

JAN - FEB 2021  
RS 20/-



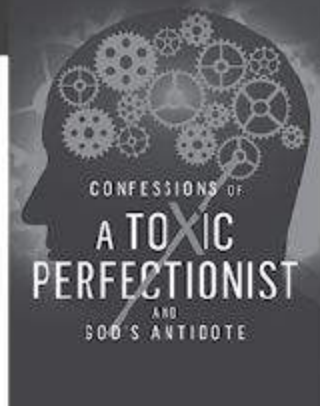
# *Mental* **HEALTH**



# Confessions of a Toxic Perfectionist and God's Antidote

— George Verwer, D.D.

GEORGE VERWER, D.D.



Paperback | Rs.99.00

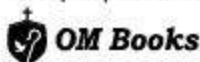
A strong commitment to excellence, and doing things right in any realm is admirable.

But when it develops to a toxic hidden streak as perfectionism under the pretext of perfect Christian life it can be murderous. Dr. George Verwer brings out in this book examples from his life and mission of over 65 years. There is a strong biblical basis for what is shared here, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23) which he paraphrases, all are toxic and fallen short of the glory of God.

Billy Graham had rightly said, "The greatest obstacle to our sanctification or godly life is our inability to see ourselves as we really are."

Please visit your nearest OM Books Retail Store for all your Christian Resources  
Ahmedabad ☎ 079-25397720 | Aizawl ☎ 0389-2318688 | Bangalore ☎ 080-25452850/51 | Dimapur ☎ 03862-229370 | Guwahati ☎ 0361-2732098  
Hyderabad ☎ 040-40307524 | Imphal ☎ 0385-2423398 | Kochi ☎ 0484-2396333 Kottayam ☎ 0481-2582333 | Lucknow ☎ 0522-4950442 | New Delhi ☎ 011-23364670 | Shillong ☎ 0364-2228232 | Trivandrum ☎ 0471-2550444 | Tura ☎ 03651-224618 | Visakhapatnam ☎ 0891-2567544 |  
Online Store [www.christianstore.in](http://www.christianstore.in) ☎ 040-40307540

For enquiries please contact:



OM Books, Logos Bhavan, Jeedimetla Village  
Medchal Road, Suchitra Junction, Secunderabad  
Telangana - 500 067 | Phone: 040 40307500  
email: [partners@ombooks.org](mailto:partners@ombooks.org)

For mail orders, please send the appropriate amount per order by MO or DD drawn in favour of 'OM Books' to the above address

**BIBLES BOOKS MUSIC GIFTS MOVIES AND MORE**

# Let's mind our minds!

***Let the mind of the master be the master of your mind.*** (Source Unknown) We Christians, like any others in the world would want to be religious without using our minds.

St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans (8 : 5–8) did not presume doing away with our minds while giving directions to live a spirit filled life on this earth.

The man whose mind is set on the desires of the Spirit is led by the Spirit. His attitudes are directed and formed by God. He thinks (uses mind!) the way God thinks. He gives his whole life, including his mind to the complete control of the Holy Spirit. Since the Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself, the spiritual man's desires are those things which please God. He loves to glorify Christ, show Christ to others.

Quite often we tend to think that we do not need to use our minds as we grow 'spiritually'. No, my dear friends, mind matters! The Bible clearly teaches about the importance of mind in Is. 26: 3; I Cor. 14: 14 and Col. 2: 14. So let us mind our minds and give it to the control of the Holy Spirit and think with Him, work with Him and enjoy living according to His desires. (Col. 3: 1, 2)

Mental health issues are very common nowadays and we do not realize the need to care for those affected. Rather we create a stigma and ill-treat people affected and we rarely realize that we ourselves are not healthy. Let us keep our mind too equally healthy as we keep our body healthy. Please enjoy reading articles on this from the subject experts and pass them on to your friends.

CL wishes all the CL readers a Christ centered New Year 2021!

Dear readers, please encourage your friends in the EUs and EGFs to subscribe to CL. If you have any struggles in getting CL, please contact us. You are welcome to write to the editor your feedback about CL to ***campus.link@uesi.in***



**T. Athma Soruban**

Hon. Editor

athma.soruban@uesi.in

## CAMPUSLINK VOL.23 NO.1

### Hon. Editor

T. Athma Soruban

### Editing by

T. Athma Soruban

Sunny Pradeep

Preeti Khristmukti

### Cover design & Lay-out

Prince Edwin. P

**E-mail:** campus.link@uesi.in

### Website:

www.CampusLinklive.org

## SUBSCRIPTION

### For Students

One Year Rs. 100/-

Three Years Rs 200/-

### Others

One Year Rs 200/-

Ten Years - Rs 1500/-

### Overseas:

1 Year - \$ 20

10 Years - \$ 200

For permission to reprint articles, write to the Hon. Editor.

## DEPOSITING SUBSCRIPTIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS

A/c Name: UESI Publication  
Trust

A/c No: 0907101061471

Bank: Canara Bank, Kellys  
corner, Chennai - 600007

IFS code: CNRB0000907

Inform details of deposit to  
campus.link@uesi.in

## INSIDE

### MENTAL HEALTH – A CHRISTIAN RESPONSE..... 5

- DR. SAMSON GANDHI

### MENTAL HEALTH AT WORKPLACE. . . 9

- DR. NANDA DULAL

### PANDEMICS CAN BE STRESSFUL . . . 13

- DR SHARON RUTH

### HOW TO FACE DISTRESS AND DISCOURAGEMENT? ..... 18

- ABRAHAM JEBAVEERAN

### JESUS AND HIS WORD ..... 23

- DORIS KURAPATY

### MY WELL-BEING, OTHERS' WELFARE! ..... 28

- BENJAMIN GOUDALLER

### COME OUT, ELIJAH! ..... 31

- ANGELIN DEVARAJ

### IS EVIDENCE NEEDED TO BELEIVE IN CHRIST ? ..... 32

- M. STALIN

### PRAYER & ONLY PRAYER SHOULD BE OUR FIRST RESORT! ..... 35

- JANVI CHETRI



## Mental Health – A Christian Response

*Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. – John 14:27*

**Y**ou and I are unique individuals, beautifully created to celebrate life. We are unique because God has created us in His image; beautiful as we are capable of love, and celebrate life for we can be creative in partnership with God. Anyone who can exercise faith, hope and love will scarcely experience mental health problems.

World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as: "A state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community."

Fear, anxiety, guilt and anger rob us of joy and peace. Fear of failure and rejection, anxiety of the unknown future, guilt of falling short of expectations, and pent up anger over injustices can corrupt our sense of well-being. Mental Health is disturbed when our state of well-being is lost. Based on the above definition, WHO believes, that people who realize their abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life and work productively and contribute to society do not have emotional, psychological and behavioral problems. The evidence is quite contrary to it. We see otherwise bright students,

career oriented and successful, and socially popular people having mental health problems.

The real issues are loss of belonging, meaninglessness and purposelessness in life. To belong, people seek relationships. When people are accepted as they are and valued as individuals, and are not criticized, rejected or manipulated, they feel secure. The truth of the matter is when others accept and value you, you accept and value yourself. If they don't, you are ill at ease with yourself and lose that sense of well-being.

Reward for your hard work is a great motivator. But after some time, wealth, power and popularity lose their charm and a sense of meaninglessness and purposelessness sets in. It leaves a void in your soul. People tend to fill that void with more of the same things and naturally they are never satisfied. Quite often loss of well-being is marked by depression. *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"*

Therefore, the twin causes of loss of well-being and consequently mental health are a lack of a fulfilling purpose in life and loving relationships to share that purpose with.

Take the first, a fulfilling purpose. Christ, when he was asked, as to which is the greatest commandment (greatest thing to do, highest purpose to pursue), reiterated that it is "to love the Lord your God with all you heart, with all your soul and with all your mind." There is something uplifting, sublime in climbing mountains. I have not scaled Mount Everest but I did climb a few hills. The feeling of moving from a valley to a mountain top is exhilarating. We are created for higher things. When God calls to love him, he calls to higher values, larger pursuits and fulfilling purposes. We enter into the kingdom of God where he rules and his subjects are happy. When God is not on our radar, we crawl in muddy pursuits of this world and naturally end up unhappy and depressed. To love God is the greatest pursuit in life.

Take the second, loving relationships. Jesus, in the same breath, reiterated that we are called to love our neighbours. Love is to share our lives with them. The goodness we experience as we love God must be shared with all those who are in our life. When we do not love God, then by default, we try to make others love us and value us by dominating, controlling and manipulating. Naturally this leads



to conflicts and violence because the other is also trying to do the same.

Christian response to the problem of mental health is not about a creed but the creator, not a process but a person and not rules but relationships. Without connecting to God, the source of life, through a relationship with Jesus Christ, the channel of that life, any attempt to experience lasting sense of well-being is frustrating, if not impossible.

If loving God (living in the kingdom of God) and loving our neighbours (sharing the goodness of the kingdom of God with others) leads to a sense of well-being, then how does it translate into a practical lifestyle? The following four simple but powerful disciplines help us practice the presence of God and love of our neighbor and enjoy good mental health.

**1. Meditative prayer:** God is good and he is good all the time. He loves us. He cares for us. He acted in history and left us 'his story' to tell us how he wants to relate to us and the promises he made and wants to fulfill in our lives. The Bible and abundant literature on it can help us meditate who God is and how he acts in our lives. God's antidote to a crisis is to remember how he came

through to aid his people through the history and be reassured that he would help us too. Consider his promise: *"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You."* Paul encourages us to *"Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, that passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."* It is a good practice to reflect on the scriptures in the morning, through the day and at bedtime. Consider how great is your God! Your spirits will be surely lifted up.

**2. Obedience to discovered truths:** As we relate to him, we encounter him. His love is so gentle yet mighty that we will be totally influenced. His way is to lead us into all truth. The truths of Christ. He taught his disciples to wash each other's feet in humility. Forgive one another as he will forgive. Share what you have with the poor and needy. *"Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."* Make choices based on teachings of Christ and peace will rule our hearts. All manner of evil: lies, deception, hypocrisy, pride, love of money, sexual sins, gluttony, envy, jealousy, bad language, anger

must be shunned in obedience to Christ. As we practice meditative prayer, the Lord will speak to us and address our weaknesses and we must give up evil. Jesus said, *"If you love me, keep my commandments."*

### **3. Confess failures, receive forgiveness:**

As a child falls and gets up many times before he can walk, a child of God is also prone to fall several times before he can walk a righteous life. Always confess your sins to God and receive forgiveness. Keep short accounts by coming to God quickly. Hiding our sins is burdensome. Psalm 32 and Psalm 51 can be personalized to make confession and receiving forgiveness. *"A righteous man may fall seven times and rise again but the wicked shall fall by calamity."* Confession with repentance keeps our connection with God. Never neglect or underestimate the destructive power of sin. Jesus paid for our sins so that through him we can be reconciled with God. Reconciliation restores our well-being.

### **4. Celebrate life through thanksgiving:**

Gratitude is a fitting response to the grace of God. We do not deserve any love, mercy or forgiveness but the grace of God – his unmerited favour – makes it

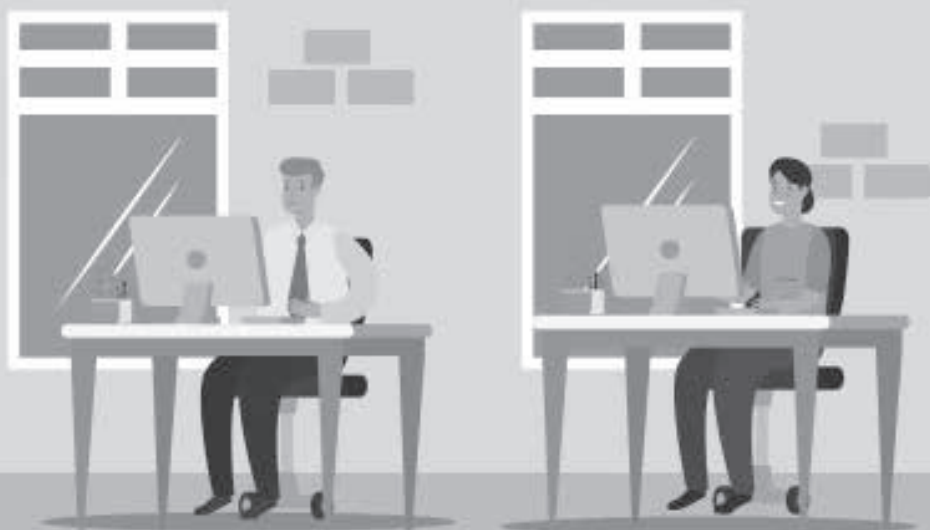
possible. Therefore, we will do well to be thankful and rejoicing for all the goodness of God, blessings of God and his faithfulness that reaches to the sky. Thanksgiving produces joyful emotions and they in turn produce endorphins in our brain that relieve stress and pain. What science is saying today had already been said in the Bible: *"A merry heart is like a medicine."* Thanksgiving will surely make us whole. The lone cleansed leper who returned to thank Jesus, went away doubly blessed by him: *"Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well (whole)."* The other nine were cleansed but were not made 'whole'. Thanksgiving to God is reciprocated by a gift of wholesome health, even mental health.

Let us whole heartedly belong to God. Have a clear purpose of lovingly sharing the goodness of such a life with others. Practice the above four principles. Make a habit of it. We will enjoy the abundant life. Mental health is part of it.



**Dr. Samson Gandhi** is passionate about Spiritual Direction, Christian Counselling and Christian Leadership. He heads 'Person to Person' an Institute for Christian counselling ([www.persontoperson.org](http://www.persontoperson.org)). He can be contacted at: [samsongandhi@yahoo.com](mailto:samsongandhi@yahoo.com)





## MENTAL HEALTH AT WORKPLACE

Generally, the mental health of a person is considered as the cognitive, behavioural, and emotional well-being of a person. It is concerned with how the individual thinks, feels, and behaves. The term “mental health” is sometimes used to mean the absence of a mental disorder. According to World Health Organisation (WHO) “Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and can make a contribution to his or her community.” The WHO stresses that mental health is “more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities.” Peak mental health is about not only avoiding active conditions but also

looking after ongoing wellness and happiness. The maxim, “there is no health without mental health” emphasizes that mental health is an integral and essential component of health. Mental health affects daily life, relationships and eventually overall physical health. Adults spend considerable time at work. Therefore, life at work is of paramount importance for the overall well being of an individual. Employees working in a positive, supportive and conducive environment remain motivated and productive at the workplace. On the other hand, a negative working environment may lead to health problems as well as alcoholism, absenteeism and low productivity.

There are many different mental disorders with different presentations. They are generally characterized by a combination of abnormal thoughts, perceptions, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others. Depression and anxiety disorders are common mental disorders that have an impact on our ability to work and to work productively. Globally, more than 300 million people suffer from depression, the leading cause of disability. More than 260 million are living with anxiety disorders. Many of these people live with both. A recent WHO-led study estimates that depression and anxiety disorders cost the global economy US\$ 1 trillion each year in lost productivity. Mental disorders contribute to a significant load of morbidity and disability, even though few conditions account for increased mortality. As per the Global Burden of Disease report, mental disorders accounts for 13% of total disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) lost for Years Lived with Disability (YLD) with depression being the leading cause. As per mental health survey of India, it is estimated that, excluding tobacco use disorders, mental morbidity of individuals above the age of 18 years currently is 10.6%. 150 million Indians need active interventions. Three crucial issues that influence

the state of well-being of a person at the workplace may be identified as stress, disregard for acknowledgement and career stagnation.

Stress-related to work is a common cause of mental ill-health. Demand for more hours of work, unachievable high target, failing to rise to the occasion to meet ever-increasing expectations of stakeholders, peer pressure, multidimensional challenges and unhealthy relationship are some of the causes for building up of tension at work. To remain competitive and relevant in the changing world, organisations aim at achieving more profit with reduced cost and manpower. Overtly or covertly, employees are driven into anxiety and mental stress. It is interesting to note that a few companies depute the executives for "de-stress" programs after they are stressed-out. But they carry the same mental burdens there too. Work away from the office or off from work is not always a stress-buster. Peace from within and mental stability are keys to mental equilibrium. Stability will stave off disorders. Often at work, we are pushed to more than we can handle, but God never gives us more than *He* can handle. "I can do all things through Him who gives me strength." (Phil.4:13). We must keep renewing our strength in the

Lord from time to time. "But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (Isa 40: 31).

Everyone craves for recognition for his or her hard work in the organisation. Absence of reward and award often lead to an emotional imbalance in the mind. Commendation of colleagues who seem to be less talented or to have achieved the target through unethical means destabilises the sound mind. Jealousy vitiates work atmosphere and affects our performance. Its tailing effects impact other areas of life and drive into depression. The Psalmist facing a similar situation in life declares, "Don't be annoyed by anyone who does wrong and don't envy them. They will soon disappear like grass without rain. (Psalm37:1-2 CEV). Let us explore God's purpose in our lives as we expectantly look unto Him.

The Important aspect that has a tremendous impact on work-life is career growth. It is quite natural for executives and professionals in every field to expect the regular rise in the hierarchy of the organisations as they put heart and soul into the work. Denials of promotions have led many not only to heart-burns

but also uncontrollable anxieties and abnormal psychological disturbance. It has impelled some persons to take drastic steps in life especially when the junior becomes the boss. In a corporation, the senior-most executive was bypassed by the Board to become CEO of the organisation. The person went into depression as his dream was dashed and it was beyond his imagination. Upon counselling and prayers, he was slowly brought into normalcy. He learnt his spiritual lessons from the verse: "Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people." (Col.3:23-NLT). After one and a half year, the chief executive resigned. Then the Board invited the same senior-most executive to head the firm. The person understood God's timing is always perfect for every event in his life including his elevation. Now he believes that his promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor the south. It is God who judges: He brings one down, He exalts another. Promotion or exaltation comes from God (Psalm75:6-7).

WHO declared 10<sup>th</sup> October every year to be observed as world mental health day. The world body has issued the following tips for "Workplace rules for a happy life" as follows: 1. Trust no one but respect

everyone, 2. What happens in the office, remains in office. Never take office gossips to home and vice-versa, 3. Enter office in time, leave on time. Your desktop is not helping to improve your health, 4. Never make relationships in the workplace. It will always backfire, 5. Expect nothing. If somebody helps, feel thankful. If not, you will learn to know things on your own, 6. Never rush for a position. If you get promoted, congrats. If not, doesn't matter. You will always be remembered for your knowledge and politeness, not for your designation, 7. Never run behind office stuff. You have better things to do in life, 8. Avoid taking everything on your ego. Your salary matters. You are being paid. Use your assets to get happiness, 9. It does not matter how people treat you. Be humble. You are not

everyone's cup of tea, 10. In the end, nothing matters except family, friends, home and inner peace (World's Mental Health day Theme by WHO).

Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us ( Heb 12:1) as God desires us to enjoy good health and that all will go well with us, even as our souls are getting along well (3John1:2).

References: 1. "what is mental health?"- Medical News Today, page 1, April 13, 2020, Adam Felman  
2. WHO- World Mental Health day/2017. 3. National Mental Health Survey of India, 2015-16, pages 1 & 14, (NIMHANS)



**Dr. Nanda Dulal** works as Group Director in an organisation and presently lives with his wife Geetanjali in Bangalore.

## SPECIAL OFFER FOR STUDENTS!

Subscribe for three years, by paying just Rs. 200/-

You can deposit the amount to

**Canara Bank**  
**UESI Publication Trust,**  
**Branch: Kellys corner,**  
**A/c No. 0907101061471**  
**IFScode: CNRB0000907**

After depositing please send a mail to [campus.link@uesi.in](mailto:campus.link@uesi.in) mentioning your postal address, phone number and email id for easy reference and better communication.



## **Pandemics can be stressful**

**T**he coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. However, these actions are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.

### **Specific and uncontrolled fears related to infection**

This is commonly one of the most frequent psychological reaction to pandemics. Several existing studies

demonstrated that those who have been exposed to the risk of infection may develop pervasive fears about their health, worries to infect others and fear infecting family members. Studies have reported that these individuals are more vulnerable than others to manifest worries if they experienced physical symptoms potentially linked to the infection and fear that symptoms are directly associated to actively having the infection even several months after the exposure.

### **Pervasive anxiety**

Social isolation related to restrictions and lockdown measures are linked to feelings of uncertainty for the future, fear of new and unknown infective agents resulting in abnormally increased

anxiety. Anxiety may be directly related to sensorial deprivation and pervasive loneliness, in this case first insomnia but later depression and post-traumatic stress occurs. In addition, anxiety is closely associated with fatigue and reduced performance in healthcare workers while boredom and loneliness are directly related to anger, frustration and sufferings linked to quarantine restrictions. Furthermore, additional tragic effects associated with pervasive anxiety in a pandemic period may include the perceived lower social support, separation from loved ones, loss of freedom, uncertainty and boredom.

### **Frustration and boredom**

Distress, boredom, social isolation and frustration are directly related to confinement, abnormally reduced social/physical contact with others, and loss of usual habits. As reported by Jeong *et al.* frustration and pervasive loneliness seem to derive by the inhibition from daily activities, interruption of social necessities, not taking part in social networking activities. Unfortunately, in this context hopelessness together with other individual characteristics such as the experience of childhood maltreatment as well as extreme sensory processing patterns may significantly and independently

predict suicidal behaviour but even the unbearable anger related to the imposition of quarantine may lead to negative outcomes.

### **Disabling loneliness**

The final effect of social isolation is pervasive loneliness and boredom, which have potential dramatic effects on both physical and mental individual well-being. Pervasive loneliness may be significantly associated with increased depression and suicidal behaviour. Unfortunately, the isolation is progressively enhanced by anxiety, panic or collective hysteria. Cognitive functions and decision making are firstly impaired by hyperarousal and anxiety and later by disabling feelings of loneliness. In addition, social isolation and loneliness are also associated with alcohol and drug abuse. Both frustration and pervasive loneliness seem to derive by the inhibition from daily activities, interruption of social necessities, inability to take part in social networking activities enhancing the risk of hopelessness and suicidal behaviour in this specific context. Overall, it is well known that long periods of social isolation or quarantine for specific illnesses may have detrimental effects on mental well-being.

### **What can be done...**



The new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling of children, and lack of physical contact with other family members, friends and colleagues take time to get used to. Adapting to lifestyle changes such as these, and managing the fear of contracting the virus and worry about people close to us who are particularly vulnerable, are challenging for all of us. They can be particularly difficult for people with mental health conditions.

Fortunately, there are lots of things that we can do to look after our own mental health and to help others who may need some extra support and care.

Here are tips and advice that we hope you will find useful.

- ▶ **Keep informed.** Listen to advice and recommendations from your national and local authorities. Follow trusted news channels.
- ▶ **Have a routine.** Keep up with daily routines as far as possible, or make new ones.
  - Get up and go to bed at similar times every day.
  - Keep up with personal hygiene.
  - Eat healthy meals at regular times.

- Exercise regularly.
- Allocate time for working and time for resting.
- Make time for doing things you enjoy.
- ▶ **Minimize newsfeeds.** Try to reduce how much you watch, read or listen to news that makes you feel anxious or distressed. Seek the latest information at specific times of the day, once or twice a day if needed.
- ▶ **Social contact is important.** If your movements are restricted, keep in regular contact with people close to you by telephone and online channels.
- ▶ **Alcohol and drug use.** There is no evidence of any protective effect of drinking alcohol for viral or other infections. In fact, the opposite is true as the harmful use of alcohol is associated with increased risk of infections and worse treatment outcomes.
- ▶ **Screen time.** Be aware of how much time you spend in front of a screen every day. Make sure that you take regular breaks from on-screen activities.

- ▶ **Video games.** While video games can be a way to relax, it can be tempting to spend much more time on them than usual when at home for long periods. Be sure to keep the right balance with off-line activities in your daily routine.
- ▶ **Social media.** Use your social media accounts to promote positive and hopeful stories. Correct misinformation wherever you see it.
- ▶ **Help others.** If you are able to, offer support to people in your community who may need it, such as helping them with food shopping.
- ▶ **Support health workers.** Take opportunities online or through your community to thank your country's health-care workers and all those working to respond to COVID-19.
- ◆ In many cities, healthcare workers, who are treating COVID-19 patients during the day, have been forcefully evicted from their homes out of fear that they may be bringing the virus back at night.
- ◆ People who tested positive are being shunned in apartment complexes by their resident associations.
- ◆ The real need is to build community-based capacity in order to handle local issues long after the acute phase of the epidemic.
- ◆ Unless the community is empowered to take care of itself, we are staring at an ever-growing shadow of mental distress which will last much longer than the pandemic.
- ◆ For adolescents, it is reset time. It is time to build mental wellbeing and resilience into schools, the community, and their families

## The Future

### As I look ahead these are some of the challenges:

- ◆ COVID-19 has created a great deal of stigma mainly through a lack of awareness about how the disease spreads and how it attacks the human body.

As I close, I would like to quote what UNICEF has rightly said, "The stakes could not be higher. If not adequately or appropriately addressed, the mental health consequences for a generation of children and young people could far surpass the immediate health

and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving long-term social and economic consequences in its wake.”

### References:

- ♦ Serafini et al. (2020). The psychological impact of COVID-19 on the mental health in the general population. *QJM: An International Journal of Medicine*, 113(8), 529-535.

DOI: 10.1093/qjmed/hcaa201

- ♦ Healthy At Home -Mental Health. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/teams/mental-health-and-substance-use/covid-19>



**Dr Sharon Ruth**, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Victoria Hospital/ Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute.

## Link others with Campus Link

### You Can,

- Encourage members from your EU or EGF fellowship to subscribe to Campus Link,
- Gift subscribe Campus Link for your friends and family members too!
- Identify Christian Institutions or Seminaries or Bible colleges who would like to receive Campus Link and send their addresses to us
- ✓ Annual Subscription:  
**Student** - Rs 100,  
**Graduate** - Rs 200
- ✓ 10 Years subscription - Rs 1500 (can be paid in 3 installments)
- ✓ Student - Rs 200 for 3 years

Help them send their subscription to

**A/c Name:** UESI Publication Trust

**A/c No:** 0907101061471

**Bank:** Canara Bank, Kellys corner

**Chennai** – 600007

**IFS code:** CNRB0000907

The details of transfer of funds to the above account can be informed through email: [campus.link@uesi.in](mailto:campus.link@uesi.in)

**Please contact:** Mr. Prabhu Varakumar, to renew your subscription, mobile number: 9494146657



## HOW TO FACE DISTRESS AND DISCOURAGEMENT?

**A**s human beings we all are prone to distress and discouragement. The Preacher had rightly said, “As long as you live, everything you do brings nothing but worry and heartache (Eccle. 2:23 GNT)

The Bible portrays the life-experiences of God’s people truthfully and honestly. It never hides or covers up even the failures and bad experiences of them. This is one of the proofs that the Bible is reliable and trustworthy. One reason for depicting how God’s people like Moses, David, Elijah etc., faced problems and bitter experiences in their lives is for our instruction, so that we may have hope through endurance and through the encouragement from their lives. (Romans 15:4, *written in the past* refer the Old Testament. (HCSB)

Now let us see how King David, “the man after God’s own heart” (Acts 13; 12) faced distress and discouragement in his life so that we can also learn practical lessons to face them courageously.

Let us read **1 Samwwuel 30:1-6 (AMPC)**

Now when David and his men came home to Ziklag on the third day, they found that the Amalekites had made a raid on the South (the Negeb) and on Ziklag, and had struck Ziklag and burned it with fire, and had taken the women and all who were there, both great and small, captive. They killed no one, but carried them off and went on their way. So David and his men came to the town, and behold, it was burned, and their wives and sons and daughters were taken captive. *Then David and the men with him lifted up their voices and*

*wept until they had no more strength to weep.* David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail, the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. **David was greatly distressed, for the men spoke of stoning him because the souls of them all were bitterly grieved,** each man for his sons and daughters. **But David encouraged and strengthened himself in the Lord his God.**

### **How did David encourage himself in the Lord?**

When we study the above quoted Bible passage and circumstance in which he composed his Psalms, we can learn the following practical lessons to overcome distress and discouragement in our own lives.

#### **1. David vented his feelings such as anger, doubt, fear, worries and sometimes sorrows with tears. He even questioned God, without any inhibitions.**

\* In the above-mentioned passage, we read that David and the men with him lifted up their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep. (1 Sam 30:4)

\* When the Philistines captured David in Gath, he prayed, "You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; *Are they not in Your book?*" (Psalm 56:8)

\*How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide Your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me? - Psalm 13:1, 2

\*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest. -Psalm 22:1, 2

#### **2. David thanked, praised and worshipped the Lord God in all circumstances, even while facing great dangers.**

\*When David changed his behaviour before Abimelech, so that he drove him out, and he went away, and sang, "I will bless the LORD AT ALL TIMES; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. Oh, magnify the LORD WITH ME, and let us exalt His name together!" (Psalm 34:1-3)

\* When David fled before Saul into the cave, he sang, "My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast! I will sing and make melody! Awake, my glory! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn! I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among



the nations. For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the clouds. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let Your glory be over all the earth! (Psalm 57: 7-11)

\*Even Jesus sang a song with His disciples before going to face the greatest agony in His life – the crucifixion. “After singing psalms, they [*Jesus and His disciples*] went out to the Mount of Olives.” (Matt 26:30 HCSB)

### **3. David trusted God under all circumstances and confessed His power and his own faith on Him.**

\*When Saul had sent men to watch David’s house in order to kill him, he sang “My God of mercy shall come to meet me; God shall let me see my desire on my enemies. I will sing of Your power; Yes, I will sing aloud of Your mercy in the morning; For You have been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. To You, O my Strength, I will sing praises; For God is my defence, My God of mercy”. (Psalm 59:10, 16, 17)

\* When David was in the cave, he sang, “I cried out to You, O LORD: I said, “You *are* my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.” (Psalm 142:5)

### **Why does God allow His people to go through distress and discouragement?**

As I study the Bible, I found two main reasons for a child of God to go through a period of grief and sorrow.

**Reason 1:** To make them stronger in their faith, on the way to heaven.

In Psalm 84:5-7 (NKJV), we read that even those who enjoy the presence of God and worshipping Him, will go through the valley of Baca (weeping) so that they become stronger, on the way to heaven.

**Reason 2: To equip God’s people so as to comfort those who face grief and sorrow.**

Apostle Paul testifies, “Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God (2 Cor 1:3, 4-HCSB)

### **My testimony:**

In obedience to the call of the Lord of the harvest, my wife and I resigned our government jobs and joined the students’ wing of a missionary organisation in 1983. God had blessed us with 2 sons and 2 daughters. But our Lord had taken my wife into His kingdom in 1986 (**Job 1:21, 22**). At that time our eldest son was 10 years old and the fourth child (daughter) was just



13 months old. During the burial service of my wife, I carried my beloved baby-daughter in my arms and sang the Tamil song (composed by late Bro. Prakash Yesudian) "*Yesu pothume, Yesu pothume, Entha nazhililume, En nilaiyilumilei, Enthan vazhvinilei, Yesu pothume* (Jesus Christ is sufficient in any and every situation of my life) with tears.

I went and stayed with my sister's family in Thoothukudy. Even though my parents, relatives and mission organization supported and helped me, I was filled with great sorrow and faced a bleak future. Then one morning, a few days after my wife's death, I went alone to the beach, with my Bible and a song book. I chose a lonely place surrounded by trees. I sang a lot of songs thanking and praising God for granting me more than 10 years of blessed married life. I also sang songs of hope in Christ. I also thanked Him for the blessings in Christ. I loudly read out some Psalms (the book with ready-made vocabulary to express our emotions) with tear-filled eyes. I prayed loudly with cries and sobbing. I renewed my commitment to our Master. As we read in Philippians 4:6, **7**, the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guarded my heart and my mind in Christ Jesus. While leaving my bereaved two young sons in Santhosha Vidhyalaya

hostel, I taught them to pray, "O Lord, you alone are my hope; my trust from my childhood" (Psalm 71:5). Our Almighty God never forsook me and my 4 children.

(After a gap of about 6 years, as we read in Psalm 68:6, our loving Lord "who makes a home for the lonely", not only blessed me again with a wife, but also with a mother to the four children. God also blessed us with a fifth child – a son. By God's grace, all our 5 children are walking with the Lord. Our eldest son and daughter-in-law are actively involved in the EGF ministry. 4 children are well-settled in life and our youngest son has just completed his studies. My wife and I are fully engaged in the Lord's ministry. Praise and Glory be to God!)

The Almighty God says, "For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but My kindness shall not depart from you, nor shall My covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, WHO HAS MERCY ON YOU. (ISAIAH 54:10)

David is a challenging example for us. Let us apply the lessons we have learnt from his life and live a peace-filled life in Christ Jesus -the Prince of peace.

Dear reader, are you passing through "the valley of weeping" with distress and discouragement?



ment? Never give up your faith and hope in our Living God. The omniscient Father is strengthening your faith as well as equipping you to be a channel of blessing for others.



**Abraham JEBAVEERAN**  
lives in a North Indian city with his wife and youngest son. They are ministering to young people including university students.



## **PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

**Accredited by Asia Theological Association (ATA)**

**Established 1969**

**Invites applications from men and women  
called for ministry in South Asia**

- Emphasis on Biblical, Evangelical and Reformed Theology
- Mission and ministry-oriented education
- Qualified Professors and Teachers
- Well-equipped library, computer lab and spacious study hall.
- Accommodation for single men, women and married students

<i>Courses</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Entrance Qualification</i>
<b>Bachelor of Theology</b>	English	3 years	<b>10+2 pass</b>
<b>Master of Divinity</b>	English	3 years	<b>B.Th/B.A/B.Sc/B.Com or equivalent</b>
<b>*Master of Divinity- (Distance)</b>	English	3 years	<b>B.Th/B.A/B.Sc/B.Com or equivalent</b>
<b>*Master of Theology (Missions)</b>	English	2 years	<b>M.Div/BD</b>
<b>Diploma in Ministry Hindi-Extension un accredited</b>	Hindi	1 years	<b>10 or Equivalent</b>

**\* Accreditation will be sought from ATA**

**Classes will begin in July 2021.**

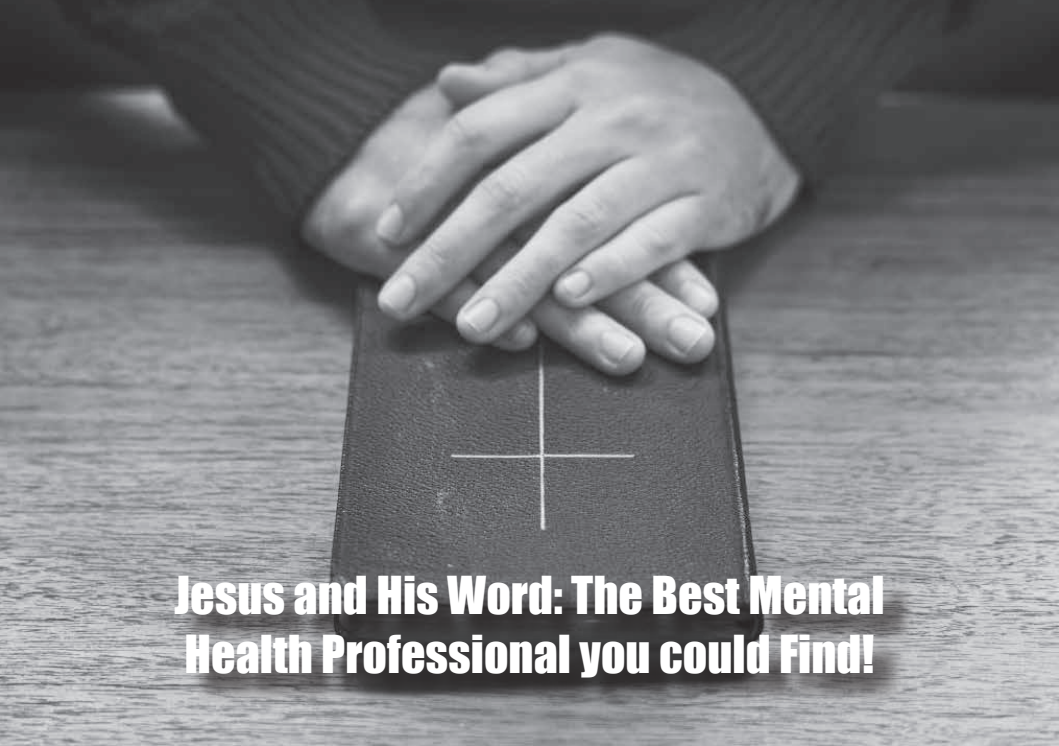
**For further information and application forms, please visit our website [www.ptsindia.com](http://www.ptsindia.com). Or contact Registrar (Admissions).**

**The Registrar Admissions,**

**P T Seminary,  
51- C Rajpur Road,  
Dehradun, UK 248001**

**Office-Phone: 0135 - 2658417**

**E-mail: [admissions@ptsindia.com](mailto:admissions@ptsindia.com)**



## Jesus and His Word: The Best Mental Health Professional you could Find!

**T**his topic has been making the rounds on social media and newspapers lately. Its importance has largely increased in India after the actor Sushant Singh Rajput was alleged to have died by suicide. People are now waking up to the realization that mental health is a serious issue and are slowly beginning to explore what it means. As a postgraduate having specialized in mental health, and a believer of the Lord Jesus Christ, I am convinced that our relationship with our maker is directly proportional to our mental health. The closer our walk with our Saviour, the more we are mentally and emotionally grounded. I would like to share a few thoughts that

the Lord has helped me realize about mental health and what our response should be as followers of Christ.

Mental health - like physical health - can get damaged if we do not take care of it. When Jesus said that we cannot live by bread alone; that signifies not only physical consumption of food but also mental and spiritual consumption of bread that is his word-The Bible. This concept only emerged through psychology in the past 150 years but has always been there according to scriptures when God speaks through the prophet Jeremiah in 17:9-10. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? "I the Lord search*

*the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds.* With increased research on human behavior, the world was looking into human emotions and how they play a major role in our daily interactions with one another. Though the theories did not make it to the implementation stage for the longest time, the findings still help us to understand different mental health conditions to this day.

Mental health according to the WHO *“is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”* While this definition is inclined more towards a self-centered healing approach, we as believers can turn to Christ who has promised us his spirit, which will guide us in all our decisions and circumstances. We need not rely on our strength or be burdened by our own decisions but depend on God’s promises and the plans he has for us.

Mental health then is not about how mentally strong we are, but about how firm our trust in God is. Sadly, this lack of sympathy is reflected in the way our society talks about mental health. Someone with a fragile temperament is merely dismissed as “unstable” or “crazy”. That is why we as believers must make it a point to go the extra mile and provide sound Christian counseling and loving companionship. After all, who could show unconditional love, apart from those who have experienced Christ’s love themselves?

When our minds are stressed, our physical health is affected. In his presentation on the relationship between mental health and physical health, Javier I. Rosado, said that Diabetes, heart disease, cancer, obesity are major illnesses because of poor mental health. Gastrointestinal problems, headaches and nausea are also a result of stress. We don’t acknowledge this, because we would rather give ten reasons for something, than address the root

## READERS' RESPONSE

Dear CL readers, we would like to get your feedback about CL. Kindly send your constructive feedback to [campus.link@uesi.in](mailto:campus.link@uesi.in)

**Hon. Editor**

cause. Therefore, to maintain our mental health (and eventually our physical health as well), we must have our “self-care” time with God every day. We need to take time to de-stress with God because he is our wonderful counselor and the one who bears our yoke. King David in the bible is an excellent example of how as human beings we will go through struggles, trials, temptations, irritation, anger, and many more disturbing circumstances but we don’t have to go through it alone. The Psalms show us how king David vents out before his perfect counselor -his triune god, whether he was in the heights of happiness or the depths of despair.

The bible is full of God’s promises and guidance for us in our time of need. So, to have good mental health, we must continue to spend time with God and ask him to increase our faith. Jesus tells us to cast our anxieties on him (1 Peter 5:7). Often, we stress out because we don’t want to upset our loved ones or because we cannot say no, out of fear of failing in the eyes of our employers or peers. But for all of this God has given us His Word to strengthen, renew, and correct. The psalmist very beautifully puts it in chapter 56:11 - “In God I trust, I shall not be afraid, what can man do to me.” He is God our creator who

made us in his image who knit us in our mother’s womb. He cares for us more than we care for ourselves. We can hold on to these promises as we cruise through life’s ups and downs.

As we grow closer to God, let’s also ask him to show us our weaknesses. Many times, we forget that we have our weaknesses too and we need to work on them before we find fault in others or blame our situations for it. As Jesus said “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your eye? (Matt 7:3). I would like to encourage my senior and junior brothers and sisters in Christ to take the opportunity to examine yourselves this year. Only when we are more aware of who we are, can we correct others. I highly recommend the book - ‘Spirit-Controlled Temperament’ by Tim LaHaye, if you want to better understand yourself or your personality. (Available on Amazon. in). In it, LaHaye provides answers patterned after ancient models of human behavior, taken from the Bible.

We are all born with distinct strengths, but also weaknesses that can hold us back. God wants to transform our natural weaknesses to make us dynamic, effective Christians who live above anger, fear, depression, and selfishness.



According to LaHaye, humans have four kinds of temperaments:

*"The 4 temperaments: Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholy and Phlegmatic, were first identified in Proverbs 30:11-14 when the wise man saw four kinds of people. About five hundred years later, the four were given names by Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine. Temperament is the combination of inborn traits that subconsciously affects all our behavior. It is a person's temperament that makes that person outgoing and extrovertish or shy and introverted. Character is the real you. The Bible refers to it as "the hidden person of the heart" 1 Pet. 3:4. It is the result of your natural temperament modified by childhood training, education, and basic attitudes, beliefs, principles, and motivations. It is sometimes referred to as "the soul" which is your mind, emotions and will." (Lahaye, Spirit-controlled temperament)*

All this will help us improve our understanding of ourselves and the surroundings we live in. we will be able to empathize with people in a better way. This will also help us to listen to people and the challenging situations they are facing. As we worship a God who listens when we humble ourselves in repentance and confession, let us also ask the Holy Spirit to help us live in that manner. The God who made our

bodies made our minds too. And so, he wants us to grow as a community together. He came down to earth to show us what perfect love looks like. He taught us how to forgive and how to share all our goods with each other. Along with sharing our materialistic goods, we need to have open hearts just like our Father in heaven so that we create a safe space for the other person to share their concerns with us. In ways like these, we can understand the importance of mental health better. We need not shun away from these things or feel like they are not meant for us. God commands us to love one another and therefore looking out for one another is a part of it. Let's not mistake it for interfering in another's life but let us look at it as being kind to one another just as Christ does for us.

I want to leave you with this: But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire compassion, and not sacrifice,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Matt 9:12)

When Jesus gave us the great commission, asking us to "make disciples", I believe that process included watching out for each other's mental health as well. He



wants us to be people who reach out to sinners, people dealing with their pain and guilt, who can receive salvation through Jesus alone.

### Works cited

World Health Organization. "Mental Health: strengthening our response." World Health Organization, 30 March 2018, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>. Accessed 28 December 2020.

Rosado, Javier I. "The relationship between Mental health and Physical health." Florida state university college of medicine, <https://www.migrantclinician.org/files/staff/MCNFSU%20-%20%20Physical%20and%20Mental%20>

Health%20%28Converted%20PPT%20Slides%29.pdf. Accessed 29 December 2020.

LaHaye, Tim. "The 4 Spirit-Controlled Temperaments." *The 4 Spirit-Controlled Temperaments*, 2014, <https://www.joydigitalmag.com/everyday-life/the-4-spirit-controlled-temperaments/>. Accessed 28 December 2020.



**Doris Kurapaty** has been associated with Vasai EU and EGF and now with Nashik EU and EGF since past one year.

After her MA in social work (Mental Health) from TISS-BALM, Chennai, is pursuing for higher studies. Ever since her childhood she has been interested to work among people with special needs.

## THEMES FOR CAMPUS LINK

**Mar – Apr - 2021:**

### **‘GENERATION GAP’**

*(Uniqueness of Christian Families, values and ethos of Christian Families)*

**LAST DATE: 25TH MAR 2021**

You can upload your articles, Testimonies, Short stories, Bible Studies, anecdotes, jokes, poems and cartoons are invited based on the themes at <http://campuslinklive.org/submit-for-cl/> or send email to [campus.link@uesi.in](mailto:campus.link@uesi.in)

**Articles other than these themes are also welcome!**



## My well-being, others' welfare!

**2020** was unprecedented due to the global pandemic. It resulted in the confounding of our style of living. Restrictions and isolations led to fear and anxiety. Coupled with the underlying mental health conditions, people with pre-existing mental health had to stand a higher risk of severe outcomes. Many are dealing with this by indulging in increased levels of alcohol consumption and drug usage etc., Some are impacted with insomnia, caused by anxiety of facing the new realities of working from home, temporary unemployment, home-schooling, online classes and lack of physical contact with other family



members, friends or colleagues. In addition, stress is also impacting us.

Mental health as defined by the World Health Organization is "a state of well-being, in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community"

### **The three core components of this definition are:**

1. Well-being
2. Effective functioning of an individual
3. Effective functioning for a community.

If these three components are fulfilled in an individual, then we can say with confidence, that our society will be a better place to dwell in and our lives would be optimal. Unfortunately, that's not the case!

Examining today's student lifestyle, one can see that there is no single place, thing or person that can satisfy the void in mental health. There are times we feel great around some people and find meaning in relationships, but at the end of the day it's always us and our loneliness – the never ending thoughts of not being good enough as a student, in the society, family or many other sectors. The pressures to blend in, over-achieve are high. As our elders have stated, "if we want to see our nation developed, we need to focus on education, developing and shaping ourselves as good students". But sadly, as per the statistics many students are struggling with suicidal thoughts, addiction, stress, identity crisis and aimlessness. Altogether these aspects impact well-being and effective functioning as individuals and community.

Our mental health is as important as physical health. Just as a person can do nothing if physical health is not fine, he can also do little if he is not mentally stable. Can a student do anything good if his mental is not fair? Absolutely not! That is why we see today's generation trying to fix things with temporary cheap thrills. This leads to bad and unhealthy thoughts. Life will not be like still water without any up and downs. This is the harsh

reality. Jesus invited us in Matthew 11:28 "come all who are weary and burdened, I will give you rest". As we meditate on this verse, we can come to an understanding that the Lord already knows that we are going to experience struggles in this world. It is not only you and me, but everyone goes through these situations. Which is why the Lord is giving this call. We need to make a decision to no more chase after the cheap thrills but rather respond to the invitation of Jesus to find peace. Here we see that our Creator is aware of all that we go through.



The Lord knows our heart (Psalms 24 :1) and the Lord knew us before we were even formed in our mother's womb (Jeremiah 1:5). The Father loves us deeply and delights in us. He sent His only son for us so that we can no more be servants in bondage but be free and become the sons and daughters of the Lord (John 8: 32:35). So, we should not give up on ourselves, but embrace the fact that it is going to be a tough and long journey. However, God has got our back in every chapter of life.

John 8:12 says “Whoever follows me will never walk-in darkness, but will have the light of life”. Many students are buying into the lies of this world, walking blindfolded. Many do not know where to go or what to do as they are emotionally sick, but here the Lord makes a beautiful statement “he will never walk in the



darkness”. This is what we need! We will be done with blindness and start wanting the light, only if we follow Jesus.

We believers claim that from the time of our salvation we have been following Jesus. Yet, why is it that sometimes in our lives we go through wilderness? When a child is learning to walk, it observes the mother’s footsteps to follow; but if that child is distracted by the surroundings it falls. Similarly, we are in the world which is controlled by evil. We need to be more focused on our footsteps in following Jesus. As we are taught, we can do it through personal relationship with Him and understanding every step of our Savior and to be more aware

of his voice by building intimacy with GOD.

As we struggle with mental health issues, we need to be reminded that Jesus Christ is the light of life. What I have realized is I can’t exhale peace if I am not inhaling Him and the life His spirit gives. We inhale so many times what the world has to offer and it leaves us wanting.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, left the 99 just for the 1 and that is ME – each of us. When God saved us, he knew we would struggle, he did it anyway regardless of how messed up we are.

Let us make a daily choice by saying, “I am done breathing the worldly feeds. I want to inhale the word of God and His spirit, so that I can exhale life to a broken world that is hurting, letting them know, that there is a hope that is Jesus. Let’s keep breathing the air that fills our lungs with life and cause us to exhale hope, peace, love to the people around. LET US BE CULTURE SETTERS. LET HOPE THAT JESUS OFFERS HAVE ITS LAST WORD.



**Benjamin Goudaller,** is a student pursuing his 3rd year in Paramedical course at Al-Ameen Institution Bijapur, Karnataka and is part of Bijapur ICEU

# Come out, Elijah!

What are you doing here,  
Afraid of human threat, run and  
disappear?

What are you doing here,  
Forgetting your anointing, dear?

Remember how I sustained you in  
famine,  
Through ravens and the widow at  
Zarephath!

Remember My encounters from  
heaven,  
The answer by Pre on the Carmel  
mount!

My Hand upon you I've kept,  
Overpowering the king, you ran  
ahead;

My Spirit inside of you I've left,  
No dew or rain, except when you  
said!

What then are you doing here,  
Choosing a diversion  
Caused by undue fear,  
Deviating from My direction?

The journey set for you is long,  
Go, return your way.  
Till when will you delay and  
prolong?

Hear not what others scheme or  
say.

Sitting under the broom tree  
To take your life you plead with  
Me.

No! get up, Elijah, and come,  
With you, I am not yet done.

Come, let's talk of what I have  
ordained,

All that you achieved, and all  
that's for you in store,  
You aren't My lone prophet left,  
be not afraid!

I've preserved for Myself seven  
thousand more!

Ahab may label you a troubler,  
And Jezebel call you a destroyer,  
But for Me, you are always 'My  
Warrior'!!!

So, get up, Elijah; come out of  
where you are!



**Angelin Devaraj** is doing  
her Masters in Chemistry in  
Amaravati, Maharashtra.  
Writing poems and songs  
are her favourite hobbies.

## Error Regretted

The error in the author's name for the Poem on Psalm 37 in the inner wrapper (page 2) of Campus Link November -December issue 2020 has been wrongly mentioned.

The author is **Anju Anil**, a part of BNE,KJC EU who writes poems based on her quiet time meditations. She is doing her BA EJP in Joseph's, Bangalore.

# IS EVIDENCE NEEDED TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST ?

In 2003, a young man in Chennai was working for the Lord as a caretaker in the mission office. One day he was invited by his colleagues to a picnic spot at St. Thomas Mount, where St. Thomas used to pray. After reaching the place he was astonished to see its beauty. That night while every one had slept this young man could not sleep. The Lord reminded him of Thomas and the relationship he had with the Lord. He too wanted a life like Thomas who became a witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

From the experience of this young man, I am encouraged to share this passage with you about the testimony of Thomas. Our central question, I feel is answered in John 20:24-31 - **“is evidence needed to believe in Christ?”**

The four gospels are often represented symbolically by the figures of the four beasts found in Revelation 4:7. John is often represented with the eagle, perhaps because eagles can fly higher and see farther. The gospel of John gives an insight into the character of the disciples, like Andrew who was always introducing people to Jesus; and Thomas who asked this amazing question. The writer knew his way around Jerusalem. And

he was familiar with the country through which Jesus travelled.

The immediate context of this text is found in chapter 18-21 that comes under passion and resurrection narrative and Jesus' appearance to his disciples.

## **Firstly, let us see what Caused Thomas to look for evidence? (V.24-25)**

What caused Thomas to look for evidence was his lack of faith. Although Jesus had three times predicted the glory of his resurrection. Thomas could not believe in the resurrection of Jesus because he himself had seen the crucifixion of Jesus. For Thomas, crucifixion was the end for Jesus. So perhaps Thomas was hiding in fear, gone off to weep over the failure of Jesus' whole mission, or turned back to his old ways. Thomas had slipped away from others because of doubt.

During his seminary days, Roger L. Fredrickson came to a point, where he was desperately asking the questions of Thomas. “If I could not have objective proof of seeing and touching – I would not believe. I felt, perhaps that the resurrection was a subjective, existential, mystical experience rather than a historical



objective event which kindled faith.” He lived with many doubts until he began to realize that he could not explain the power of a transformed, living community of believers without knowing that someone - an actual, living person had been the source of this life and power. He was grasped by J.B. Phillip’s “Ring of truth” and encountered the living, resurrected Lord. So he was profoundly grateful to Thomas who saw his doubts through to the end.”

Here, in the passage we find that the purpose of Jesus was to convince Thomas of the reality of his resurrection. Therefore, when one is willing to face the evidence and really loves Christ, he is certain to receive light.

**Secondly, we find that the evidence Made Thomas to Make a Great Confession (Vv.26-29):**

The testimony of the disciples that Jesus had showed them the wounds was not enough to convince Thomas. The next Sunday evening, Thomas was with the group again, Jesus was suddenly in their midst, even though the doors were closed.

Jesus told Thomas not to be faithless but to believe. The disciples saw him and believed. Thomas also believed, but only after having been over-insistent on the marvellous aspect of the appearance. To Thomas the

revelation was complete. Jesus was not only his Lord he was truly God. This became the complete Christian confession. Now he needed no more proof. The same Jesus he had followed, seen crucified had now stood before him and offered him the proof that he had demanded. He needed no more proof. Jesus was the incarnation of God who had come to earth in human flesh.

Then Thomas made a great Confession “My Lord and My God”!

This was a mighty declaration of faith. It was the first time that the title ‘My God’ was given to the Son of God with power. This was also the first time a disciple acknowledged Christ as God.

Jesus accepted the Thomas’ worship as God. Jesus told that Thomas believed him because he had seen him. There would be many people who would not have the opportunity to see him, to have their doubts brushed away as conclusively as Thomas’ had been. They were called as ‘blessed’ by Jesus.

God reveals Himself to those who seek him with all their heart. When God reveals himself, the obvious response is a great confession. In the case of Thomas he acknowledged Christ as his Lord and God. This should be the confession of every

genuine Christian. We are called 'blessed' by the Lord if we believe in him without seeing.

**Thirdly, John gives us the evidence of the History of Resurrection (V 30-31):**

In these last two verses, the gospel writer gives his reason for writing the Gospel. Jesus had done many signs in the presence of his disciples. A sign is an act that points beyond itself to compel belief in God. Therefore, the sign of resurrection is included in the gospel. He has presented this sign to the reader in such way that they would not only tell a story but be led to faith. The author's motive toward his reader is that they make the same confession that Thomas had made. The material included in the fourth Gospel had the evangelistic motive of bringing the reader to confess that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the promised deliverer from God, and that Jesus was God himself incarnated in human flesh. The person who believes this would have life with all its meaning and fullness. That life comes through belief in Jesus.

This is manifested in John 20:31. The gospel is written in order that the readers may 'believe'. According to some manuscripts, the word 'believe' is in the present tense and subjunctive mood (pistue-

that you may believe) that means the writer wants the readers to continue to believe. Another manuscript has this word in aorist subjunctive (pistueste- that you might believe now), which has an evangelistic purpose. It was written in the context of persecution when the Christians were expelled from the synagogue.

We began this meditation by reflecting on the experience of a young man. When this young man was still a boy, he heard about salvation at a UESI camp. He prayed and asked God; "Are you 'The Living God'? Did you die for the sins of humanity? Did you rise again on the third day? If you are a living God then please come into my life and heal the boils I have on both my legs; then I'll understand you have forgiven my sins and I will worship you." Then the boy went to the hostel and began to read the Bible every day and practice what the Bible teaches. He experienced joy and peace in his heart. He lived like this for a week then he thought that if he continues to live exactly as the Bible teaches for the rest of his life then how much peace that would bring to him. At the end of the week his boils were healed. He then acknowledged Jesus Christ as the living God and worshiped him and shared the good news with his parents and relatives and other

friends as well. He was determined to share God's peace to the world. Dear friends, that is my personal story.

Our Life is the greatest evidence to the world that Christ lived, died and rose again. Our greatest desire should be like that of the author of this gospel, who wanted the believers to continue their faith in Christ in the midst of persecution and also wanted everyone who did not believe in Jesus to believe henceforth.

What about us today? After being in faith for so many years do we still look for evidence? Or have we ourselves become an evidence for the resurrected Christ? Let us remember that we'll be called 'blessed' by the

Lord if we believe him without seeing Him.

Let us ask ourselves this question: **do we need evidence to believe in Christ?**

Do we have personal experiences that prove beyond doubt that Jesus lives? If so, let us thank him for that. If not, let us examine ourselves whether we lack faith or doubt the Lord? Let us take this time to confess as Thomas confessed "My Lord and My God"



**M. Stalin and Uma Stalin** are UESI -Tamilnadu Staff based in Port Blair for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. They are blessed with two children.

## Prayer & Only Prayer Should Be Our First Resort!

*Ye shall not fear them, for the Lord your God, He shall fight for you - Deuteronomy 3:22 (KJV)*

You see, not every day of our lives are bright and beautiful, some days are gloomy too.

When days are gloomy and things are uncertain, prayer and only prayer should be our first resort.

'Cause when we pray god hears us, when we pray mountain like situations move away.

So, let us not stop praying no matter how dark, no matter how hopeless our situation may seem.

Because for with God all things are possible (Matthew 19: 26) and

some bottles are not ours to fight,

He will fight for us and God has promised us that He will never ever leave us nor forsake us.

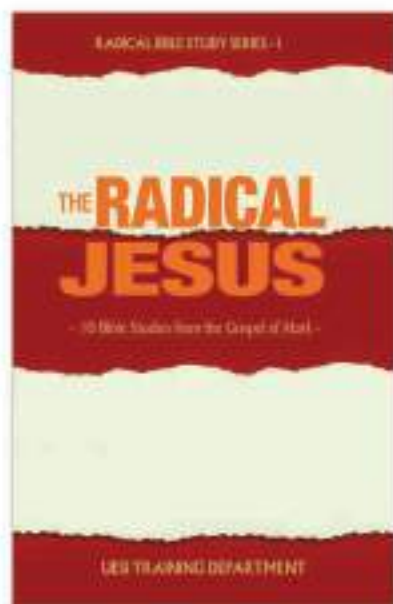
So let us pray and praise when things are okay. When things are bright and beautiful and when days seem hopeless


**PRAYER & ONLY PRAYER SHOULD BE OUR FIRST RESORT.**



**Janvi Chetni, SILIGURI, EGF**

# Radical Jesus



“Being Radical” is  a challenging concept. A radical is one who practices fundamentalism and known for having extreme political or religious ideas or one who is different in his or her thinking and action from others. Being radical means being misunderstood and rejected by others. But it always has the positive connotation of bringing about drastic changes to the existing lifestyle and value system of individuals and society. Hence, to be radical means, to be willing to take risks and dare to be different!

The first Bible study guide in this series is ‘The Radical Jesus’, which consists of 10 Bible studies from the Gospel of Mark. These studies help us to understand the radical nature of the life and teachings of Jesus. Jesus of the gospels is very different from Jesus as commonly understood today. Today’s Jesus is more a figment of our imaginations than the Jesus who walked the streets of Galilee two thousand years ago. The Radical Jesus helps us discover the real Jesus for ourselves.

## Copies available at

InterVarsity Publishers India  
19 Millers Road  
Kilpauk, Chennai -10

**books@uesi.in/ 0 9176 988 987**



## UESI PUBLICATION TRUST

Published by Mr. Saji Easo & Printed by Mr. D. Devavaram on behalf of UESI PUBLICATION TRUST.

Printed at Melpporul Achakam, No.278, Konnur High Road, Ayanavaram, Chennai 600 023.

Published from New No. 19, Old No. 10, Millers Road, Kilpauk, Chennai 600 010.

Editor Mr. T. Athma Soruban.