

Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a
steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10



Kirkspire

The Monthly Magazine of St. Andrew's Church (The Kirk), Chennai
May - June 2024

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Editorial Board :

Usha George
Chitra Bennett

Word from the Pastor



Ready to Receive

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Imagine the scenario wherein the person whom you admire greatly has words of appreciation for you. What are the odds that a simple action of yours is considered so noteworthy because it is exceptional before God? That is exactly what is mentioned in Matthew 8:8. The well known story of the Centurion brings out this wonderful truth of a man who was prepared to receive. He came with one purpose and one purpose only. He was not there to showcase his standing before Jesus or to get the applause of the crowd. He got more than what he could have asked for. Jesus was willing to go to his house and heal the servant but he was quick to tell Jesus of the power of the Master who was far greater than any other powerful leader. In essence, the Centurion acknowledged three things about Jesus that made him receive the healing for his servant and so much more.

Jesus is Master of all - The Centurion knew to whom he was coming and he came with total humility and surrender.

Jesus can make and create with His words - The Centurion knew that Jesus had the power to speak healing into reality.

Jesus is worthy of worship - The Centurion knew that Jesus was not a teacher but God in flesh, something that many Jews, then & now, failed to acknowledge.

His expression of faith was not an act of physical prowess or flashy show of money, fame or power. The Centurion expressed faith and

Jesus was so overwhelmed with his faith that He made a remarkable statement that put all the Jews including his own disciples to shame. Matthew 8:10 records those powerful words of Jesus saying "When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!" For a moment, think about this whole scenario from the point of view of Jesus. He was ministering to the people of Israel and He would have longed to hear this words from the Jews but Jesus heard this declaration of faith from a 'heathen'. Jesus awarded him with an honour far greater than the healing. The Centurion (for his faith) was honoured publicly.

If you want to receive from God, think carefully about your thoughts, your words (in desperation) and approach to the throne of grace. Our God is waiting to give good gifts to all mankind but many don't receive because they go to God on their terms. Be ready to receive from the Master for He is ready to bestow.

Have a blessed month of June

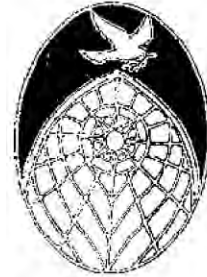
Blessings

Rev. Isaac Johnson

You may not be looking for the wealth, but Christ is looking for His lost coin.

Dr. Alexander Maclaren

John's Corner



OH MY GOD!

Our Father ... Hallowed be Thy name: The Lord's Prayer
(Read Exodus 20:7, Leviticus 19:12, Proverbs 22:4)

It's terribly annoying, Lord,
When Christians take Your name in vain;
Like arrows piercing through the soul,
It gives me sorrow and great pain.

Teach us to reverence Your name,
And give You all the honour due,
The third commandment never break,
And make a mockery of You.

May we serve You with godly fear,
True love and deep humility,
Remember though Your grace abounds,
You won't tolerate mockery.

John H. Bala Singh

Do you expect that religion is so cheap that without giving time you can find close fellowship with God? You cannot; this pearl is worth everything.

Andrew Murray

He cares for me

During our Friendship Club meeting on June 8, 2023, we sang a hymn called "God Who Made the Earth". Each verse ended with "He cares for me." The God who created the universe, who sent Christ into the world, who governs things by the providence of His wisdom. He cares for me. Those words took on a whole new meaning for me over the next six months.

June 12, 2023, started like any other day. My husband and I went to the bank, where a misstep resulted in a fracture. As I left the bank in a wheelchair, a security guard remarked on the sudden change in my circumstances. My life shifted in an instant, leading to a six-month journey confined to bed. Surgery on June 23, 2023, involved implanting two plates and eleven screws to mend my fractured bones. Physiotherapy commenced immediately and continued thereafter.

God is with us even in our moments of folly. I was always told, "Don't talk when climbing up and down stairs; hold on to railings, if provided, especially as you are a senior citizen". (There were no railings in the place where I fell as it had just two steps!) Despite my folly, God's watchful eye and unfailing care was there for me.

My family proved to be the greatest blessing during this ordeal. Their unwavering support made me realize the depth of the covenant promises made at our wedding, "for better or for worse". From pre- to post-surgery, the children in the family (extended ones included) ensured I was well cared for. God also provided assistance on the home front and a dedicated physiotherapist. Indeed, God cared for me and my family.

The church family served as God's provision for both physical and spiritual needs. Visits from church friends and fellow believers, who prayed, brought gifts, and even prepared meals, touched my heart. Their acts of kindness echoed Jesus' words in Matthew 25, and I felt humbled for not having done the same.

During hospital visits, I often travelled by ambulance, eyes closed in prayer. Once, I glimpsed the "Star of Life," a symbol featuring a blue six-pointed star with a Rod of Asclepius in the centre, symbolizing medicine. This reminded me of the Israelites' salvation by looking at the bronze snake in Numbers 21 and Jesus' reference to it in John 3.14-15. It prompted me to confess my moments of grumbling and seek forgiveness, as God cared to sanctify me.

My foot's recovery followed the textbook trajectory, surprising the doctors. After six weeks, I was instructed to walk with the aid of a physiotherapist. With God's strength, I progressed from using a walker to walking unaided in six months. All praise to God, who cares for me.

Physically and spiritually, God demonstrated His care for me. Through this experience, I rediscovered the strength, wisdom, and goodness of God, who shouldered my burdens and cared for me. What God has done for me He will do for you.

Sujatha Prasad

Know Your Law

Ignorantia Facti Excusat and Ignorantia Juris Non Excusat

This Latin Legal Maxim means that Ignorance of a fact is an excuse whereas Ignorance of Law is not an excuse. It is applicable to civil as well as criminal jurisprudence.

Ignorance of Fact: If someone accidentally takes something from a store without paying because they thought it was free, they might not be charged with theft because they didn't know they were supposed to pay for it.

Ignorance of Law: You cannot say you did not pay your tax (income) because you did not know that you come under the tax bracket!

Ignorance of Law: A classic example is found in Leviticus 5:17 "If anyone sins and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commands, even though they do not know it, they are guilty and will be held responsible."

The 'two drachma temple tax' Matthew 17:24 -26 and 'the Imperial Tax' Mark 12: 13 – 17 are two instances where the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus into saying that keeping the local laws were not important but Jesus answered them wisely.

Jesus also said that He did not come to abolish the Law (God's) but to fulfill it and set a higher standard of Law regarding Anger, Adultery and Divorce – Matthew 5: 17 to 31.

Joshua Chelliah

Stir

'And there is no one who calls on Your name, who stirs himself up to take hold of You...'Isaiah, 64, :7

Stir: to move continuously or repeatedly, to shake, agitate, instigate, rouse or provoke

The gravy simmers as the appetizing aroma of blended spice with meat fills the room.
A rich gravy (apparently) involves more frequent stirs, active watchfulness & work.
Failure to do so results in burnt pans & choosing an alternate course for dinner.

Beginners like me learn it the hard way.
That the investment in the end matters as much as the beginning.
For after the hard work of chopping & grinding the temptation to relax or do some other task is alluring.
More so, when the texture & smell in the interim assure a good outcome.
However this is short lived if focus shifts or a mother's recipe is not followed to the letter.

Father, haven't I done the same?
After embracing salvation & initial sanctification I have been content with status quo.
I expect You to do everything for me and never ask what I can do for You.
Satisfied with receiving
I no longer lovingly give.

Forgive this selfishness that has led to drawn boundaries.
Because it is either all the way or no way with You and half measures won't do.

So when passion is lacking & the thrill of worship ebbs help me do what pleases You when emotions lag behind.

Gentle Spirit, prompt this soul that is prone to live by feelings

to live by factual faith.
As I stir myself to take hold of You*
& all that You have called me to
may this life become a beautiful aroma.
Like gravy.
Stirring the hunger of all
who inhale it.
For You.

"...people are often worried. They are told they ought to love God. They cannot find any such feeling in themselves. What are they to do? The answer is the same as before. Act as if you did. Do not sit trying to manufacture feelings. Ask yourself, "If I were sure that I loved God, what would I do?" When you have found the answer, go and do it." - C.S.Lewis

*Reading suggestion: Celebration of Discipline by Richard J.Foster

Dr. Susan Rajkumari

NO ONE CAN STOP THE ARRIVAL OF SPRING...

You may pluck and throw away the flowers,
You may crush and crumple its sepals;
You may chop off the branches ruthlessly,
Or trample upon its leaves in madness;
You may even plot to dig up the roots
in the dark or when no one's looking;
But dear friend, my dearly beloved:
"No one can stop the Arrival of Spring!"

The times and the seasons only He changes;
He removes the kings, raises up the rulers;
He gives knowledge to those having understanding,
He knows what is in the darkness,
He reveals deep and secret things,
For light dwells in Him;
Wisdom and Might are His: *
"No one can stop the Arrival of Spring!"

*Quoted from Daniel 2:20-22

B V Selvaraj

St. Andrew's Church - Tamil KSBS 2024

Tamil KSBS was held at ASHA, RMDCC and St. Mark's school, Periamet during April 22 to April 29, 2024. A total of 136 children attended the KSBS and we had 13 teachers and 8 volunteers. Six Volunteers from BCM (Bible Club Movement) and three volunteers from Swamidasapuram served as teachers.

The day began with teachers and volunteers devotion. The devotion for ASHA and RMDCC teachers was led by Mrs. Rani Joseph on the life of Moses. At St. Mark's, teachers handled the devotion themselves by sharing the Word and prayer requests. This was a great blessing personally to all and was an encouragement to share the Bible truths with the children.

The Theme of KSBS was 'OVERCOMERS'. The children learnt how to overcome self-doubt, self-pity, rebellion, anger and temptation through the Bible characters like Elijah, Samson, Moses and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego respectively.

Mrs. Sujatha Prasad explained these truths every morning using power point presentations for RMDCC and ASHA children during the General Session. During this session the children learnt these truths, new songs and memory verses with great joy and enthusiasm. During their class time they enthusiastically dressed-up as Bible characters and enacted the stories with great interest. St. Mark's children also learnt the same truths at their level by searching the Scripture and through skits and craft work.

Every day the children enjoyed snacks and juice and Biryani on love feast day. At St. Mark's lunch was also provided for the children

Inspection day was observed as encouragement day with all classes being appreciated for one of their strengths.

Final day was a day of show casing all the children learnt. Each class took one of the lessons and acted the Bible incident, recited the

memory verse and sang a song appropriate to that day's theme. It was well appreciated.

It is our prayer that the seed sown will bear much fruit in the ensuing years.

Not only were the children blessed during the days of KSBS but the teachers were also encouraged and enabled to conduct the sessions with joy and enthusiasm.

Here are a few responses of the teachers:

"Every day is generally a struggle to come especially as I have to come early to church. But I had experienced God's strength to come on time and was refreshed by God's word every day."

"After being part of ASHA family I have learned to love and worship Jesus. But my family does not know Jesus. Last year I brought my son to VBS but after two days he was not allowed to come. Praise God he was able to attend all the days of KSBS this year and he heard the word of God."

"On the first day of KSBS I got up early and cooked and came to school but the food got spoiled by the time my family ate. From the second day I prayed that it should be fresh till my family eats the food and it was so. Jesus is a prayer answering God. My family does not generally help me when I rush to go to work. But during the days of KSBS all members cooperated and helped me and I was able to catch the train and come on time. Do you know where I practiced the actions for the songs to be taught in KSBS? In the train! I thank God for His grace and blessings during the six days of KSBS."

"I had a small lump in my palm which was giving me trouble and doctors suggested surgery. When I was told to share what God had done during the KSBS I suddenly observed that the lump was not there. What a miracle! Jesus healed me!"

"My child is a miracle child born after much prayer. God had met that need as an answer to prayer. During this KSBS I prayed for a house to stay I am trusting God for this provision."

"When I joined RMDCC I did not know Christ. But now, not only me but my family knows Christ and what is more wonderful is that God called my son to be a missionary."

"With joy I joined the St. Mark's KSBS. I thank God that I could sow the seeds of His word into the lives of the children. Though at the beginning they did not understand much, but by the end of the KSBS children knew who Jesus is and how God can help them to be victorious."

"I came with great enthusiasm to teach in KSBS I wrote down the names of the children and prayed for them to know Jesus as God. A fatherless child recognised God as her Father and said she would share with Him her needs in future. One very zealous child refused to wear make up on her forehead saying it belongs to god. I am praying that she will recognise Jesus as God. I will continue to pray for all the children to know and love and follow Jesus."

"I usually teach KSBS in St Mark's but this year I was thinking I will miss it because of my children's exam. I like to be with them when they go and come back from the examinations. So I decided to skip this year's KSBS. But when I discussed this with my husband and my children, they readily let me go. I praise God for that and for this great opportunity to serve God."

"Last year I was sick during the KSBS but this year God helped me to be part of this great ministry and I thank God for this opportunity."

"When we were thinking of giving lunch for the children of St Mark's after the KSBS, God provided the funds miraculously so that they children could eat well before they went home. Praise God for His provision!"

With God we are overcomers in our individual and family life also.

Gladys Veda Vimali

The noble woman does not find roses in her path; she leaves them there.

Sunshine Magazine



Bible Quiz No. 148 – June 2024

An Ornithologist's Quiz

Please give a Bible reference, where applicable (KJV).

Fill in the blanks with the correct names of the birds in the Bible mentioned in these verses.

1. 'They shall mount up with wings as _____.'
2. 'I have commanded the _____ to feed thee.'
3. 'Yea, the _____ hath found a house, and the _____
_ a nest for herself.'
4. 'Doth the _____ fly by thy wisdom?'
5. 'There is a path which the _____'s eye hath not seen.'
6. 'I am like a _____ in the wilderness ; I am like an _____
in the desert.'
7. 'The _____ in the heaven knoweth her appointed time.'
8. 'Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the _____ ? or wings
and feathers unto the _____ ?'
9. 'The _____ and the _____ shall lodge in the
upper lintels.'
10. 'Like a _____ or a _____ so did I chatter : I did mourn
as a _____ !'

Taken from *A Bible Quiz Book* by May C. Smith

Kindly send your answers to the church office or email admin@thekirk.in
by 23rd June 2024.

Usha George

Answers to Bible Quiz No. 147 – April 2024

AMusician'sQuiz

1. Harps. Psalm 137:2
2. Timbrel. Exodus 15:20
3. Psaltery and Harp. Psalm 57:8
4. Organ. Genesis 4:21
5. Cymbal. 1 Corinthians 13:1
6. Trumpet. Judges 7:16
7. Cornet. Hosea 5:8
8. Pipes. 1 Kings 1:40
9. Bells. Exodus 39:25
10. Viol. Amos 6:5

The winners are:

1. Mrs. Victoria Basker
2. Ms. Praiseye
3. Mr. Jones Ronald
4. Mrs. Indra Rajanayakam
5. Mrs. Suguna Joseph
6. Mrs. Minnie Devadoss
7. Mrs. Patricia Patrick
8. Mrs. Gladys Vedavimali
9. Mrs. Sabrina Siga
10. Mrs. Angeline Reagan
11. Mrs. Peace Rani Sudhakar
12. Mrs. Sujata Elizabeth Prasad

Hearty Congratulations!

A BOUQUET FOR JESUS - KSBS 2024

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is called KSBS - Kirk Summer Bible School. I will visualise it like giving our LORD a beautiful bouquet of flowers. I have been a teacher with KSBS for the past 4 years. Every year, the experience has gotten more enriching and memorable. A bouquet is putting many flowers together. In the same way, each one of us came together to make this year's KSBS a meaningful journey of faith. The theme for KSBS 2024 was OVERCOMERS. Each lesson taught us how we can overcome our fears, doubts, guilt, shame etc. by submitting our lives to the LORD. The children were very interactive and enjoyed every day and every class thoroughly. Personally, KSBS was a time of refilling my soul with God's word by God's Spirit. As I prepared to be part of the KSBS and to serve the LORD in a small way, the LORD JESUS filled me with much more peace, joy and strength than ever before. I wondered if I could manage my office work, family and do justice to this God-given calling. However, God put every piece of my shortcomings together and helped me be a beautiful part of KSBS. Each teacher, administrator and volunteer had a great responsibility and with much prayer and supplication, we were empowered by God to serve Him cheerfully and efficiently. I can visualise how the LORD hand-picked each one of the children and us as individual flowers, just like a gardener would. To tie us all together, God took a strong and beautiful ribbon in the person of Mrs. Roselin Johnson, who was the Director. She exquisitely guided us all together to become a beautiful bouquet for JESUS.

Here are a few highlights of KSBS 2024. To reinforce the theme of KSBS, there was a special caption - BY JESUS POWER AM AN OVERCOMER. The children enjoyed shouting out this phrase many times in the course of the KSBS and we believe it will help them throughout their lives. Every day started with Devotion time for teachers & volunteers. Each day's KSBS started with lively 'Praise and Worship' with a vibrant team of singers and musicians. It was such a lovely time to worship our Great God along with them. Children were assigned classes according to their age and lessons were taught according to their levels. Afternoon sessions were also very meaningful with different topics useful daily life. Snacks time was a great bonding time for the children over delicious food and loads of laughter. Along with the English KSBS, we were blessed to see the children of ASHA and DCC have their own KSBS in the Kirk campus and they enjoyed it very much as well.

A heartfelt THANK YOU to each and everyone who participated in KSBS 2024. No role is insignificant and no person is less valuable. We served God together, we loved God together, we glorified together and we will journey by faith together, always remembering that 'we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us'. All glory, praise and honour be to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Shantha Augustus





KIRK SUMMER BIBLE SCHOOL

APRIL 24 - MAY 5, 2024

NO, IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US - ROMANS 8:37



KSBS - RMDCC and ASHA





KSBS - St. Mark's School

This Is War!

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12

The above verse succinctly sums up the manifesto of Christian warfare and spells out the dangers we are so highly susceptible to.

The 'War' is between our God the Creator and the deadly Evil personified in Satan. Can we ever forget that our first parents, Adam and Eve, were provided the pristine beauty of Creation, from the hands of our Maker – the sun, moon, stars, the lush trees, the plethora of fragrant flowers and plants, the flowing waters, limpid lakes and mighty oceans; the majestic ranging mountains, the plunging valleys – the list is endless.

The gates of Innocence and Paradise closed when crafty Satan enticed the couple with a single fruit – the sole element forbidden by God. This singular act of disobedience ushered in a continuous conflict between Good and Evil.

Can man ever fathom the depth of God's anguish? The entire tapestry of Creation seemed to unravel. But our God is Love. He offers to save fallen Man by sacrificing His only Begotten Son – Jesus Christ.

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus is the Only Way to save sin-stained humanity from the eternal clutches of Satan. He is the Only Gate – way to Heaven and God.

Wrestling and strife between Good and Evil will persist until the end of Time. We belong to an age that speaks placidly of 'knowledge explosion'. Trained minds are sizzling with acquired knowledge. There is a craving to glorify self and be totally independent of a Creator. Sadly, we live in an age moving swiftly to self-idolatry.

The vicious devil promotes all kinds of seemingly innocent devices in our behaviour. Long ago when we purchased gramophone records we were advised to hold the record only by the rims to avoid fingerprints on the grooves as this would mar the sounds produced. Today the 'fingerprints' of greed, envy, pride, deceit, anxiety, doubt and fear so easily shake and spoil our faith and trust in our Redeemer.

We desperately need parents, preachers, Sunday School teachers and educators to guide young minds according to peerless Christian values. The disciples of our Master Teacher had hardly any school education and yet they possessed 'something' more powerful than uranium. They possessed the power to ignite the world with the sublime Light of Jesus Christ.

We Christians are here for a purpose. We are to wrestle and pray that we will overcome the powers of darkness. As we sing 'Onward Christian Soldiers' let us not run backwards!

We are His chosen soldiers and we have to 'Dare to be a Daniel'. We must have our feet firmly rooted in our purpose. The trapped and blinded world has to be freed from the grip of the devil's clutches. Armed with the power of the Holy Spirit, our shield gleaming bright and our Lord's banner flying high we march on.

"Rouse then soldiers rally round the banner!
Ready, steady pass the word along.
Onward! Forward! Shout aloud Hosanna!
Christ is Captain of the mighty throng!"

Usha George

I reckon him a Christian indeed who is neither ashamed
of the Gospel nor a shame to it.

Matthew Henry

Why are undeserved punishment and suffering allowed by God?

Sometimes we wonder why a just God allows undeserved punishment and suffering in this world. We are ready and willing to be punished when we know that we are in the wrong. But when there is no earthly reason for our punishment, it is very difficult to digest it, isn't it? We cannot fathom the wisdom of God who created this whole universe and who is in control of the same. The Lord asked Job, "where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell me if you understand" (Job 38:4).

Let us meditate on this theme and find out what the Word of God has to say. As far as I can understand, undeserved punishment is meted out by God for various reasons; for chastisement, as God's discipline, to comfort others who are suffering, to experience God's deliverance, for inward renewal, to experience God's grace and to be tested by God!

For Chastisement

Just think about Joseph, the Dreamer. Do you remember that in his younger days he carried tales about his brothers to his father Jacob? (Genesis 37:2) He earned his brothers' jealousy and anger because of Jacob's preferential treatment of his beloved son Joseph. (Genesis 37:4) and partly because of Joseph's dreams. (Genesis 37:5) All of this led to the plotting of his brothers to kill Joseph. But the Holy Spirit's intervention led Reuban to rescue him.

Psalms 105:17-22 explains that Joseph was sold as a slave and put in prison, his feet in shackles and neck in irons. But there came a raise in his position as the Lord willed! He was sent to Egypt before the famine so that the descendants of Israel could be saved. According to Hebrews 12:6, the Lord chastens whom He loves and accepts as His child.

As God's Discipline

In Hebrews 12:5-11 we learn, God disciplines us for our good (v10). He disciplines those He loves (v6), as He is treating us as His own children. We are disciplined so that we may share in His holiness (v10).

We should not make light of the Lord's discipline. We should not lose heart when He rebukes us. "Endure hardship as discipline" (v7). "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful" (v11).

As a result of this discipline, we get a harvest of righteousness and peace from this training (v11). We will have to remind ourselves rightly as Deuteronomy 8:5 says, "know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you."

To Comfort Others

James in his epistle says, "The Lord is full of compassion and mercy" (James 5:11). Paul in 2 Corinthians says, "...the Father of compassion and God of all comfort' (2 Cor 1:3). He further goes on to say that we receive His comfort in all our troubles. Why? It is so, because only then we can comfort those who are in any kind of trouble. We can pass on the same comfort we received from Christ. We are to share in the sufferings of Christ so that we will be comforted in Him.

"No suffering has seized you except what is common to man" (1 Cor 10:13). As we have already experienced the same kind of sufferings as others, we will be in a better position to comfort them.

To Experience God's Deliverance

When we are under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, we are forced to put our whole trust in Him. He is able to deliver us even from death. He delivers us from deadly perils and will continue to do so in the future too. (2 Cor 1:8-11). So we set our hope in Him for continued deliverance from sufferings through our earnest prayers as well as that of others.

My son was delivered from the ailment of a brain cyst which was recurring even after two consecutive brain surgeries, only through the mighty healing hand of our Master Surgeon Jesus Christ! Yes, what Medical Science and two consecutive surgeries couldn't do was miraculously done by our Great Physician, Christ! That wonderful experience of deliverance enabled my son as well as his parents to share the power of the healing hands of our Saviour with many. We are thankful to God for that!

(...to be continued...)

Nalini Suryaprakash

JESUS LOVES ME THIS I KNOW

*"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these".
Mark 10:16*

"Jesus loves me" is one of the most popular hymns sung all over the world. This children's hymn was written by Anna Bartlett Warner (1827-1915) as a poem in the 1860 novel called 'Say and Seal' written by her older sister Susan Warner. The words were spoken as a comforting poem to a dying child by his Sunday school teacher as he rocks the child in his arms.

Anna came from a prosperous family and was educated privately. She lived in a townhouse in New York City where their father, Henry Whiting Warner, was a successful lawyer. However, the Panic of 1837 affected their family's finances and they were forced to move to Constitution Island, in a dilapidated Revolutionary War-era home, which was right across the Military Academy at West Point. She and her sister felt the burden to contribute to the family income and began to write stories and poems for publication. They were successful at this venture and was able to put out 106 publications, 18 of which they co-authored.

Say and Seal, a two-volume novel was one of their most successful joint projects. In one portion of the story, the main character, John Linden, a Sunday school teacher comforts Johnny Fox, a boy at the brink of death, by making up a little song, 'Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.' This novel became very popular, second only to Uncle Tom's Cabin.

For some years, they taught Sunday school classes for the cadets at Westpoint. Anna wrote a fresh hymn for her Sunday School class each month. It is believed that Dwight D. Eisenhower was one of the last cadets to attend their classes. He graduated the year of Anna's death. Anna outlived her sister by more than thirty years. The popularity of the song was so great, that both sisters were buried with military honors in recognition for the spiritual guidance

they offered to young military officers. They are the only civilians buried in the West Point Cemetery. They willed their home, called Good Crag, to the Academy. Their home is now a museum in their honor.

The hymn first appeared in *Golden Shower of Sunday School Melodies* (1862) edited by Northeastern Baptist church musician William Bradbury (1816–1868) who was inspired by reading the novel. Bradbury composed a childlike pentatonic melody and added a refrain with text drawn from the first lines 'Yes Jesus loves me'. Without Bradbury's tune, the text may have remained buried in the novel. Dr. Bradbury dedicated himself to teaching, writing and publishing his music; published 59 collections of sacred and secular music. He wrote hymns such as "*He Leadeth Me*", "*Just As I Am*" and "*Sweet Hour of Prayer*". Taught by missionaries this hymn became a favorite tune among Chinese children, hence the name of the tune is CHINA. (A hymn usually has a person writing the lyrics and another person composing the tune which is given a name.)

The hymn has been adapted and translated more than any other hymn in the English language. A surprising incident: When President John F Kennedy in his earlier years served as a PT-Boat Commander in the Pacific in the Second World War, his patrol torpedo boat was split in two by the Japs. Afloat on the half boat he and his troops reached Solomon island. After a few days the natives put Kennedy and others in the bottom of their canoe and covered them with sacking and palm fronds in case Japanese planes should be around. As they reached the rescue boat all of them—the natives too—sang this hymn 'Jesus loves me'—the natives had been taught this song earlier by missionaries.

The simplicity of the lyrics is endearing and comforting. 'Jesus loves me this I know' reminds us how Jesus always loves little children and bids them to come to Him. 'For the Bible tells me so' encourages us to read the Word. The song speaks of the salvation message to all, especially the little hearts and reminds us of Christ's promise that He will never leave us nor forsake us.

Jesus loves me—this I know,

For the Bible tells me so;

Little ones to him belong,—

They are weak, but he is strong.

Jesus loves me—he will stay,

Close beside me all the way.

Then his little child will take,

Up to heaven for his dear sake.

Refrain

*Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.*

*Jesus loves me he who died
heaven's gate to open wide.
He will wash away my sin,
let his little child come in.*

*Jesus loves me—loves me still,
Though I'm very weak and ill;
From his shining throne on high,
Comes to watch me where I lie.*

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us." 1 John 3 :16

What can we do?"We love Him because he first loved us"1 John4:19
Love Him in returnandif I say I love Him what should I do?

"This is love for God: to keep his commands."1 John 5:3

JESUS LOVES ME THIS I KNOW.

Dr.Anita Chelliah

"Is the Last Supper a religious habit with you? If it is, it is bad – as a habit. It was no habit with Jesus: it was the crowning hour of His life."

Living by the Book: Part 1

Learning how to study the Bible from Dr Howard Hendricks

I first encountered this book* by Dr Hendricks through Sishya, an organisation which taught us much of what we know and practise of bible study and prayer. To say that the book was an eye-opener would be an understatement; Hendricks takes 140 pages to explain how to read the Bible! That takes time, which can be hard for many people. So in this series, I would like to summarise and share my learning from this book, in the hope that it will help others to dig deep into the Word, as it has helped me.

"I don't know how"
"I'm just a lay person"
"Is it relevant any more?"
"I can't seem to make it interesting"
"I don't have the time!"
"I have my doubts"

Hendricks identified a number of reasons why people don't study the Bible. Which one do you think applies to you?

Why study the Bible?

If I invest my time in studying the Word deeply, what difference will it make in my life? Hendricks reminds us that Bible study is essential to growth in respect to salvation (1 Pet 2:2). We need both the right attitude and an insatiable appetite; but it's not enough to know, we need to grow, and the Word is God's primary tool to help us.

"The third kind [of believer] is what I call the "strawberries-and-cream" folks. They just can't get enough of the stuff."

"The mark of spiritual maturity is not how much you understand, but how much you use. In the spiritual realm, the opposite of ignorance is not knowledge but obedience."

Bible study is essential to spiritual ministry. The mature are those who have trained themselves through constant use of Scripture to distinguish good from evil (Heb 5:11-14).

Bible study is essential to spiritual effectiveness. All Scripture is profitable; it will structure our thinking, it defines sin, it opens the door for correction in our lives, and it shows us how to live (2 Tim 3:16-17). Bible study is the primary way to be an effective servant of Jesus Christ, an available, clean, sharp instrument in His hands to accomplish His purposes.

We know that the Bible can be trusted. It is a single unit, bound by the theme of God and His relationship to humankind, each part relating together as a unified whole. It is the revelation of God's consistent truth. It is inspired,

Jesus defeated the devil thrice by quoting from the book of Deuteronomy. "If my spiritual life depended on my knowledge of Deuteronomy, how would I make out?"

I.e. breathed by God, as men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God (2 Pet 1:21). Jesus Himself bears witness to it.

So the real question is: how can we afford not to be in God's Word?

HOW ABOUT YOU?

The great tragedy among Christians today is that too many of us are under the Word of God, but not in it for ourselves.

What about you? Do you regularly read and study the Bible on your own? Or are you part of the majority of people who rarely if ever open the Bible for themselves? Here's a simple exercise to help you evaluate your Bible reading habits.

How often do you read the Bible? (circle one)

NEVER ONCE A MONTH ONCE A WEEK TWO OR THREE TIMES A WEEK EVERY DAY

When you read it, how much time do you spend reading?

5 MIN. OR LESS 15 MIN. 30 MIN. 45 MIN. 1 HR. OR MORE

Here are a few reasons that people give for not reading the Bible. Check the ones that express why you don't read the Bible more than you do.

- The Bible doesn't seem relevant to my life.
- The Bible seems confusing and hard to understand. I don't know how to make sense out of it.
- I used to read the Bible, and it made me feel good. But after awhile, it didn't seem to have the same impact, so finally I gave it up.
- I feel guilty when I read the Bible.
- The Bible is hopelessly out-of-date. It may have some interesting stories, but it has little significance for life today.
- I rely on my pastor or minister to explain the Bible to me. If I need to know something, he will tell me about it.
- I have doubts about the Bible's reliability.
- I don't have time. I'm just too busy.
- The Bible seems boring to me.
- I don't own a Bible.
- The Bible is full of myths and half-truths. Why study something that lacks credibility?
- I don't read, period! It's not just the Bible; I don't read anything.

*Hendricks, H. G., Hendricks, W.D., Living by the Book: The Art and Science of Reading the Bible. Chicago, Moody Publishers, 2007.



GLANDS IN THE BODY – VIII LIVER AND THE BILE JUICE

“Doctors treat, but Jesus heals”

The liver produces a digestive juice “bile”, which is stored in a pouch known as the “gall bladder”. The liver secretes 1-2 litres of bile daily. The gall bladder can hold about 45 millilitres of bile at one time.

During digestion, bile flows from the liver through the common bile duct and empties into the first section of the small intestine. Between meals, the bile is not needed but it continues to flow from the liver into the common bile duct. The fluid then flows into the gall bladder, where it is concentrated and stored until it is needed for digestion.

Gallstones sometimes form within the concentrated bile. Cholesterol stones are most common in industrialised countries, whereas pigment stones are more frequent in developing countries. These small, hard masses may become stuck in the common bile duct, causing severe pain. Blockage of the common bile duct may lead to jaundice, a yellowing of the skin resulting from an accumulation of bile in the blood. Doctors commonly treat gallstones by surgically removing the gall bladder. Some gallstones can be dissolved by taking a medication. Others can be treated by using a device called a lithotripter. The lithotripter produces shock waves that break the stone into tiny fragments, so that it is easier to remove.

Dr. (Mrs.) Rajinikantha Narendranath

Kirk News

*Bright eyes gladden the heart;
Good news puts fat on the bones.
Proverbs 15:30*



New Open Gates of Opportunities and Renovation

The Kirk has evolved over the years, and it is wonderful how it continues to do so. The church has finally been able to use its "in gate," and the renovations are progressing steadily. While these physical changes are happening, there are always more important spiritual aspects that these developments point towards. During this season of rest, let us keep ourselves in prayer, see shut gates open, and experience a renewal of the spiritual zest that we may have lost.

This renewal can be seen in the various events that took place in the church over the past few months, from a blessed time at KSBS for the children to celebrating the Day of Ascension and the Day of Pentecost.

Guest Speakers

Mr. Benny Prasad – Fervent Prayer - 14/03/2024 - 7:00 am, 9:00 am Services

Col. Amrit Raj – Rough Terrain - 28/04/24 – 6:00 pm Service

Kirk Choir

The Kirk Choir graced the 9 am service on 14/03/2024 with a heartfelt rendition of "Come Let Us Sing," uplifting the congregation with their harmonious melodies and praise.

Kirk Summer Bible School

From April 24 to May 5, 2024, the Kirk Summer Bible School engaged children in a series of activities centred around the theme "Overcomers," inspired by Romans 8:37. The program culminated on May 5th with a valedictory event at 6:00 pm, with worship songs, choreography, skits, and memory verse recitations. Parents and the

church gathered to celebrate the children's spiritual growth and achievements through KSBS.

Kirk Youth Fellowship

Topic: From Grave to Grace

On April 21, 2024, at 9 AM, the Kirk Youth Fellowship presented Catalyst at the SACCE Hall. Pastor James Ebenezer delivered an inspiring message, it also included a time of worship and fellowship.

SALT Ministry

On May 6 at 6 pm at the Kirk, a special evening service was organised with Col. Amrit Raj and his family. The session tackled spiritual challenges faced by individuals and families who follow Jesus. Crucial questions on raising the next generation in Christ was addressed with practical anecdotes. It was a unique service with worship, teaching, sharing, praying, and fellowship.

Kirk Men's Fellowship

On May 1st, from 7 pm onwards, the SACCE Hall hosted an evening of fun and fellowship. This barbecue event was a time of great food and camaraderie among the men of the church.

House Church

The warmth of fellowship was felt deeply at the House Church hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Benil Oommen on April 26, 2024, at 6:30 pm. Attendees enjoyed a time of worship, prayer, and community bonding.

Medical, Gospel, and Counselling Outreach Program

On April 21, 2024, from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM, the Kirk's Outreach Program took place in SM Nagar. This event provided medical assistance, gospel sharing, and counselling services to the community.

Obituary

We thank God for the lives of:

Suchalatha Bright (April 7, 1953 - April 23, 2024)

K. Ravindranath (May 6, 1956 - April 25, 2024)

We remember them with love and respect. Their lives touched many, and they will be dearly missed by the Kirk family.

Forever with the Lord!

Angela Susan Bryner



Song Session



Shout to the Lord All the earth let us sing
Power and majesty Praise to the King
Mountains bow down And the sea will roar

Teacher Song



VBS : 24 Teachers & Volunteers

53 : 05 & 06

May - June 2024