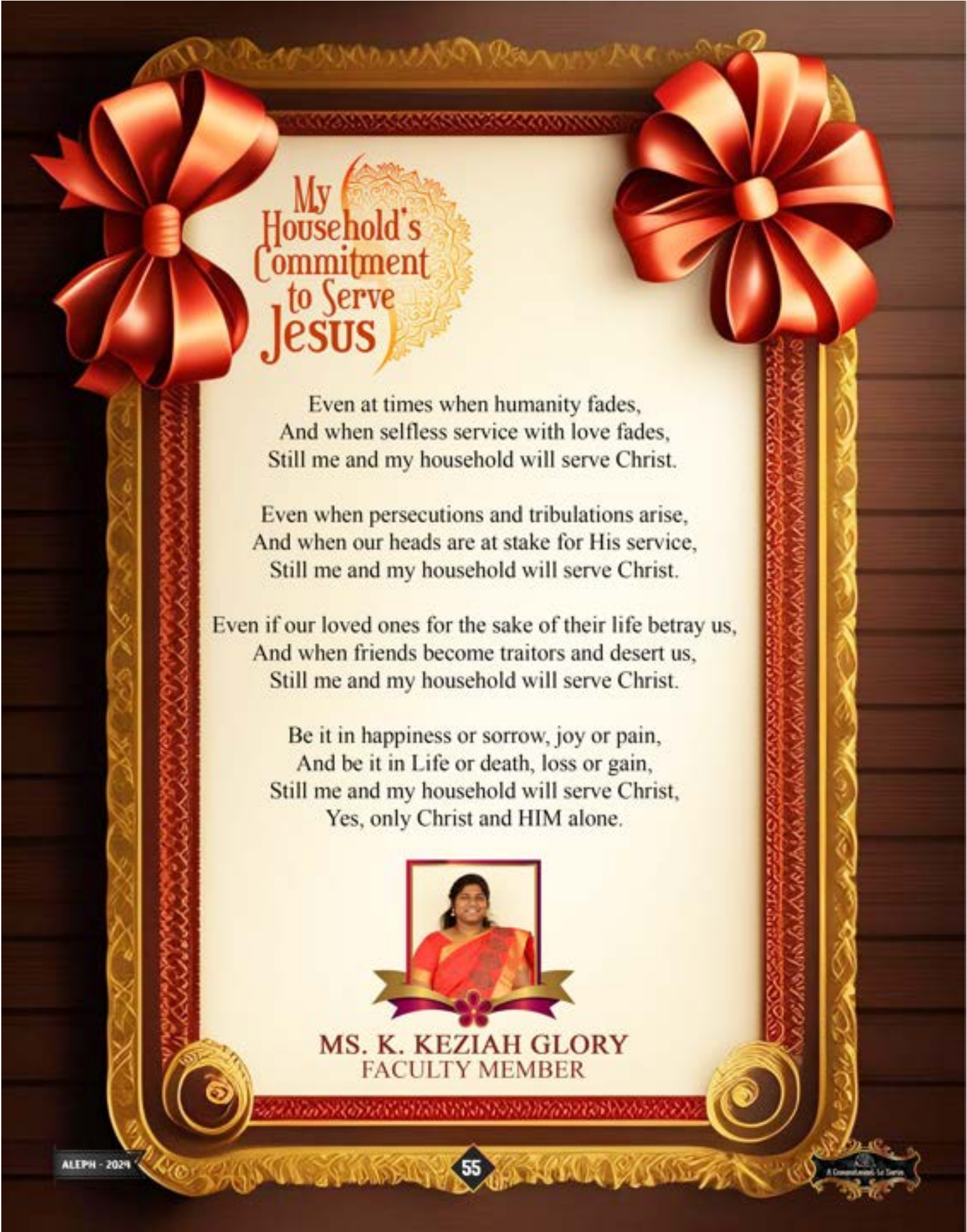
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குடிசைத் தொழில்



My Household's Commitment to Serve Jesus

Even at times when humanity fades,
And when selfless service with love fades,
Still me and my household will serve Christ.

Even when persecutions and tribulations arise,
And when our heads are at stake for His service,
Still me and my household will serve Christ.

Even if our loved ones for the sake of their life betray us,
And when friends become traitors and desert us,
Still me and my household will serve Christ.

Be it in happiness or sorrow, joy or pain,
And be it in Life or death, loss or gain,
Still me and my household will serve Christ,
Yes, only Christ and HIM alone.



MS. K. KEZIAH GLORY
FACULTY MEMBER

**"THE DIVINE SERVICE:
AN ODE TO FAITH AND COMPASSION"**

In service to God and His people's need,
A commitment strong, with fervour we lead.
With every breath, with every heartbeat,
We dedicate ourselves, in service complete.

Like a flickering candle, burning bright,
Guiding lost souls through the darkest night.
Through valleys deep and mountains high,
We offer comfort, as angels in the sky.

With steadfast love, we lend a helping hand,
To heal the broken, to help them understand.
In every act, we seek to spread His grace,
A reflection of God's love, in every embrace.

For in this commitment, we find our peace,
As we serve the Lord, our souls find release.
In serving others, we serve our God above,
A testament of faith, devotion and love.



MS. LIBNA MATHEW
BD IV

**MY CHALLENGING
COMMITMENT TO SERVE**

In the realm of service, challenges arise,
Commitment tested, under demanding skies.
A path with obstacles, strewn in my way,
Yet, I press on, with resolve each day.

The call to serve echoes, a noble quest,
But doubts and struggles put me to the test.
Through uncertainties and shadows deep,
I find the strength within, my promise to keep.

Amidst the trials, a flame still burns,
A commitment unwavering, the lesson learns.
Service is not easy, yet it's my creed,
For in dedication, my purpose takes seed.

So, let the challenges come, I'll endure,
With steadfast commitment, my spirit pure.
In serving others, a journey unfolds,
A tale of resilience, as my story molds.



MS. SARAH AMENICA LAKRA
BD IV

A Hymn to our Alma Mater

No lush green lawns nor manicured gardens
But the Sun sees nothing finer in his course
Than this temple of learning
On the plains of plenitude of Guntur
In the serene ambience on the fringe
Of a premier city of pristine glory.
A hoary and grungy place once
Where many moons ago
Stray beasts and ferocious creatures
Lied in thorns and thistles.
Now blossomed beyond recognition
Into full glory with meteoric rise
To be the beauty of Indian pride.
Hail, our spiritual patriarchs
Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose
A royal diadem of the pedigree of Perumallapalli
And Scot Norling of America Esquire
Quintessential visionaries of high order
Forget not, their gargantuan tasks
Through whose groans and labours
With birth pangs emerged this Alma-Mater.

This bower of covetous gnosis
Takes one back to the times
Making one's life's moment a treasured one
How blessed are the postulants of this Hall of ivy
For the stream of wisdom they pant
To soak their parched throats
In the gracious presence of
Bloomsbury group of dons
The first waters of the senate of Serampore College
Glorious chapters of selfless service
Who battle every moment
To spread smiles in novices
Under the support and solidarity of
God-sent and spirit-controlled
Head honcho of priestly descent
Selvam Robertson and his dream team.
With their exemplary devotion to duty
Surmounting the summit of success is sure
By recording reverberating victories.

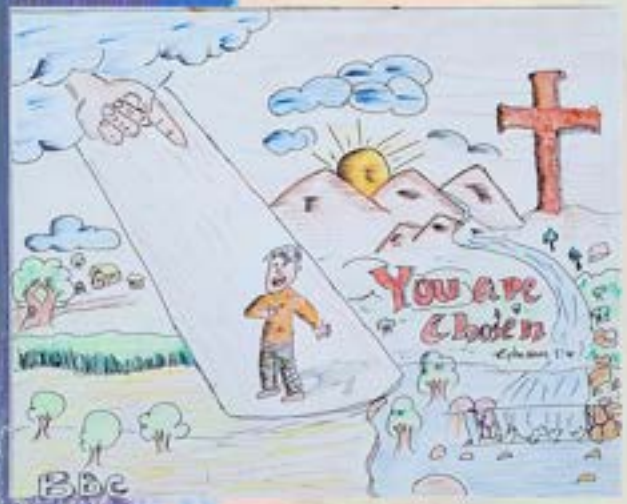


MR. MATTHEW BHASKAR
B.D. IV

Art Work



MS. M.HENA JANCY MARY
BD IV



MR. LINGALA SRUJAN
BD O



MR. KOLAGANI SHALMA PAUL
BD II

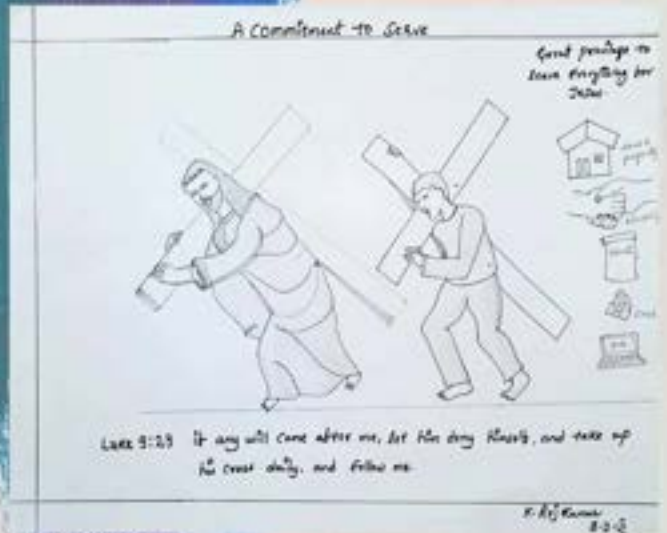


MR. MURPHY HRAM BAWI
BD I

Art Work



MR. JERICO S SANGMA
BD III



MR. KANDULA ROJ KUMAR
BD II



MR. SIMSON J
BD II



MR. DEVARAPALLI JOHN PAUL
BD O

Art Work

Panel 1: A cross symbol with a thought bubble: "What is that?"

Panel 2: A man walking with a thought bubble: "That is empty as soon as the stone is rolled away..."

Panel 3: A church scene with a thought bubble: "I need to be here..."

Panel 4: A man walking with a thought bubble: "I need to be here as soon as you are..."

Panel 5: Two men talking, one says: "I believe in you..."

Panel 6: A man sitting with a dog, thought bubble: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 7: Two men talking, one says: "Thank you for everything..."

Panel 8: Two men talking, one says: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 9: A man sitting at a desk, thought bubble: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 10: A man sitting at a desk, thought bubble: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 11: Two men talking, one says: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 12: Two men talking, one says: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 13: A man sitting at a desk, thought bubble: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 14: A man sitting at a desk, thought bubble: "I am the only one who can help you..."

Panel 15: Text: "Therefore I CAN COMMIT TO THE LORD WHATEVER YOU DO, AND YOUR PLANS WILL SUCCEED COMMITMENT TO SERVE"



MR. KOLAGANI SHALMA PAUL
BD II

MR. YERRAM RITCHIE JOSHUA
BD I



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What is the reason for your selfless service?

Non-Teaching STAFF

What is the reason for your selfless service?

TEACHERS

What is the reason for your selfless service?

We Are Committed to Serve

Grimpers of Devotion Committed Hearts of Bethel Bible College

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61



BD - ORIENTATION



BD - FIRST YEAR



BD - SECOND YEAR



BD - THIRD YEAR



BD - FINAL YEAR



CLASS REPRESENTATIVES





BD - FINAL YEAR



**AKRAMKOTI
IMMANUEL**



AUCHINGKUMLA C



**FRINCIBARTH T
SANGMA**



**GANTA GEORGE
OWKER**



GIFTSON J



**GUDISE
DEVANAND**



H.C. BEIKHOCHAI



IMMANUEL BENI A



KT BEISOKHAI



LIBNA MATTHEW



M BHASKAR



NAMADI WALTON



**PUTTA ISAAC
WOODNEY**



**RAGAM RAJESH
KUMAR**



S LAITUA



**SARAH AMENICA
LAKRA**



SIMSON RAJA J



SOLOMON S



ST LALRINHLUA



**V. TIMOTHY
LALREMRUATA**





**ANANDA RAO
MUKKALA**



**B JACOB
BYHNAPIERONA**



**BEIRATHIE
CHOZAH**



BIKI NARZARY



**DASARI
YESURATNAM**



**GOLDWIN
JEBARA J A**



**HENA JANCY
MARY M**



**JACKSON DURAI
RAJ E**



KIRUBASING K



**LORDSON
SAMUEL M**



NANDRU MAHESH



**PULUKURI
CHAITANYA KUMAR**



RABEEN SINGH J



RANJAY NARZARY



SUNDERSINGH S



YACOB PRAVEEN N



**INDUPALLI
KARUNANDHI**



**MATHEW BHASKAR
TALLURI**



**SULOCHANA
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**SUNIL KUMAR
KUNCHAKARA**



YESUDASU RAGI

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BBC
EVENTS





INAUGURAL Service





Seminars





RENOVATION OF Dining hall





BBC
Alumni meet





Freshers





Day



(ALECC)





RELEASE OF
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Independence DAY





Literary





Day





Cultural





Night





NATIONAL
Bible Fair





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2ND MEMORIAL SERVICE





Teachers'





Day





College





Sports Day





Concurrent Practical





Work





Concurrent Practical





Work





Practical
EXPOSURE





TO Siliguri





Christmas CAROLS





CHRISTMAS
Gift Exchange





★ Christmas ★
 ★ FELLOWSHIP ★





Rev. Dr. Scott's
FAMILY VISIT





Republic DAY





Women's DAY






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ONE DAY SEMINAR
 on
Ecological Sensitivity during Religious Festivals:
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Ecological





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Farewell





Farewell





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కోర్సుల వివరములు:



డిప్లొమా ఇన్ క్రిస్టియన్ ఎడ్యుకేషన్ (Dip.C.E.)

1 సంవత్సరము, అర్హత: ఇంటర్మీడియట్

డిప్లొమా ఇన్ కాన్సెక్యూయల్ థియాలజీస్ (Dip.C.T.)

1 సంవత్సరము, అర్హత: ఇంటర్మీడియట్

డిప్లొమా ఇన్ క్రిస్టియన్ సైడీస్ (Dip.C.S.)

2 సంవత్సరములు, అర్హత: ఇంటర్మీడియట్

బ్యాచులర్ ఆఫ్ క్రిస్టియన్ సైడీస్ (B.C.S.)

4 సంవత్సరములు, అర్హత: ఏదైనా డిగ్రీ

మాస్టర్ ఆఫ్ క్రిస్టియన్ సైడీస్ (M.C.S.)

3 సంవత్సరములు, అర్హత: బి.డి./బ్యాచులర్ ఆఫ్ క్రిస్టియన్ సైడీస్

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వారి జీవితాలను విజయాలకు విలయాలుగా మారుస్తాం

అత్యున్నత శ్రేణి విద్యాబోధనతో అద్భుతమైన ఫలితాలు సాధిస్తున్న మా విద్యార్థులు

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Dr. Leela Chandra Bose
M.Sc., B.C.S., D.O.
Director

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Rev. Dr. P.N.S. Chandra Bose
Founder - President
Gospel Mission of India
Bethel Bible College



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