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Baptist News

A quarterly news letter of the COUNCIL OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN NORTH EAST INDIA

The Council comprises of Assam Baptist Convention, Arunachal Baptist Church Council, Garo Baptist Convention, Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention, Manipur Baptist Convention and Nagaland Baptist Church Council.

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from the desk of editor 



Dear friends,

We are looking for someone who could lead us as the Assistant Editor of the Baptist News. I have been juggling with too many responsibilities. Besides the office of the General Secretary, I am also looking after the office of the Secretary for the Medical Department and Leadership Training. Hence the publication of the last issue is delayed. You might have noticed that this issue combines the two issues. Please accept my apology.

The primary goal of *Baptist News* has been to publish the news of the events happening in the Baptist family. So that through them you may sense the movement of the Holy Spirit amidst us and give thanks, pray, and get involved.

Since most of us in the northeast are not keen on writing it has been an uphill task to gather the news. Most news that you might read here are from the departments of CBCNEI. Please know that we welcome the news with pictures from your church, association, and convention. We will be glad to include them in the next issue.

We also welcome your article. If there are certain contextual issues that you would like to address to provoke our thinking, please write and send them to us. Our editorial team will help you to publish them.

In this issue, we have included an article on REST from Johnson Raih, the Principal of MBC High School. He has done good job to underline a range of meaning of the Rest in Bible. Rev Kulendra Marak gathers some of his experience and knowledge to help us understand how men and women of God strived to serve the people of Nishangram and the areas around through Babupara Christian Hospital. Charyl Ford, wife of Pastor Clayton Ford, who was one of the resource persons in the CBCNEI Training Program, shares her thought on God who always extends sceptre of mercies to those who are in need. I have written an article to record my views and suggestions on the governance and administration in the Baptist family. Rev Taku Longkumer has written an article to prepare our hearts for the forthcoming season of Christmas. While Dr Asangla gives some tips on the basics of the Couseling. Dr Jolly Rimai and I have tried to address various issues related to Missions in our context. I hope you will enjoy reading it.

The Christmas and the New Year 2013 is approaching. We wish you a blessed festive season. May the good Lord grant you a prosperous and successful New Year 2013.

Dr A. K. Lama
General Secretary

First Dispensary in Nagaland

(Excerpt taken from Impur Christian Hospital Centenary Souvenir (1912-2012) Published by Impur Christian Hospital, Impur, Nagaland)



Dispensary constructed in 1916-ICH

With the increasing growth of mission activities, they came to realize Medical Ministry for physical healing as one of the greatest, urgent and pressing needs of the hour for the Naga people.



Dr & Mrs. James R. Bailey

Dr & Mrs. James R. Bailey, the first Medical Missionary came to Impur in 1909. For about two years, he gave medicine and helped the patients from his home.

But in the year 1912, under his initiative the first dispensary was opened at the hillock near the boundary with Mopungchuket village, present microwave station. Later in the year 1916 the temporary dispensary was shifted to

just below the present Impur Christian Hospital; and continued their medical healing ministry till 1954. Dr J. R. Bailey was not only a good physical healer but a competent spiritual healer also. He worked tediously till his death, in the year 1928, leaving behind his beloved wife and six (6) children, viz. James, Howard, Audrey, Stephen, Barbara and Phyllis. Mrs. James R. Bailey wanted to continue as Women Missionary under Foreign Mission amongst the Nagas, but the American Baptist Mission Union did not give her permission. That's how Mrs J. R. Bailey had to return back to America with her children.

After the death of Dr Bailey in 1928, Impur Dispensary went through some lapses due to the lack of proper residential Medical Doctors.

So it was at that time, Dr J. A. Ahlquist, a missionary doctor from Jorhat Christian Hospital frequently visited Impur Dispensary and helped the patients.

It was very encouraging to see the good helping relationship between Jorhat Christian Hospital and Impur dispensary, since both the ministries were under the American Baptist mission.

In November 1953, when Rev Truxton was the field incharge of Impur mission centre, Dr. Ngangshi Aier, Dr O. W. Hasselblad, Rev. Truxton and Rev Kijung had a meeting for the improvement of the Impur Dispensary.

After much prolonged discussion for the possible option to improve. Impur dispensary, it was finally decided to start a Mobile Medical Unit from Jorhat Christian Hospital with one of the Doctors to visit and help Impur Dispensary monthly from

the year 1954.

At this time Dr Ngangshi Aier was serving at Jorhat Christian Hospital very actively. Even though he was working there, he had a deep concern for the improvement and the well being of Impur Dispensary.

Therefore under his pioneering leadership he brought several mobile unit teams from Jorhat Christian Hospital to Impur to cover more Ao villages with better medical treatment.

According to the official record, Dr Ngangshi Aier brought the first mobile medical unit from Jorhat Christian Hospital to Impur Dispensary on April 16, 1954.

In his first trip he stayed for 3 days at Impur Dispensary, during which he gave treatment to 34 Impur students and 17 outsiders.

Also, it was at this difficult time that SDMO (Sub Divisional Medical Officer) from Mokokchung made monthly visits and helped Impur Dispensary as required by the Medical mobile unit team (1958).



By Dr Asangla Ao, Women's Director, TLA Ministries

BASIC COUNSELING

Not everyone is cut to be a counselor. But in ministry whether you are trained counselor or not, you can't wash your hands off from the responsibility of offering counseling ministry to those who are in need. Many are hurting around us and extending a helping hand to those is inevitable for a pastor or for those who are in full time ministry. Whether you want it or not, people will come to you seeking advice, looking for solutions to their problems, or even to unburden their troubled heart. With all good intention while helping an unskillful counselor might cause more damage than healing. Incompetence of a counselor may lead to failure of the whole counseling process.

Learning some basic principles

of counseling, and keeping the counseling "tools" sharpened will certainly help us stay ready for any moment of need. Moreover; counseling is a skill—the more you practice it, the better you become.

BASIC ELEMENTS FOR AN EFFECTIVE COUNSELING

COMPASSIONATE HEART: One must have a compassionate heart to observe, see, and act in order to render a helping hand to those who are in need. Jesus was a compassionate person who saw, had compassion, and met the needs of people (Matt 9:36)

RELATIONSHIP: The art of counseling runs through the fabric of healthy relationship. So, the ability to connect with other person is paramount in an effective counseling process. A

healthy relationship itself can be therapeutic—encouraging counselees understand themselves and their situation better, find the available resources, and learn to manage their lives more effectively.

EMPATHY: It's being with and understanding the counselees in and through the context of their lives. Being able to discern, touch the emotions a counselee is experiencing, and then respond accurately may open the 'gateway' to his /her world, helping you to see the bigger picture.

TRUST AND CONFIDENTIALITY: It is a vital part of counseling. Betrayal can be lethal in the process of counseling. Earn the trust of the counselee and maintain confidentiality.

ACTIVE LISTENING: It is the foundation of understanding. The depth of understanding depends on how well you listen to your counselee. Process well what you hear. Be aware of your own internal conversation, assumptions, cultural biases, and presupposition. They might distort or filter what is being said

by the counselee. Listen to both verbal and nonverbal messages and respond accurately.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: The quality of communication between counselor and counselee is an integral part of effective counseling. We communicate nonverbally much more than verbally. As you listen to verbal messages, do not ignore the nonverbal messages (facial expression, body posture, eye movement). The conversation between counselor and counselee should be therapeutic.

*"All Scripture is inspired by God & profitable for **teaching**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **training in righteousness**, so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."* (2 Tim 3:16-17).

May the Word of God inspire you, give you in depth knowledge and wisdom as you counsel and guide others. May you allow the Holy Spirit to work in and through your counseling ministry.

My short Experience about Babupara Christian Hospital (Nisangram)

By Rev Kulendra Marak, Evangelist, Pillangkatta B. Church, Meghalaya

“If only you had paid attention in my commands, your peace would have been like a river, your righteousness like the waves of the sea” Isaiah 48:18

Right from the creation our Almighty God set everything systematically and used his people for betterment and development of his Institution or Organization everywhere. Before I narrate about Babupara Christian Hospital I would like to draw your attention about **“NISANGRAM”**. As per my knowledge goes Nisan means Banner or Flag and Gram means village. We are aware of education in Bengali language during British rule in Assam. During that time Bengali Language

was very common in Assam. The two Missionaries Dr Stoddard and Rev T. J. Keith, and other present dignitaries named this place as **“NISANGRAM”**. So with a great joy and thanksgiving a celebration took place on 6th February 1872 as it is recorded in A’chik Baptist Krima No. 1-Centennial Souvenir.

First, **BABUPARA CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL** was situated somewhere at Rongjeg village as a small Dispensary but due to some inconveniences it was shifted from Rongjeg to Nisangram. In the beginning it was used as a Nisangram Dispensary. It is not clear who named Babupara Christian Hospital but I believe this name also might

have given by the founder of this Hospital. As recorded by A.B.Krima No. 1-Centennial Souvenir, this Hospital was founded in February 1949 by



Dr E. S. Downs an American Missionary. It started functioning since May 1949. Mr Genaram A. Momin worked as a compounder with one small *almirah* for storing the medicine. He lived in a small cottage with small two rooms for the family. He worked for seventeen years from 1949 to 1966. In between Dr E. S. Downs visited on & off, and did eye check ups. As the population increased in the village the medical demand became more. The foreign Missionaries from USA visited and took more interest as the compounder Mr G. A. Momin strongly demanded the needs of the medical aid. One building was constructed with three rooms and seven beds. It was dedicated by Dr Fuman (now with the Lord, Feb. 1960), the General Secretary of American

Home Mission Board. So it was more convenient for stocking medicine, dressing and treatment of the patients. Miss Ruth Menon and Miss Nodil K. Marak came to help Mr G. A. Momin for ten days in 1963 and in the same year Dr Mundek and Mr C. C. Jones, Treasurer, CBC-NEI visited to see the work and development of the dispensary.

In 1966 both Dr C. T. Ao and Dr Alangla Ao worked for two months with Mr G. A. Momin in rotation. In the same year Dr Alice Marak (now with the Lord) who also worked for five months after her retirement. Mr G. A. Momin retired in Feb. 1966. After his retirement, Mrs Pisoni A. Sangma (now with the Lord) was appointed as an incharge of the Hospital. Although there was no doctor, patients need

were met satisfactorily. Since there was no delivery room and no light facilities in the hospital the compounder had to conduct deliveries in homes. Mr G. A. Momin was reappointed by the A'chik Baptist Convention just for one year. Fortunately Dr L. Norton and Dr Dogdson visited the hospital with much interest. One nurse's quarter was constructed in 1967 and it was inaugurated by Dr E. S. Downs in January and it was their last Mission Visit to Nisangram Babupara Christian Hospital before they left Garo Hills for America. The present Hospital building was constructed and left half done for many years. In 1968 Dr Curzon G. Momin from Guwahati was appointed as a Medical Officer and worked from 1969 to 1970 with Mrs Pisoni A. Sangma (GNM). But she also left the hospital in 1969.

In 1973 onward the hospital was almost closed down but the Committee Members kept open just to give injections. Hence the dissatisfaction from the public side had been increased. In this situation in

1980 Mrs Prekhilda W. Momin (ANM) was sent from Tura Christian Hospital and worked only for one and half year. Dr Crozier S. Sangma worked for one year. But unfortunately the Hospital was closed for some time again. In September 1980 the Hospital was reopened and Mr G. A. Momin was called by the Committee and he worked till 1990. He died on April 25th 1990. During his service the Hospital building construction was completed and it was inaugurated by Rev Imotemjen Aier (the Former General Secretary, CBCNEI) in September 1983. In 1983 Mrs Hingonbala Sangma (ANM) was sent from Tura Christian Hospital and she worked till 1986. Dr Rosemarina Marak worked from 1993 to 1994. In between Dr P. Rudra Tariang visited from time to time and checked the patients and the Hospital was run by Mrs Emina Ch. Momin. During 1996 to 1997 Dr C. Lawrence, Dr Lucita Momin, Dr Kevi Angami, Dr Takemba Ao and Dr Naomi Doungel from Satribari Christian Hospital, Guwahati worked in rotation. In 1998 Dr

Sailendra Singh Massey from Guwahati Medical College worked for June and July.

After a long struggle and difficulties Dr John Ritchi N. Sangma, an Eye Specialist from Satribari Christian Hospital, was appointed as Medical Superintendent incharge in 2008. While he was working at Satribari Christian Hospital, he was approached by a fine gentleman, Dr Ranjit Ratnaike, a practitioner from Adelaide, Australia for setting up an Eye unit. The required amount for OPD Unit was sent to the CBCNEI from the InterLink Foundation, Australia. After much contemplation Rev Dr Ngul Khan Pau, General Secretary, CBCNEI Mr Rolland G. Momin, Treasurer. CBCNEI and Dr John jointly decided to set up the Eye Unit at Babupara Christian Hospital, Nisangram. In spite of all these odds the CBCNEI along with local support of the villagers, decided to go ahead establishing the Eye unit at Babupara Christian Hospital and Dr John Sangma looked after the Project. By this way with funds from Interlink Foundation the OPD was

inaugurated on 11th of June 2008. In the same way the Funds from the National Program for Control of Blindness (as promised by the Joint Director Dr J. V. Basaiawmoit) enabled to start the construction of the operation theater. After completion of the same on 5th September 2009, Mr D. Vijoy Kumar, the Deputy Commissioner (Williamnagar) East Garo Hills, along with Rev Dr A. K. Lama, General Secretary, CBCNEI inaugurated and dedicated the Operation Theater respectively. The Medical Superintendent of Tura Christian Hospital, Dr Jedidah Marak, Mr Lokho Mao, CEO, other staff of Satribari Christian Hospital, Guwahati, some ABDK leaders attended during this auspicious day. I was extremely happy to participate on this particular ceremonial program.

I was determined to have my Eye's operation done by Dr John R. N. Sangma last year but due to my unavoidable circumstances I couldn't do so. However after constant prayers for a year, our Lord gave me the courage and full conviction in

Him. So, finally I was prepared for my eye's operation on 3rd May 2012 (Thursday) I was awaiting from morning till 5:30 p.m. but there was no electricity for which the Hospital authority had to use the generator and near about 6:30 pm my eye's operation was done successfully. I thank Dr John R. N. Sangma and his assistants who prayerfully and systematically performed the operation. I do pray that this Babupara Christian Hospital grow in strength to strength through the present doctor and nurses of the Hospital.

The location of Babupara Christian Hospital itself is so beautiful because it has been surrounded by 4 (four) Hills namely Wa'gok Hills, Matchuki Ading, Chimatcha Hills, and Babupara Hills, etc. As a whole Nisangram village is one of the advanced villages among the Garo villages. There is a prominent church in the village. In fact Nisangram Baptist Church had first ordained Pastor Rev. Ramke W. Momin, who worked as a pastor from 1868 to 1887. I attended first in this church on

Sunday morning service in 1974 while I was serving as a field supervisor under India Every Home Crusade. There was good gathering on Sunday Service to worship our living Lord Jesus Christ. The A'chik Baptist krima No. 1 office is situated at Nisangram and Garo vernacular cum English Bible School also running at Nisangram. Our merciful Lord is giving all blessings for the people of this area. As I mentioned earlier if we pay our attention His(Lord) commands, then we'll have peace like a river and our righteousness will become just like the waves of the sea.

So lastly, I should suggest to the Medical Board of the Council, it would be highly appreciated and helpful for downtrodden people if Medical Board prayerfully consider to upgrade this Babupara Christian Hospital. Our people cannot afford to take any medical treatment in the city or town Hospital where patients are spending more for their treatments. (AMEN).



By Rev Dr A. K. Lama, General Secretary, CBCNEI

Administration in the Baptist Churches: Hierarchy or Anarchy

In the Baptist Churches of northeast India, we are often occupied with service oriented ministries. We are good at organizing Sunday worship services, conduct spiritual programs, provide member care, and take initiatives in missions. However, we do not give much importance to administration and governance. Some of our churches, mostly in villages, may not even have trained pastors or leaders. And those who are trained are rarely taught in

their seminary training about administration and governance. Most Baptist leaders need training in administration and governance.

Unlike Episcopalian, Baptists are supposed to be Congregationalist in governance and administration. We believe in the priesthood of all believers, and hence we recognize the work of the Holy Spirit in every individual's life. Yet in reality, not every member exercises equal authority as they are not

equally mature and committed. The congregation appoint a group of deacons who on behalf of them govern the church. This group of deacon is supposed to function like a service team to facilitate the ministry of the pastor. The pastor is supposed to be primarily accountable to this team and in turn the team is expected to be accountable to the pastor. And together they are accountable to the congregation. It is the mutual submission and their common goal to serve God that binds them together as one team.

In reality, this is where Satan corrupts the team work. Selfishness, pride, arrogance, dominance, prejudices, favouritism, biased opinions, theological ignorance, spiritual immaturity, lack of respect for others, uncontrolled passion, and poor skill of communication are the deadly mines that the team members often have to walk across. Many churches have become victims of this deadly trap. Both clergy and lay leaders have stepped on them. Pastors are complaining against the arrogance of lay leaders and

the lay-leaders complain against dominance of pastors. In between, Satan gets the upper hand.

Question has often been asked to me: *Who is superior—Pastor or Chairman of the deacon?* Since the pastor is appointed by the deacon body, obviously in the secular mind, it appears that the seat of authority lies with the deacon and not with the pastor. However, when pastor is seen as an employee and given no spiritual authority then the purpose of inviting a pastor to the church is self-defeated.

Biblically, the authority does not lie in any individual or any institution but in the Word of God. All must submit to the authority of the Word of God. Next to the Word of God, it is wise to submit to the corporate authority of the body of Christ which is expressed through local church and also through the Association of churches or Convention of associations. It does not mean that an individual does not have access to God to know what is right. It also does not mean that the community

is always right. But a Christian individual is called to live within a community. Hence, submission to community seeking common good through common wisdom for Unity is a biblical mandate. One must spur with the community to influence, to correct, to lead, and to be led. If one has to choose between two rights then the Biblical wisdom demands us to submit to the betterment of the larger body of the community of believers.

In some churches, pastor rules alone, while in others few handful of lay leaders make every decisions. The majority in the congregation are silent worshippers. Rules are made and broken at the personal whims and interpretations of individual or a "clique" group. The definition of church and its ministry, with all good intention, is often constrained to the perspective of an individual or a clique group. In some cases, the local church may divide, in others, the local church may disassociate itself from Association, or still others it may change their name and de-

nomination. Some Baptist churches are persuaded to become Believers Church, others became Good Shepherd Church and still others became Methodist Church. Baptist churches are very vulnerable and hence the Baptist unity. Some Baptist Association leaders feel frustrated to see their member churches scattered in their commitment with their own agendas which they are not even aware of.

We do not have Bishops. There is no hierarchy of episcopal nature in our churches and yet hierarchy flows in some form in our churches. Either it flows from a dominant individual or it flows from a clique group to the rest of the silent worshippers in our churches. Since there is no criterion to ascertain the credential of the source of authority, most of the time such practice of authority leads to anarchy in our churches.

Some Baptist churches emphasize too much on autonomy while others on centralization of power. Extreme of either emphasis has its own pros and

cons. Too much of autonomy can weaken the governance and administration at the association level and too much centralization can make the governance and administration of the local church weak. To strike a balance is a constant struggle.

The organizational structure of the Baptist churches under the Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast India (CBCNEI) is as follows:



Churches have come together to form an Association and the Associations together have formed the Conventions. And the six Conventions together own the Council at the top. Through Executive Body and the Annual General Body meeting at each level a consensus of the community is sought.

There are commonly agreed Constitution and Bylaws that governs these bodies.

On the one hand, it appears to be well organized, on the other hand, anarchy still prevails. For instance, we notice a glimpse of anarchy even in nomenclature. The CBCNEI is a federated body of six conventions and one hundred associations. However, it is confusing when the word “Council” is used interchangeably for association as well as convention within the family. Some association name their leader as the Executive Secretary while others name them as the General Secretary. The bodies within the family function independently and hence there are overlapping of their objectives. Often they are unaware of each other’s areas of operations. The central body which is supposed to connect and coordinate the member body also functions independently like a third body. Hence the anarchy continues. Besides, there are leaders who run the body by their own individual rights and authority. They don’t like to submit to anybody but

demands submission from others.

As Baptists, we do not encourage a common liturgy, a book of common prayer, Pope or Bishop which embodies an authority to direct and govern the Baptist churches. Yet a complete absence of consensus, point of reference, a model to look for, and an authoritative body to intervene in times of need has left most churches vulnerable. Especially churches in the rural area are in desperate need of help.

Baptist Churches in northeast are easy prey to cult and heretic groups. Baptist Churches are continually losing its members to the new groups that are making in roads in the northeast region. They begin with a fellowship and then soon become a church. Some Baptist members are like sheep without shepherd. They are gullible and easily lured by any ministries that come to them in the name of JESUS, Mission, and Spirituality. They often become a platform to launch and promote ministries that have no commit-

ment and accountability to the Churches but build their personal empire. Some of them theologically unsound, others are ethically objectionable; still others are biblically anti-church. The individual members of the churches are misguided and the resources of the churches get drained out. I was told that some individual Baptist members donated a big fat sum of money to an individual healer but gave just a token amount to the local church.

No wonder why so many individuals running private ministries in the name of healing and prophecies are able to build personal empires by collecting the wealth from the Baptist members. Some of them are our own former church leaders. The church and association leaders often grumble against them. It wouldn't be wise to call for a consultation and resolve a clear instruction for our members against such individuals who drain our Church resources and who fail to respect the authority of the local church. There must be a place for confronting these individuals, checking

them out how they are committed to churches. Who are they accountable to? What is their ultimate goal?

Our Baptist unity is often violated because our family agreements are obscure. If we have not agreed upon to be together for common goodness then parting is obvious. But even if one has agreed upon and they are not clear, then misunderstanding is likely to exist. Given the fact that the group has clarity on their agreement, there is no guarantee that everybody would know it for next five years because the leaders in Baptist system keep changing. Hence the governance and administration in the local church, Association, and Convention is not easy. Misunderstanding and confusion is inevitable.

Water becomes even muddier in some places where nothing exists in favour of governance and administration. I have been conducting seminars on church Administration and Management and I have often heard senior leaders asking question such as:

I did not know that the church needs a Constitution or By Laws

Where can we find a copy of Constitution?

What is Vision and Mission Statement?

Why do we need to write objective of a church?

Do we need to register our church as a society?

Why do we need Service rules?

Why do we need to register our church property?

Why do we need to deposit money in the bank?

Why do we need financial policy?

I did not know that Baptist also believe in any doctrines.

[Read Baptist Confession of Faith 1689 at the web page <http://www.vor.org/truth/1689/1689bc00.html>]

I thought we believe only in Baptist Distinctive.

I don't know what is the Baptist Distinctive?

I know that Baptist Distinctive

came out of a historical context but how do we apply them to our context today?

There is a need to address these questions. The Association and Conventions leaders will have to address them sooner or later to keep the churches function with good governance and administration. Each church must know who they are, what they have agreed to achieve, what limits them, and how they are going to achieve their goal. While enjoying the freedom of the Holy Spirit, there must be a set of things that must hold them accountable to each other in unity.

There are universal basics for good governance and administrations which all churches must seek to have. They are:

A. Necessity of a Constitution and Byelaws (Church/Association/Convention)

1. Work out a Constitution and bylaws carefully and keep your members informed about it at least once in two years. Shillong Baptist Church has one and that could be one good sample to

follow for the local Church. You can adapt from it.

2. This document must outline the obligation of your relationship with Association, Convention, and Council.

3. Insure that you refer to it for every decision to remain on the track.

4. Distribute it in every Annual General Body meeting for all members.

It's the Constitution and Byelaws that must be a point of reference for all authority for governance and administration. In the areas where there is lack of clarity, first a consensus must be sought in the Body of Christ. Elders must be respected for their wisdom but youth must not be ignored either. Pray until consensus is achieved. Never push your idea forcibly by hook or crook. Major on the major things and not minor. Wait for the wisdom from above and pray like Solomon, ***Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?***

(2 Chr 1:10) Time heals as well as it reveals. Waiting upon the Lord is often the best choice.

Registering your Church, association, and Convention as a registered charitable society may have certain benefit. Educate yourself with the state law for the registered Society and trustee. Understand its pros and cons and take benefit of the law of the land.

B. Necessity of a Baptist Guideline for Common Standard Operating Procedure:

The Association or Convention can call a Consultation and formulate a guideline on common standard operating procedure for all churches for various services. Call for wisdom of the elders' experience. Learn from others.

C. Necessity of clear Job description and Service Rules for all employed staffs:

A clearly described job description, rules and regulations, privileges and and penalty must be outlined. At the appointment, one should acknowledge of receiving and reading it. Of-

ten lay leaders can do a better job in these areas.

D. Necessity of a Financial Policy:

There are standard financial policies to prevent mishaps, human errors, and manipulation. System must prevent individual handling of money and accounts. There must be room for third party annual auditing and reporting. Money must be kept in bank in joint account but never in an individual account. Know the law of the land and be sensitive to it. Be aware of the changes in the Income Tax Rules and FCRA Rules. Finally, it is not merely a good and honest intention but actually the good paper works that protects us from litigation. So we must have a system that requires good ledger entry and record keeping.

In 2 Cor 8:18-21 we notice St Paul's desire to be right both in the eyes of the Lord and men:

And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. ¹⁹ ***What is***

more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help.²⁰ We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift.²¹ For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man.

E. Necessity of an Annual Forum where all operational problems can be discussed and a guideline for their prevention is resolved.

At the level of Association, churches must come together to resolve their *Dos* and *Donts* so that they function as one body and prevent any confusion. Such unity shall prevent the wrong party intruding like bad yeast and cause damage. No complaints must go unheard and unattended. A good governance and administration must be aimed to bring order and unity in the Body of Christ.

Well, much can be said about good governance and administration, but I hope that this brief

writing might help us to think and bring some improvement in governance and administration in our Baptist family. May God help us.

Helpful Books on Administration and Management:

1. *Principles and Practices for Baptist Churches: A Guide to the Administration of the Baptist Churches* by Edward T. Hiscox, 1980.
2. *A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice* by Norman Hill Maring, Winthrop Still Hudson, 1991.
3. *Management of Christian Services in India* Vol. 1 & 2, edited by Ebe Sunder Raj, SD Jayakumar, and Varghese Jacob, published by CIM, 2005.
4. *Basic Management Handbook for Pastors, Missionaries, Field Workers, Evangelists, Seminary Students etc.* compiled by CIM Team, 2011.

N e w s C a p s u l e

Missionary Training Program:

CBCNEI organized a Missionary Training Program from August 13 - 17, 2012 at CBCNEI Conference Centre. 38 evangelists from Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur took part in it. Mr Duane, Mr Andy, Rev Taku Longkumer, Rev Dr A. K. Lama and



Rev Dr Jolly Rimai were the resource persons. Mr Mhabemo and Siamliana coordinated the program.

Humanitarian Assistance to the victims of Ethnic Violence in BTC Areas of Assam:

The communal violence in Kokrajhar district of Assam left many homeless and many lives were lost. Most of these affected people were living in Relief camps set up in secure places.

They were afraid to go back to their own homes, fearing that bloodsheds and violence may occur any time.

Seeing the situation, the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India undertook a relief work on 4th-5th of September

2012. The relief was supported financially by the following organizations:-

1. International Ministries (BIM)

2. Campus Christian Fellowship, Kohima Science College
3. Thahekhu Baptist Church
4. Guwahati Baptist Church
5. Guwahati Satsang Church
6. Council of Baptist Churches in Northeast India

The relief team comprising 11 members from CBCNEI were Vikato Shikhu (Convener), Aowabang (Pastor Ao Church Guwahati), Senti Longkumer (Pastor NCF Guwahati), Kughaho Chishi (Chaplain Sumi Fellowship Guwahati), Shoudhit Marak (CBCNEI), Mhabemo Kithan (CBCNEI), Babul (CBCNEI), Rosjit (CBCNEI), Sarkar (CBCNEI), Neon (LM Hosteler) and Dayouth (Kamrup Associa-

tion). The relief materials include: floor mat, bathing soap, detergent, baby food, and mosquito net. The relief was provided to 1400 families living in three relief camps namely Ouguri (360 families), Koila Moila (320 families) and Bala Gari (420 families).

Relief work was divided into three groups under the supervision of Aowabang (Ouguri), Sentiwabang (Bala Gari) and Vikato Shikhu (Koila Moila). A thirty minutes program was also held at Ouguri before the relief work started. Relief volunteers and committees were from the village assisted by the local village elders and also from the All Assam Bodo Stu-



dents' union. The three relief camps were surrounded by rivers namely Ai and Langkar river, where the relief materials were transported by country made boats and tractors. Transportation of relief members to the camps were done by 11 bikers.

Koila Moila Relief:

At around 11:00 am after the short program at Ouguri, Mr Vikato, the convener of the CBC-NEI relief team, gave a brief speech highlighting about the purpose of the relief work through the initiative of CBC-NEI. After which the relief distribution began with the assistance of the locals as well as the ABSU members. Around 320 families' beneficiaries were given relief assistance. Initially the



turn up for the relief was low due to communication gap; however, slowly at around noon time most of the beneficiaries started to arrive to take the relief materials. The distribution of relief materials winded up late in the evening.

Ouguri Relief:

On 5th Sept morning the team moved out from the Boro Baptist Mission for the relief work and after *Aie* river they reached the first destination Ouguri, where they had a short prayer meeting. The team leader Mr



Vikato gave a short introduction about how and from where they've come. In Ouguri the team assigned were Pastor Aowabang Ozukum, Pastor Khugaho Sumi and Mr Sa-



gar. Along with them there were local volunteers from All Boro Students Union (ABSU). There were 350 beneficiaries in this centre. The distribution got over by 12:00 noon without any untoward incident, the program was peaceful.

Bala Gari Relief:

The group left Oguri Relief Camp at about 10.30 am after a short prayer meeting. After crossing river Lankar on boat they reached the Bala Gari Relief Camp at 12.30pm. The team rode on bikes for about 15-20

minutes to reach the camp.

The relief work started from 1.30pm after a short speech by Rev. Dhojen (General Secretary of Boro), Baptist Church Council (BBCC). The Relief bags contained: floor mat, detergent powder, bathing soap, mosquito net and milk for children aged below 4 years. There were 396 beneficiaries in this camp coming from about 7 nearby villages. The group members were assisted by local volunteers in this regard. The distribution got over at 3:30 pm.

Due to NESO bandh on 6th of September, distribution of relief at Gossigaon was entrusted to BBCA.

Training on Disciple Making and Preaching (Sept 27-29):

Meitei Baptist Churches Association (MBA) of Manipur hosted two and half day training program for 50 pastors and lay leaders. The resource persons were Rev. Chris Horton, Rev. Greg Morrison, Rev. A. K. Lama, and Dr. Lev Bragg. The program was fully sponsored by Transforming Leaders in Asia (TLA) Ministries. Most participants expressed their gratitude for such a program. They said that it was first of its kind which had addressed many practical issues of ministries. Pray for the Meitei community, considered as one of the larg-

est unreached groups in Manipur. Pray for them that the Vision of God's Mission is delivered through the Gospel.

Ten bicycles were also donated to the pastors of the MBA by TLA Ministries during the training program.



New Dormitory Dedicated (Oct 1):

The General Secretary and the staff of Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI) dedicated much awaited 40 bed dormitory in the Conference Center, Guwahati. This has enhanced the capacity to 120 beds. The council felt the need to increase the capac-





ity as the Confernece Centre remains booked through out the year for various programs and seminars. Guwahati being the gateway to northeast, people prefer to use the facility during transit as the compound gives them sence of security and comfort.



Christian Literature Centre, Dimapur (Aug 27):

Dr W. Konghar, Chairman of the Christian Literature Centre, inaugurated a 17 beds guest house of CLC Dimapur for Church leaders. The CLC Dimapur has also been renovated. It looks new and well organised. Please uphold the ministries of CLC Dimapur.

Centenary Celebration of Impur Christian Hospital (Oct 5):

Impur Christian Hospital celebrated 100th years of its inception under the leadership of Rev Dr Mar Atsongchanger, Executive Secretary of ABAM, the Chairperson of ADMC, Dr S. S. Aka and the members of the ADMC, the Centenary Celebration of ICH was hosted with



grand celebration. More than 500 delegates were present. The pioneering work of American Baptist Missionary couple, *Dr. and Mrs James R Bailey*, who came to impur in 1909, was remembered with gratitude. *Dr. A. K. Lama*, the General Secretary of CBCNEI ministered the Word of God and invited ABAM leaders to carry forth the vision by dreaming for a Nursing College or a Medical School for the posterity.

Medical Board of CBCNEI (Oct 3 - 4):

The representatives from the five hospitals of CBCNEI met on Oct.



3-4, 2012 at Impur and took many important decisions. The Board appointed *Mr. Nig-sangtemsuo Ao* as the Chief Administrative Officer of JCMC. All hospitals are in need of

Christian Doctors and Nursing Tutors.

Celebrate Recovery (Oct 8 - 10):

With the sponsorship from Summerville Baptist Church and TLA, a three day training program was hosted by CBCNEI in Guwahati. 47 pastors and Christian workers participated

the program. The resource persons were *Pastor Dana Gatewood, Ms Mary Ann Boggs, John Foster, and Denise Foster*. The focus was to train the participants how to help recover those who are captive to various kind of addictions.

The Board of Christian Literature Center (Oct 16):

The CLC Board met for one day and took several important decisions. The CLC Dimapur has been given special attention for its development. A new assistant Director (Mr. Isaac Aimol) has been appointed for Imphal branch. The CLC released two new publications on this day.

Special Consultation of CBCNEI Leaders (Oct 17):

One day special consultation of CBCNEI leaders was held in Guwahati to consider the future ministries of CBCNEI. The Con-



sultation recommended appointment of a special trustee to develop CBCNEI compound. They also recommended a Steering Committee to guide CBCNEI in launching a full-fledged ministry that will channelize Baptist Response to various disasters in the region.

Executive Committee Meeting (Oct 18):

Dr Kavito Zhimo, the President of CBCNEI led the Executive



Committee members representing the six conventions for a review of the ministry of CBCNEI. All the Secretaries and Subcommittees presented their reports and their decisions were ratified.

Mission Consultation cum Pastors Training organised by Mising Baptist Kebang

(1 - 4 Nov):

Mising Baptist Kebang (Convention) is one of the youngest Conventions here in North East India, comprising of six member Associations in six different districts of Assam. It is an Associate member of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI), where over hundred churches are affiliated under MBK. Many churches and various mission agencies from Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh are working among the Mising people

as their mission fields. Since the convention is young, the local association or the churches remain closer to the sponsoring bodies more than their own local bodies. Therefore seeing the needs, the MBK under the initiative of CBCNEI Mission Department organised its first ever Mission consultation cum pastors training for all the mission agencies working among the Mising people with Rev Dr A. K. Lama, General Secretary, CBCNEI as the Resource person. Out of 23 mission agencies 10 were present during the mission consultation. The mission consultation ended on a positive note with both MBK and mission agencies adopting resolutions for better partnerships and coordination for the extension of His Kingdom. Altogether 59 pastors attended the pas-



tors training organised by MBK with Rev Dr A. K. Lama as the speaker for the pastors training. On 4th November, Mr. Abhijit Pegu, Regional Secretary, MBK was given licence for conducting Lords Supper and Baptism. Mr Champe Doley was installed as the new Mission Secretary by Rev Dr A. K. Lama.

12th Mission Conference LBM-LNBA-M at Kon- phung Baptist Church LNBA-M (16 -18 Nov):

On the theme ***“You shall be my witness to all Nations”***, the Liangmai Naga Baptist Association in collaboration with



Manipur Baptist Convention Mission Department conducted its **12th Mission Conference at Konphung Baptist Church, Manipur**. Topics such as “Biblical perspective of Mission”, “Mission begins at home”, “The life and Responsibility of an Evangelist”, and “Church and Mission: A Paradigm Shift” were discussed in the conference. The Mission conference was attended by 29 evangelists and around 89 delegates consisting of Church elders and pastors under LNBA. Mr R. T. Johnson Raih (Principal MBC Higher Sec. School, Imphal), Rev Alani Songsir (Mission Secretary, MBC), Rev Z. Mairilungbou (Executive Secretary, LNBA-M) and Mr Mhabemo Kithan (Mission Assistant, CBCNEI) were

the resource persons. The participants were blessed through this mission conference and expressed their gratitude to LNBA-M, MBC and CBCNEI for the fruitful conference.

White Memorial Hostel, Guwahati celebrates 75th Years Jubilee (Nov 24):

White Memorial Hostel, the first college going girl's hostel in the North East India, established in 1937 celebrated her 75 years Jubilee on in Guwahati on the theme "**Triumphant Virtuous Women**". White Memorial Hostel is a part of the hostel ministry under Council of Baptist Churches in North East India (CBCNEI).

Rev Dr A.K Lama, the General Secretary shared greetings on behalf of CBCNEI. Shri. Khekiho Zhimomi, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Nagaland graced the occasion as the Chief Guest. He deeply appreciated the existence of this unique

hostel in NE states where pioneer women education seekers lived while there was no question of shelter for women. In his speech he stressed on sincerely to preserve this unique hostel as heritage without changing the original structure because he opined that development means destruction of the original beauty. The Speaker of the occasion was Rev Dr K. Zhimo, President CBCNEI. He spoke from the book of Esther. Recollecting the nostalgia of the hostel life, eminent pioneer alumni Ms Norun Sangma, Mrs Maya Ingti John, Mrs Sano Vamuzo, Chairperson Women Commission, Nagaland expressed with emotion of their past life in this hostel.

The second session was the Entertainment and alumni get together. The Jubilee Celebration was well attended by many alumni, distinguished guests and scholars.





Norun Sangma, Former Suptd. of White Memorial Hostel

*(On the occasion of 75th
year celebration of WM
Hostel date 24th Nov.
2012)*

First of all I extend my “NAMASKAR” to you all do day my heart is full of great joy to be able to come to this place and attend the Platinum Jubilee of the White Memorial Hostel. I also extend my thanks to the warden the students and members of the Platinum Jubilee’s Program Committee for their invitation.

At first I did not want to accept this big responsibility as I was afraid of the grown up college girls. I though it would not be easy for me to deal

with them. Any way the General Secretary Rev. Imotemjen Aier and late Rev. Sumkholen Serto encouraged me to help the young girls. Gladly I joined with the workers of the hostel and with the girls and it was not too heavy .The hostel workers and the girls all were happy, they were very helpful and co-operative.

For the night time I asked the girls to collect pieces of bricks, stones and sticks and keep in the room and at night when they hear me calling them to come down to help me. One night one man came tried to

open the doors. My nephew was with me. I woke him up and we two went out to see who he was. My nephew had a big dao in his hand. Bravely he looked for that person. Three times he hid and couldn't find him. All the girls came down with pieces of bricks, stones and sticks. My nephew was done looking for him and we all waiting bravely. He was hiding behind the old cowshed. My nephew saw him, caught him and dragged him and tied him and to a tree. The girls laughed at him, heat him, kicked him broke his wrist watch and said to him "Laz loga nai" (Are you not ashamed)

Dr. Ananta Baruah was called, he came out phoned to thana and after few minutes a full jeep of police came and took him with them. I too had a stick in my hand and pushed and heat him. The girls were very brave and cooperative. That was just like

a fun. After he was taken by the police girls laughed like anything. I appreciated girls for their co-operation.

While I was helping in the White Memorial hostel, Miss Suderman and Dr. & Mrs. Baruah they were always ready to help me, advised me.

Miss Burnham thought the hostel was already closed. But when Miss Suderman went to America and told about me, the students and the beautiful flower garden, she was very happy.

It was very very hard to leave my third sweet home White Memorial Hostel, where I had peace and joy and blessings from God!

May the good Lord bless and keep all of them.

Amen

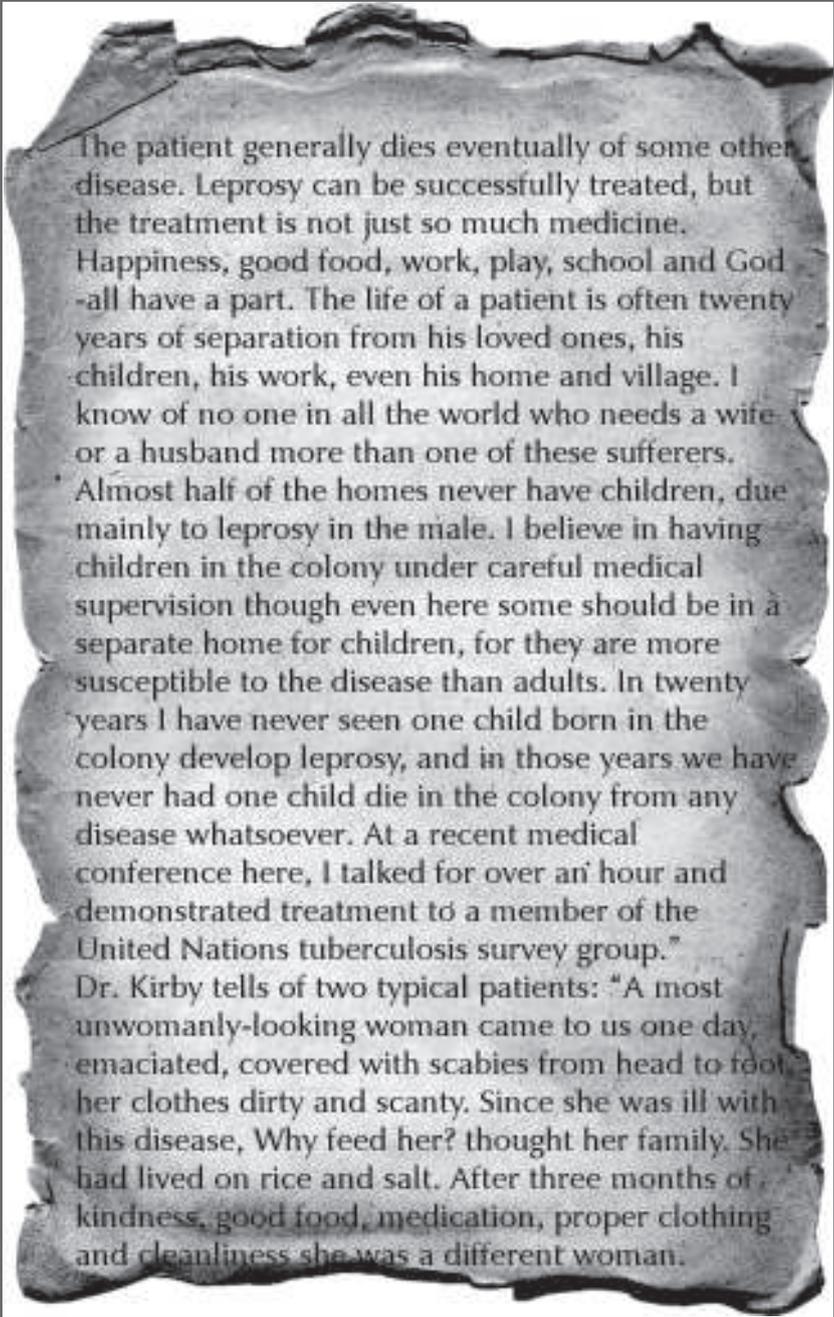
An excerpt taken from "These my Brethren", edited and compiled by Ada P. Stearns, published by Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society

Leprosy Work

Following the retirement of Dr. H. W. Kirby from the full medical program in 1941, he was free to give the leprosy colony at Jorhat his special devotion. In 1948 he was awarded by the Governor of Assam the gold Kaiser-i-Hind medal in recognition of his services. It is not unusual to have as many as ten races of India represented in the colony, and sometimes the patients walk as far as 200 miles to be admitted.

On some 65 acres of land given by the Government, [The present campus of Jorhat Christian Medical Centre] approximately 200 leprosy victims live in 59 houses, all but four of which are bamboo and thatch. Each patient-family has its own garden and all they grow is their own. They keep cows and chickens, and only supplemental food and clothing items have to be furnished.

Dr. Kirby has kept abreast of the latest methods of medical treatment of his patients. He writes from Jorhat, "It is very difficult to contract leprosy. How the leprosy bacillus is conveyed from the sick to the healthy is not fully understood, but there must first be lowered resistance in the blood of the non-leprosy person."



The patient generally dies eventually of some other disease. Leprosy can be successfully treated, but the treatment is not just so much medicine. Happiness, good food, work, play, school and God -all have a part. The life of a patient is often twenty years of separation from his loved ones, his children, his work, even his home and village. I know of no one in all the world who needs a wife or a husband more than one of these sufferers. Almost half of the homes never have children, due mainly to leprosy in the male. I believe in having children in the colony under careful medical supervision though even here some should be in a separate home for children, for they are more susceptible to the disease than adults. In twenty years I have never seen one child born in the colony develop leprosy, and in those years we have never had one child die in the colony from any disease whatsoever. At a recent medical conference here, I talked for over an hour and demonstrated treatment to a member of the United Nations tuberculosis survey group."

Dr. Kirby tells of two typical patients: "A most unwomanly-looking woman came to us one day, emaciated, covered with scabies from head to foot, her clothes dirty and scanty. Since she was ill with this disease, Why feed her? thought her family. She had lived on rice and salt. After three months of kindness, good food, medication, proper clothing and cleanliness she was a different woman.

A girl from a tea garden said to me on arrival, 'You may cut me in pieces but I won't go inside a church; you may cut me to pieces but I won't go to school.' When she found that doing either was her own decision, she did both."

There have been a number of baptisms from among the Jorhat patients, and a gratifying number have been discharged as symptom-free. In 1953 Dr. Kirby's daughter, Dr. Mary Kirby Berry, will take charge of the Jorhat work. A project for reaching the villages from which the patients come is being planned in order to treat new cases there with a view to prevention and control of the disease.

In a recent letter from Rev. and Mrs. Maxwell Chance, written while they were in charge of Jorhat Theological Seminary, is found this interesting account of two more of Dr. Kirby's patients :

"Bhumidhor and Giridhor, studying at the Seminary, are former leprosy victims whose last despondent hope led them to our Jorhat Leprosy Colony as their only refuge. Before they found cleansing from leprosy they found Christ. Since they have found both forgiveness and healing, they have given themselves to tell of the Christ who led Dr. Kirby to develop this haven of mercy, healing and Life. Bhumidhor's possibilities are great, for he will be the first Christian preacher among a tribe numbering over 300,000!

During the summer vacation both men have gone to preach in the Assam stronghold of Hinduism on the largest island in the Brahmaputra River."

A second colony, located at Kangpokpi, was closed during the war because of a surprise Japanese attack, but in 1949 it was reopened by Dr. Frank F. Curry. He found only five buildings standing and these in need of repair. Hard work will be necessary to restore the colony to its pre-war status of over 100 patients, with a well-developed religious, educational, agricultural and medical program. Not merely treatment but leprosy control is the aim.

CBCNEI CONFERENCE CENTRE

A.C. ROOM

Single	- 4
Double	- 7
Triple	- 1

Common Bath

Double	- 4
Triple	- 2

NON A.C. ROOM (Bath Attached)

4 Beded	- 1
6 Beded	- 1
Double	- 6

Dormitory

Double	- 4	19 Beded	- 1	7 Beded	- 1
Triple	- 2	21 Beded	- 1	5 Beded	- 1

CONFERENCE HALLS

Conference Room New Block (AC)	₹ 2000/-
L. M. Auditorium (Non AC)	₹ 3000/-
Training Centre (AC)	₹ 1000/-

Contact: 0361-2736874 | 9085322961 | confcentre@cbcnei.com

New Appointments

The council has appointed the following for the various posts:



Mr Issac Lunglai is from Aimol Chingnunghut Baptist Church, Chandel district, Manipur. He earned his MBA from Sikkim Manipal University, Shillong. He is appointed as the Assistant Director of CLC Imphal Branch from August this year.



Mr N. Mhabemo Kithan is from old Changsu village, Wokha, Nagaland. He completed his BD after BA from Eastern Theological College. He has joined the Council as Mission Assistant from July 2 this year.



Mr Ningthoujam Rojit Singh hails from Phayeng, Imphal West, Manipur. He served the Manipur Baptist Convention as a driver for three years. He has joined the Council as a Driver from July 2 this year.



Mr Siamliana Khiangte comes from Guwahati, Assam. He completed his BSc. from Shillong. He worked as a Group Leader in NIIT Shillong Centre. He joined the Council as a Program Coordinator from July 2 this year.



Mr Lendup Tshering Lepcha is from Lower Dabling Basti, Kalimpong. He worked as a cook in Pine Brook restaurant Shillong for four years. He joined the Council as a Cook from July 2 this year.



By R. T. Johnson Raih, Principal MBC Higher Sec. School, Imphal

THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE OF REST

'Rest is the best for health', some people say. Rest is indeed important in maintaining a balanced life as we live in an action-oriented world! There is always something to do and no time to rest. Yet God demonstrated that physical rest is appropriate and right when he said, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest" (Mark 6: 31- 32). Our normal understanding of rest is associated with the various po-

sitions of a human body; sitting, squatting, sleeping or lying down, leaning, kneeling etc. Further, when we talk of rest, certain furniture like bed, chair, couch, stool, sofa etc, come to our imagination. But what does this term or concept mean from the biblical perspective?

Firstly, rest as complete ceasing of work. If we trace the origin of this term in the Bible we come across in Gen 2: 2 which

says, *“By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.”*

The concept of rest mentioned here is ‘ceasing’ from work after the completion of the creation of the world and the universe by God. However when we reach Ex 20: 8; 31: 15 the concept of rest takes an elevated meaning. Here God tells Moses to tell the Israelites to keep the Sabbath as a holy day by observing and honouring it and not doing anything on this day. Remember, here the Sabbath day was to be observed in honour of God and not necessarily because human beings have completed the different kinds of work in their life and cease from work like God.

Secondly, rest as a point of unburdening and new beginning. Jesus invites everyone who is tired and burdened in carrying heavy load and he will give each of them rest (Matt 11: 28). There are many people in this world who have carried their

heavy burden for as long as they could remember. Some people found the way to unburden their load early in life whereas some very late. Some sadly end their lives without knowing where to unburden themselves. Many people carry their burden to the school/ college/ university/ work place, and then bring it home to only pick it up and carry the same or heavier load tomorrow... continuously going in a circle. They do not know where to unburden themselves and live a life of freedom. Jesus is offering rest to such people. This rest is the unburdening moment of their lives and the beginning of a new life of freedom; freedom from the penalty and power of sin.

Thirdly, rest as the ultimate plan of God. When Jesus was about to leave his disciples for heaven, the disciples were torn apart with fear and insecurity. Then Jesus comforted them that he is going to heaven to prepare a place for them. He assured them that there are many

rooms in his father's house. He promised them that he'd come back and take them to where he is (Jn 14: 1-4). It will be the day when creation will be renewed and restored, every mark of sin will be removed, and the world will be made perfect again. It will be the moment in history when life will be full of rest and peace because rest is the ultimate plan of God.

Finally, rest as the abiding presence of God. Hoping for complete rest one day in heaven is a good thing. To unburden one's heavy load at one point of time in history is very essential. But for me the more immediate and helpful concept as a resident of this world before we go home is this last paradigm; rest in the midst of action. God was telling Moses and the Israelites that he will give them the land flowing with milk and honey but that he would not go up with them because they were a stiff-necked people (Ex 33: 3). At this Moses and the people were so grieved. Moses reasoned with

God and spoke with him face to face, as a man speaks with his friend (Ex 33: 11). Moses reminds God that this nation is his people (Ex 33: 13). Then God spoke forth one of the most amazing concepts of rest in the Bible. He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." (Ex 33: 14). Moses' prayer was answered but he continued to bargain by saying, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here". (Ex 33: 15).

Great leaders can become so tired, stressed and even almost burnt out after great victories and achievements. Prophet Elijah after the triumphant Mt. Carmel episode ran away to Beersheba in Judah and then walked another day's journey into the desert and sat down under a broom tree and prayed that he might die (I Kings 19: 3-4). The famous Samson after killing 1000 men with the jaw bone of a donkey cried out to God for he was thirsty. He questioned God if he would be made

to die and fall into the hands of the circumcised (Jud 15: 16- 18). Pastors, mission workers, teachers, politicians, contractors, bureaucrats, doctors, engineers etc, will all get tired emotionally and spiritually on this road of life. But should we panic and be like people without hope? Doesn't the Bible tell us that the youths will grow weary, and young men stumble and fall but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength (Isa 40: 28- 31)?

When the boat Jesus and his disciples were travelling in was rocked by the storm (Matt 8: 23- 27), while Jesus was undisturbed, the disciples panicked and became like a dwarf in their faith. I can almost hear the unspoken rebuke of Jesus toward the disciples, "Can the sea swallow its Master; Can the wind trample his boat; Is your future in danger; Is there anything I can't do; So why do you fear, ye of little faith, when I am near?" God's presence with us is always a continual rest in our

everyday activities. Jesus' final comforting words to his disciples were, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jn 14: 27). Experiencing God's peace and joy in the midst of our sorrow, accidents, deaths, misfortune, hurts, tears, injustice, wrong accusations, sickness etc, helps us to experience continual rest in the journey of our lives. In Christ we have peace. As we continue to live on until the earth and the heavens all wear out like a garment and rolled up like a robe (Heb 1: 11- 12), let us remember that true rest is not in the position of our bodies nor is it associated with the furniture of our homes and time of the day (night). But true rest resides in the presence of God in our lives!



By Cheryl Ford, California

A Life Changing Revelation

Have you ever felt that you don't meet God's standards, and that you are less than you should be as a Christian? It is hard to walk in peace and confidence as a woman of God when the broken world around us so devalues us. Our parents fail to instill in us healthy self-esteem because they don't have it to give.

I was a dedicated pastor's wife serving God tirelessly in various ministries. But no matter how I served, I felt like a worthless failure. I had never lived up

to my parent's expectations, and now as an adult I didn't live up to God's.

How could this be when I tried so hard to please Him? That was my problem. I came to the Lord for salvation by His generous grace but now was striving to earn His favor. My legalism blocked the flow of His grace. I seemed to spend my life crying, "Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24)

One year I could take no more. Something had to change. I

chose to fast pray and seek God earnestly. The Holy Spirit replied with a revelation that changed my life forever. I know that if you suffer similarly, it will help you too, I had known God loves me but felt He could not tolerate me. He loved me enough to save me, but it seemed that whenever I prayed, He said to Himself, “Oh no, here comes the whiner. I’ve got to go hide from her.”

But on that particular day, I saw an opposite picture. First, I saw Queen Esther going fearfully before her King, unsure she would survive the experience. Anyone who approached the throne uninvited would be put to death. The only exception was if the king held out (his “golden scepter”) to spare his or her life. But the king hadn’t called for Esther in a month. She feared the worst if she approached the throne uninvited. But to her great relief the King did extend his scepter and spared her. (Esther 4:5

Then I saw myself going before

my King Jesus. His throne, unlike earthly thrones, is a throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16). He gives an open invitation, saying “Come to me. I love you and want you to know that my scepter is ALWAYS extended to you. I even wait for you to come. I will never leave you standing outside.”

And not only has that, but He even invited me to come and sit with Him. The Bible calls it being seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)

From then on I learned to share my guilt and condemnation aside and march boldly to His throne of grace, where I touched His golden scepter and received His approval.

And this grace is for you, too, dear sisters in Christ. He loves you more than you can imagine. He wants to enjoy your presence. He wants to answer your prayers. Let Him welcome you to His throne of grace. His grace truly is amazing!

A Note of Appreciation

CBCNEI expresses appreciation and gratitude to those individuals, churches, fellowships and organizations who have been partnering/supporting the Ministries of CBCNEI through their sacrificial giving. The following contributions have been received by us.

Towards Mission Project

- | | |
|--|------------|
| 1. Dakopgre Baptist Church, Tura | ₹ 15,000 |
| 2. Dr Dave Register | ₹ 1,20,000 |
| 3. Lotha Baptist Church, Dimapur | ₹ 4,000 |
| 4. Manipur Baptist Convention | ₹ 8,000 |
| 5. Naga Christian Fellowship, Ghy/Shillong | ₹ 21,600 |
| 6. Rongkhon Songgital Baptist Church, Tura | ₹ 15,000 |
| 7. Sumi Baptist Akukubu Kuqhakulu-A | ₹ 90,000 |
| 8. Wokha Baptist Church | ₹ 21,000 |

Assam Ethnic Conflict

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Campus Christian Fellowship, Kohima
Science College | ₹ 21,782 |
| 2. Thahekhu Baptist Church | ₹ 5,000 |
| 3. Guwahati Baptist Church, Guwahati | ₹ 25,800 |
| 4. Guwahati Satsang Church | ₹ 7,777 |

CBCNEI DAY OF PRAYER

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Mishmi Baptist Church Council | ₹ 5,000 |
| 2. Dibang Lohit Baptist C. Association | ₹ 10,000 |
| 3. Nokte Baptist Churches Association | ₹ 9,240 |
| 4. Yagrung Adi Baptist Church, SABA | ₹ 424 |
| 5. Zomi Baptist Church, Mizoram | ₹ 718 |

Mr Pawan Bhuyan
Property cum Finance Secretary



By Rev Dr J. Rimai, Mission Secretary, CBCNEI

Making Greater Impact in Mission: Streamlining & Partnership

Introduction: The North East Baptist Churches are by and large mission minded churches. I am encouraged to see many churches and Associations already sending so many missionaries and have invested so much in the mission field. God, in His goodness, has also blessed our humble efforts by making our work fruitful in many fields. However, all is not well in mission.

In spite of sending so many missionaries, the impact has been very minimal, especially mission outside the North East. It

could be because of our approach to mission. For many churches the concept of mission has been narrowed down so much so that they feel simply paying Rs.3000 to a person is enough to say they are involving in mission. Yes they are, but as we all know, mission is much more than that. Recruiting Missionaries, training them, supervising, member care is lacking so much in our mission work. Though many of us are aware, with our limited resources, building all these logistics and infrastructures in every local Church level is not possible.

Therefore, it is important for us to relook our work and see how we can be more effective; making greater impact in our mission efforts.

Individualism: In general, I feel, we have become too individualistic and have developed a negative competitive spirit within our own church. We want to take pride in the 'Number of Missionaries' we sent and not in the impact we make. We should be able to see the harvest from God's point of view; it is His harvest and we all partner with Him in it. Our passion and enthusiasm for mission has made us involved in it and has taken us to the extreme of sending missionaries at the individual, family, and local church level without properly working out a strategy. In the process, there has been a lot of confusions. Some feel frustrated, burned out, and even cheated in the mission work.

Intentional and focused: As an old proverb says, "Every stone thrown in the jungle does not

necessarily hit bird", we need to be more intentional and more focused in our mission work. It is not wrong to give financial support to mission organizations that are sending missionaries. But at the end of the day, we should be able to say "by the grace of God we were able to harvest these". The final goal of Mission is winning souls to Christ, but to achieve it, we have to encourage our members to continue to support the mission. We need to show to them what the Lord has blessed us through our humble obedience.

The problem with simply sponsoring missionaries through mission organizations is that, we are not being focused and intentional. It is not wrong to sponsor some missionaries as they are also sharing the word of God, but what I am saying is, in doing so, we simply let the organization achieve what they plan. We don't have a target and we are not into accomplishing it. If we want a catch, we need to focus and be very intentional

in our approach.

Resources: Fourthly, we need to be realistic in our approach to mission. Many of us would agree that we are very rich in human resources and not very rich financially. There are hundreds and thousands of people who wanted to be missionary, but we have very little financial resources to support them. Therefore, we need to be wise enough to make good judgment on how we can make greater impact with the resources we have. For example; it will not be a very wise decision to send a missionary to European countries or other countries where the cost of living is high or where we have to spend more than Rs. 50,000 as salary every month. The impact it will make as compared to the financial resources we may invest will not balance. It will drain out financial resources from the church within few years. Hence it may be wiser to send 5 missionaries with the above money to the place where would manage well.

With all these mentioned, it may be necessary for us to revisit the missionary work of the American Baptist Mission (International Ministries).

Revisiting International Ministries in North East India:

The impact of the missionary endeavor of the American Baptist Mission is seen in the life of the Baptist churches in North East India today. By the grace of God, they have done well in their missionary endeavor. The mission policy and the strategy they have adopted to win souls to Christ were relevant to the given situation and the time. It may be important for us to relook and evaluate so that it will help us to see the need of our time as well.

One of the main reasons why they were fruitful could be because their mission approach was holistic. They helped people improve their living condition through providing the immediate needs in the form of the followings:

1. Education: Establishing

schools, translating books, and even inventing scripts for them,

2. Health: Establishing hospitals and clinics for them and also teaching them hygienic living,

3. Skills: They taught the people skills such as carpentry, etc.

They were able to do all these because they have a strong home support; united and focused. Their investment in one mission field is enormous as we can still see them in the form of Hospitals and Mission Centers in our own land. This is possible because of their concerted effort.

Secondly, they did not end in sending sponsorship money to the mission field, but monitored them by placing their own people in the field who would continually write back reports, asking prayers support and informing the needs in the fields.

Thirdly, they were very intentional in their approach. They were not easily discouraged or

disheartened by the external oppositions in the field or at home. Once they are stationed, they ensured that churches are planted that are made self sufficient. Today, by the grace of God, they can rejoice in what the Lord has done through their humble efforts.

The Need:

It has become imperative for us to relook our efforts and see if there are areas we need to improve in our mission works.

Working together: The local autonomy of Baptist churches has, in some way, contributed to make us believe that mission belongs to individual family, local churches, societies, associations, and Convention. It is very natural for us to say, “My Mission, or Our Mission”. This has negatively affected the mission work in a sense that we want to do it ‘alone’. We don’t want others coming to the area where we are working. But the question is, can we really do it all ‘alone’?

For example, in a village where

there is no water supply, every family needed a water pond. They all dug their own pond for one week. In the end of the week they found out that they were not able to dig big and deep enough to get water. Later they decided to dig together for the village, and eventually got water sufficient for all the villagers.

Strong points in working individually: No doubt, there are strong reasons why we should work alone, such as,

- Get to know the evangelist and the field (sense of satisfaction).
- You can visit anytime and help the church.
- You can call something for your own.
- Easier to raise fund from the church members.

Weak points: However, there are more weak points than strong points if we work alone.

- How much can an individual really achieve?

- Lack of proper supervision; no training = lack of discipleship, No member care,
- You can be easily fooled
- Burn out from too many demands
- Unable to help in infrastructure
- Once you decide to stop sponsorship it gets lost
- Doubling of sponsorship
- Your endeavor not recorded
- No impact left behind

Secondly when you work together, you are also encouraging/enabling the smaller/weaker churches to be also involved in mission. They, on their own, are unable to support any missionary or evangelist, but with you they can also share their resources to the measure the Lord has blessed them with and support missionaries.

Conclusion: Looking into all these issues, I want to point out few points for discussions so

that we can make greater impact in our mission.

1. **Streamlining:** In order to make greater impact in mission, it is necessary that we streamline all the mission activities through the church and work together at the churches Association level. In this we can pull our resources both human and finance together. This will help us in many areas in mission work such as; field survey, strategy planning, recruiting right candidates, training them for cross cultural mission, proper supervision, member care, withdrawal plan, etc.
2. **Partnership:** There is this new paradigm shift in mission which will come to us very soon, and that is partnership of churches; a shift from agencies to churches. This applies to both

here at home and also in the mission fields. At home it is important that we partner each other for more strength to meet challenges in the field. In the mission field we need to partner with the existing church for better understanding and proper supervision. This helps in avoiding unwanted confusions, conflict and misunderstandings in the field. This will also help us in times of troubles and difficulties in the field.

Looking at the potentials and opportunities, and the impact we make, it is time for us to work together. We need to be more focused and intentional in our approach. We should not be satisfied by simply sending money to the mission organizations to do the mission work. We should be part of the work for which we are called.



By Rev Taku Longkumer, Development Workers under International Ministries (ABCUSA)

PREPARE YE THE WAY OF THE LORD

Listen to the reading of the Old Testament , “Arise shine for the light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you”. Isa 60:1-3

Light is a precious gift from God. In the beginning God said, “Let there be light”. Now during the winter months of the year it gets dark quite early. Imagine people who are living without electric lights. Many of them relied on oil lamps or firewood. The Bible often uses darkness for sin, evil as well as fear and despair. Light is used as a symbol for the mercy, love and sal-

vation that come from the hand of God.

Through history Christians lit candles as a symbol of the light of hope that shines from Christ and the glorious salvation, He gives to us sinners who live in spiritual darkness without Christ. The Advent wreath was developed to help Christians meditate during Advent, the church season that helps us focus on the first and second coming of Christ.

Advent is from the Latin word means arrival or approach, or coming. Advent is the arrival,

the approach, the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world through His birth. In North East India many of our churches do not observe this Advent season. The Advent season starts on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. The real reason for the season is to mark the waiting for and the preparation for the birth of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.

These four Sundays before Christmas are focused on four important topics such as Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. This year (2012) the first Sunday of Advent will be on the 2nd December, the first Sunday. I would like to share the first Sunday of Advent "HOPE".

Hope means, hoping when things are hopeless or it is no virtue at all. As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery. It is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength. So Advent is a season of hope and expectation with three faces each looking in a different direction. One to the past,

another looking around at the present and the third into the future.

When I say, to the past, which means Advent is the historical fulfillment. It was not just prophecy any more. The Advent we hope for the birth of Jesus now as a remembrance of an historical event. The historical record said to have occurred in Bethlehem during the time of Caesar Augustus. The Biblical records and stories from Matthew and Luke support the historical record. Jesus is already born and Christmas has become a birthday and not a due date. But we should not forget the other two aspects of advent. The expectation of both present and a future coming of the Christ.

The hope of Christ coming is not just a past history or prophecy, but everyday in our lives. The hope of Christ working and fulfilling his promises is very real and important. This not just a promise which was fulfilled once and for all at Bethlehem, as a single historical event, but

this is a promise which is fulfilled over and over again not just at Christmas, but at any time and in any place when we experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is the promise from despair to hope, from darkness to light. The presence of God comes in many forms or ways. The presence of God (Immanuel) can come at any moment, even in suffering, such as a death or accident, serious illness, joyous time, at the birth of a baby, recovery from an illness, the achievement of a lifelong goal etc. So advent is not just about the past, but it is about the ways in which God comes to us in the present and can and does come to us at any moment and at any time. Because His name is Immanuel (God with us).

The scripture has even more to say about the future Advent. The cosmic renewal, the new world, new heaven, the change that last forever. When things will be as God initially intended at creation. This hope is still yet to fulfill. That day “every

knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord”. One day this future Advent will be fully fulfilled and God’s reign will be fully known everywhere.

Christ has come and died for us, Christ rose from the dead and He is our Immanuel, He is present here among us, working in us through us, Christ will come in glory. Let us seek God with all our hearts. I pray that the beginning of this Advent season will shed light so you may see the sign given unto us....may see Christ moving in your life.....may feel His comfort and hope from seeing these things. May you really prepare yourselves this Advent for Christmas to truly experience the hope of forgiveness, the hope of eternal life, the hope of joy, peace and love given to us through the birth of Jesus Christ.

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By Rev Dr A. K. Lama, General Secretary, CBCNEI

Mission: Ex Deus et Ex Humanus

I. Introduction

Christian Mission is *ex Deus* (from God) as well as *ex Humanus* (from human being). It is from God, of God, and for God. Yet human intellect, which is a gift from God, is a necessity in making it happen. However, human intellect is not free from presuppositions, perspective, prejudices, cultural biases, fear, ignorance, pride, fear, the desire of freedom from any accountability and various human limitations. Therefore, it is pos-

sible that with all good intention a Christian mission may entail with it—confusion, misunderstanding, division, distrust, suspicion, blame, and bad relationships. We may be 80% right and only 20% wrong, and yet the 20%, though small, can undermine all the right done. Undoubtedly, Mission effort requires constant reflection on what we are doing and how we are doing.

II. Philosophy of Mission

What is the philosophy of your

mission?

The question may sound ridiculous to a missionary or any mission agency. We would normally ask about Vision, Mission, and Methodology. We might question about the commitment of a missionary or financial stability of a sending agency, or at the most, we may question about their theology.

Usually, we don't talk about the philosophy of mission. We talk about philosophy of education and science but not of mission. Some may talk about it in the academic set up, but rarely while orienting a missionary. I suggest that we talk about it sooner than later.

What is philosophy?

Philosophy, in academic set up, is defined differently but I would adapt it in following terms.

Philosophy of Mission comprises a set of views and theories of a particular philosopher (in our case the source is the Holy Bible and the Holy Spirit who inspired it), the fundamental nature of knowledge (the

essentials and the core values of the teachings of the Holy Bible), *reality* (understanding of social, religious, political, and economical context), *and a critical consideration of the existing and possible results and their implications* (learning from the two thousand years of the history of the missions of Church).

Hence the philosophy of mission embodies in itself the theology of mission, the ethics of mission, and the wisdom of mission (the best applied ethics). It needs to be articulated by the missionary who is on the mission field. And its articulation would often depend on the depth of the virtues a missionary has acquired. This is why the intensity of the problem on the mission field is direct reflection of who the missionary as a person is. Hence, continuous orientation, training, and support of a missionary with a right philosophy of mission are indispensable.

The first component of the philosophy of mission is the knowledge of the Holy Scripture and

our continued learning from the Holy Spirit. Biblical mission must be grounded in the Biblical Theology. A study of sociology, anthropology, culture and other skills are helpful; however, it is the understanding of Biblical theology that would determine how biblical the particular mission is. Samuel Escobar rightly emphasized, *Biblical scholarship and theology are therefore foundational points of reference for missiological work.* (p.22)

What constitutes our biblical theology?

We need to ask questions such as:

What is essential and non-essential in our mission?

How do we understand the Biblical concept of Church?

What is a local Church?
What is a universal Church?

Is there anything called independent and isolated Church?

What does the Bible teach us about goal of faith?

about unity and love?

character of a new community?

about the ultimate goal of missions?

Biblical theology mandates the following:

Vision: All may glorify God of the Bible

Mission: To save people from the penalty of sin (evangelism) and from the power of sin (discipleship)

Objectives:

1. To present the whole gospel relevant to the context

2. To facilitate establishing of a witnessing community, a body of Christ, who is able to interpret and apply the gospel in their context.

3. To educate the new community to seek love and unity with other existing followers of Christ so that they can together become a powerful witnessing community. To have functional understanding with fellow Christians and not do the things that divides the local Christian community. [Essential unites but non-essential di-

vides].

4. To enable the established new community become mature and multiply on their own.

We need to check whether our Vision, Mission, and Objectives are aligned to the biblical theology.

II. Transforming our theology into our Ethics:

The second component of the philosophy is facing the *reality* (understanding of social, cultural, religious, political, and economical context).

Our theology must be made relevant to the context. It must determine our ethics that is pragmatic.

What kind of life style? behaviour? cloths? food habit?

What is prevalent? What is assumed in the minds of people?

Is there any ethical guideline for our Mission?

If so, how are they influenced and guided by our biblical theology?

We should also ask the

questions about implications of our mission?

What are the implications of what are we doing?

how are we doing?

negative campaign?

methods of control?

the guiding principles?

Does the end justify the means?

Is misrepresentation, manipulation, and monopolization right in mission?

What kinds of ethics are applicable in a given situation?

What do we want to ultimately achieve through our mission effort?

Corporate authority or individual authority?

Personal vision or perpetuation of vision?

Personal empire or the Kingdom of God?

How do they fall in line with the teaching of the Bible?

Application of ethics must be sensitive to social, cultural, religious, political and economical context.

We are constantly judged by our conscience as well people around us who interpret us according to their yard stick.

III. Transforming Knowledge into Wisdom:

The third component of the Philosophy of Mission is *critical consideration of the existing and possible results and their implications* (learning from the two thousand years of the history of the missions of Church).

Most problems on the Mission field are not new. They are repetition of the same from the past. Likewise, no debate and consultation on the subject is also new. Many books are written and published. Our library is full of them.

We are fortunate we have more than 2000 years of church history. We can learn from the past and shape our present. We are blessed with more than one option.

In other words, we have options to be wiser than our predecessors. We can choose to be wise. It is one thing to have informa-

tion but it is entirely another thing to have wisdom. There are things that may apparently look right, legal, and good and yet may cause damages that are serious in nature. Mission is not only about right theology but also ethics that is right and appropriate.

St. Paul wrote, *All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.* (1Co 6:12 NAS)

It is not only right means but also right end result.

It is not only reaching the destination but taking the community along with us. It's not about how fast we arrive at the spot but how safe we arrive. The traffic sign *better late than never* does have some lesson even for mission work.

Hence, wisdom is needed. The wisest man of the world wrote, ¹³ *Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.* ¹⁴ *For God will bring every deed into*

judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. (Eccl 12:13-14)

We need wisdom to uphold our united common witness, wisdom to trust in God, and wisdom to seek not only His Kingdom but also His righteousness on top priority.

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. (James 1:5)

Conclusion:

Yes we need to draw a succinct and carefully thought philosophy of Biblical Mission. However, the greatest challenge would be how to nurture them in the minds and hearts of our jealous and passionate missionaries on the mission field.

I believe what is impossible with man is possible with God and hence our effort must be persistent and consistent.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Recommended Books:

Bishop Dr Ezra Sargunam, ed., *Mission Mandate II*, 2006.

Chan-Sik Park & Noah Jung, ed., *21C New Nomad Era and Migrant Mission*, 2010.

Echard J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission: Paul and the Early Church*, Vol 1 & 2, 2004.

John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, 2008

Roger E. Hedlund, *Roots of the Great Debate in Mission: Historical and Theological Perspective*, Series 3, 1993.

S. D. Ponraj, *The Mark of a Missionary: Essential Qualifications for a Missionary*, 1997.

Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to*

Everywhere, 2003.

Vinoth Ramachandra, *The Recovery of Mission: Beyond the Pluralist Paradigm*, 1996.

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