

JUL - AUG 2024  
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Vol. 26 No. 4



# TRUTH & FREEDOM



## The Truths of Historic Christian Faith



## From Ephemeral to Eternity

A world of likes, a follower's  
chase,

A superficial mask, a hollow  
face.

We seek connection, a genuine  
art,

But often settle for a fleeting  
part.

For friends, we yearn, with  
loyal heart,

But shadows dance where  
truths depart.

Betrayal's sting, a painful test,  
Reveals the fragile bonds, at  
best.

My papa's wisdom, a guiding  
light,

To be a friend, with all our  
might.

To offer solace, strength, and  
care,

And plant the seeds of  
friendship, rare.

Yet, in this quest for human  
grace,

We often overlook the ultimate  
place.

A Friend Divine, Who calls us  
near,

Whose love endures, year after  
year.

We've wandered far, in selfish  
ways,

Ignoring His call, on countless  
days.

But grace abounds, a tender  
plea,

To turn and find our destiny.

So let us strive, with hearts  
aflake,

To be the friends our world can  
claim.

With Jesus' love as our guiding  
star,

We'll mend the broken, and  
open hearts afar.



**S. Sneha Vanya**, doing B.Tech in Computer Science, EU Student at MHOW ICEU Madhya Pradesh. She can be reached at [snehavanyasaranu@gmail.com](mailto:snehavanyasaranu@gmail.com)

## Upholding the Truths of Historic Christian Faith

John Stott says, *"the Cross of Christ is at the center of the evangelical faith that is historic Biblical faith."*

Today's humans are living in a world of counterfeits, confused between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and fact and fake. They are searching for reality and the ultimate reality (truth). Today, college campuses are filled with students embracing different philosophies, isms and faiths and they are influenced by politics, and problems like ragging and racism. They need Truth and Freedom.

The Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU) was founded in 1877 as the first university Christian Union with the purpose of making Jesus Christ known to students in Cambridge. In 1954, Dr. T.N. Sterrett and Prof. E.H. Enoch were connected through Bro. Bhakt Singh to form UESI, with the aim of raising a testimony in the campuses to the Truths of Historic Christian Faith.

The Third aim of UESI focuses on raising in the colleges, a testimony to the truths of Historic Christian faith (10 doctrines of UESI). *'Marturia'* the Greek word for Testimony, which means *"account of what one has seen, heard and known."* The Ark and Tabernacle represented God's presence (Exo 33:7, 40:36-37 & Num 1:50) and God's law (Deut 10:1-5). Jesus came in human form to bear witness to the truth (Jn 18:37, Rev 1:5). His deity was testified by four reliable witnesses: John the Baptist, Jesus' works, God the Father, and the Scriptures (Jn 5:31-47). Jesus' disciples became witnesses to *'what God had done through Christ in human history'* - i.e. God raised Christ Jesus from the dead (Acts 1:8, 2:32, 3:15, 5:30, 32, 10:39, 40, 13:30,31, & 22:14, 15). The truth is meant to be revealed, not hidden (Mt 5:15,16).

EU students and graduates must be equipped to provide a biblical perspective on the human problems of physical, intellectual, emotional, psychological, social, and spiritual nature. They should be sensitive to the needs of those around them, including poor and sick students who are affected by natural disasters, poverty, injustice, and wickedness. EU students are expected to embody the biblical faith by articulating their beliefs and demonstrating them through their actions on campus (1 Pet 3:15).

*May the Lord help us, as students, staff, and graduates of UESI, to introspect as UESI commemorates 70 years of upholding the truths of Historic Christian Faith among college students in 2024!!!*



**Vivekananda Sunder Singh Babu**

+91-9440252002  
campus.link@uesi.in

**CAMPUSLINK  
VOL. 26, NO. 4**

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Athma Soruban

**Editorial Team**

Sunder Singh Babu

James Sebastian

Smitha George

Ruth Collins

Poonam Sotra

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**Cover design & Lay-out**

Prince Edwin. P

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

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**Overseas:**

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**SCANQR & PAY**



**SUBSCRIPTIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS**

A/c Name: UESI Publication Trust

A/c No: 0907101061471

Bank: Canara Bank

Branch: Chennai Purasawalkam

IFS code: CNRB0000907

Inform details of deposit to

campus.link@uesi.in

Ph: +91-9176 988 987 (CL Desk)

https://forms.gle/

BkpnYiZacUP9s4H8

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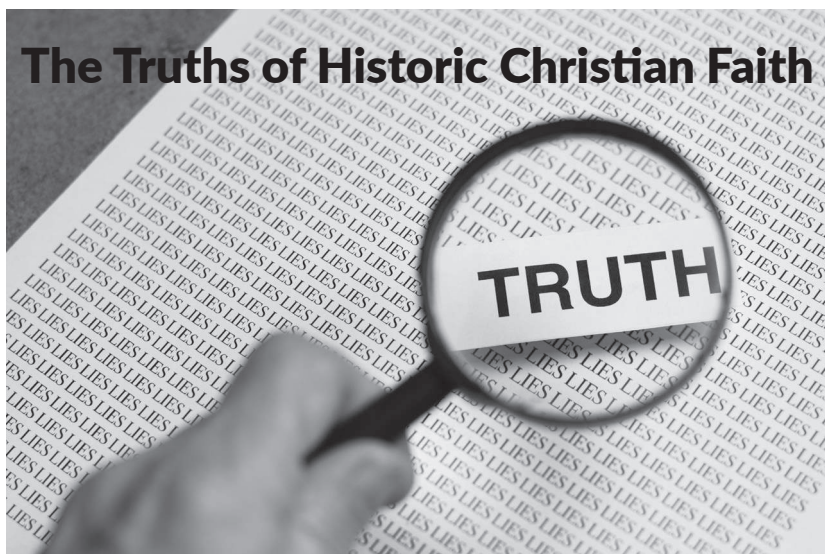
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# The Truths of Historic Christian Faith



**Introduction:** In the contemporary global culture, especially in its cultural theory, no idea is more unpopular than that of absolute truth. The phrase ‘absolute truth’ smacks of dogmatism, authoritarianism, a belief in the timeless and universal.<sup>1</sup> The culture in which we are living (both locally and globally) is so much against the notions of 1) absolute and exclusive truth and 2) uniqueness of one religion among the many that they are meted with antagonism and rejection. Many years ago, an Indian and a global figure, Ravi Zacharias described the culture in these words: “Philosophically you can believe anything as long as you don’t claim it to be true. Morally you can practice any-

thing as long as you don’t claim it is a better way. Religiously you can hold on to anything as long as you don’t bring Christ into it.”<sup>2</sup> It is against this backdrop that we are considering our (UESI) third aim (this is also the fourth aim of NEGF) of raising a testimony to the truths of the historic Christian faith and to present the message there of as the solution for the problems of mankind, covering whole of life.<sup>3</sup> We can see straight away the religious, philosophical, political, and cultural context in which we are called to present, represent, and

1. Terry Eagleton, *After Theory* (London: Basic Books, 2003), 103.

2. Ravi Zacharias, *Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims of the Christian Message* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 2000), vii.

3. To raise in the colleges, a testimony to the truths of Historic Christian faith, and to present its message (for the whole of life) as a Solution to the problems of mankind.

## Lead

stand for the truths of the historic Christian faith, is post-Christian and post-truth society. It is a very challenging task now than ever before and therefore, we need to think and act very clearly, critically, and strategically.

In this essay or article, our aim is to learn i) the logic of truth, ii) the truths of the historic Christian faith, iii) raising testimony to the truths (or creating a plausibility structure to prepare the ground for evangelism or witnessing, which is our first aim),<sup>4</sup> and iv) showing the message of the truths of the historic Christian faith as the solution for all human problems.

---

4. "To present the claims of Christ so that other students may come to a personal experience of Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and God through the new birth."

**I. The Logic of Truth:** "All roads lead to Rome and so any way will get you there" is a statement of Religious Pluralism, 5 according to which, different religions are likened to different routes to the same destiny. Similarly, some hold that religions are like

---

5. John Hick has been one of the leading proponents of Religious Pluralism. Many leading Indian Religious Leaders and Philosophers too (e.g., Rama Krishan Paramahansa, S. Radha Krishnan) were pluralists. See John Hick, Faith and Knowledge (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1957); Hick, God Has Many Names (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980); Hick, A Christian Theology of Religions: The Rainbow of Faiths (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995) and S. Radhakrishnan, Eastern Religions and Western Thought (Oxford: Clarendon, 1939). Pluralism basically is the claim that there is no one way to God or heaven but there are many ways and it does not matter which way one chooses, because all religions are equally good or true.

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rivers and just as different rivers ultimately merge with the same ocean, different religions take us to the same God. It is said that just as we can reach the top of a mountain from different sides, we can reach God by choosing one of the many religious routes that are available. In this context, any exclusive claims are considered as expressions of outmoded thinking and of narrow-mindedness and religious bigotry.

In a context like this, we should draw the attention of people to 'the truth about truth' by helping them to grasp 'the logic of truth'. The most fundamental law of logic, the law of non-contradiction<sup>6</sup> shows that truth is narrow and excludes falsehood. Truth never contradicts itself. Any statement that contradicts itself can never be true. When we are dealing with contradictories, it must be either A or non-A, but never both A and non-A. We can apply this logic of truth to the many different claims that people make about truth and evaluate them.

---

6. Here are the different ways in which this law is stated: Nothing can be what it is and what it is not (A and non-A). No Proposition or Statement can be both true and not true (or false) at the same time. Opposites cannot be true at the same time and in the same sense. Two opposite answers to the same question cannot both be true at the same time and in the same sense.

**A. Truth - Different Views:** We will consider the first set of statements expressing different possible views that a person could possibly hold about truth and the questions that will help us to evaluate their validity.

**1. "There is nothing called the truth."**

Let us consider this statement. Is this true or the truth? If this is not true, then the claimer is giving us a false statement (and we need not take it seriously). Even if it is true that "there is nothing called truth," it still means the same thing (i.e., it cannot be true, because it contradicts itself). This means that there is some truth and this is inescapable.<sup>7</sup>

**2. "All views about truth are false or wrong."**

Is this also false or wrong? If 'yes' then we do not have to pay attention. But if 'no' then the claimer is contradicting himself and her view cannot be true. This means that some view of truth must be true or right.

**3. "All views about truth are equally valid or true."**

What about the first two views? If they are true, then this cannot be true! Therefore, we must conclude

---

7. Whatever is inescapable is true and whatever is undeniable is true. On the contrary whatever is unaffirmable is false.

# Lead

that some views of truth are better than other views.

## 4. **“Some views about truth are or must be better than other views.”**

When can we use the words ‘better’ or ‘worse’ (or words like ‘taller’ or ‘shorter’ etc.) meaningfully? Only when there is an objective standard against which things are compared can we use the word ‘better’ meaningfully. Therefore, there must be a standard, one unchanging reality or view, the Absolute. So, absolute truth is inescapable. All truth or truth claims cannot be relative and there must be some absolute truth.

**B. Truth – Different Views about Its Knowability and Nature:** Now we will consider a second set of statements expressing different views about truth, especially its knowability and nature that one can possibly hold.

### 1. **“We cannot know anything about truth or any truth.”<sup>8</sup>**

Do you know this? If ‘yes’, then the claimer is contradicting himself. If ‘no’ then he is not really offering anything for us to consider. Therefore, we must conclude that we can know something about truth and some truth. This is inescapable.

---

8. This view is called agnosticism and it is self-contradictory. Therefore, it cannot be true.

### 2. **“We have to doubt everything or every view or every truth claim.”<sup>9</sup>**

Should we doubt this view? If ‘yes’ then you are not offering us any solid truth. If ‘no’ you are contradicting yourself. If we must doubt every claim, then we must doubt this claim too. Therefore, we must conclude that we must believe in something. This conclusion is inescapable.

### 3. **“All truth is relative, a matter of one’s own perspective.”<sup>10</sup>**

This is that claim that there is nothing called truth which is truth for all and all claims about truth or truth-claims are equally valid. This is a denial of the claim that truth is objective and hence the same for all.

What about this statement? Is it just the claimer’s perspective or is he telling others that this is true? You see, if it is just his perspective, then he should not or need not tell it out. The fact he is telling it out shows that he is offering it to others and it is no longer just his private and subjective opinion. Therefore, we must conclude that all truth is not relative and a matter of one’s own

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9. This view is called scepticism (doubt everythingism) and this is self-contradictory. Therefore, it cannot be true.

10. This view is called relativism and particularly perspectival view of truth and it is self-contradictory. Therefore, it cannot be true.



perspective and that there is some truth that is objective and hence truth for all.

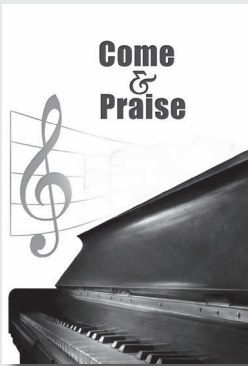
Based on the foregone analysis, we conclude that there must be some truth that is truth for all. If there is no truth that is truth for all, we cannot live harmoniously as human beings. For example, if there is no moral truth (we should not harm others or kill others), there will be moral and existential chaos and life cannot be lived. So, all truth cannot be relative and there must be some truth that is truth for all. And hence absolute. But what is truth? What do we mean by the words 'truth' and 'falsehood' or 'true' and 'false'?

### C. Truth and Falsehood: What are they?

Truth is the characteristic of a statement or proposition where what is stated by it corresponds to reality. On the contrary, false means that what is stated or affirmed by a statement does not correspond to reality. But this raises another question: What then is reality? That which is, is real. Reality is that which is (or that which exists) or the real state of affairs. Reality is objective in the sense that it is outside of us or exists independent of us. Here is what a great philosopher of the past, Aristotle, said about truth and falsehood:

*"To say what is, is, is truth,  
To say what is not, is not, is truth,*

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# Lead

*To say what is, is not, is false, and  
To say what is not, is, is false.”*

This is simple (free from philosophical or complex jargon) and yet very profound. This is not simplistic. This brings great clarity. However, what are the characteristics of truth and falsehood? Let me explain them briefly.

## **D. Truth and Falsehood: What are their Characteristics?**

Truth is **absolute** (not relative to an individual or culture or society), **objective** (not subjective or private to an individual but accessible to others also), and **universal** (applies to all). It is the same for all people in all places. It does not change from place to place, person to person, culture-to-culture, and country to country. But it might change from time to time if the reality itself changes. For example, the statement “Sudhakar Mondithoka is not married” was true until the 21st of September 1991, but not true after that.

Falsehood is not the same for all people (not absolute) in the sense that it can come in any number of forms. But what is false is also false to all people, whether they know it or not or accept it or not.

Let us now consider a final set of statements about truth that seem

to give us, or comment on the ultimate basis for truth:

*Truth is true - even if no one knows it.*

*Truth is true - even if no one admits it.*

*Truth is true - even if no one agrees what it is.*

*Truth is true - even if no one follows it.*

Truth is true - even if no one, but God grasps it fully.<sup>11</sup>

If we apply the logic of truth (which says that two contradictory or incompatible statements cannot be true at the same time and in the same sense, and that truth is the same for all)<sup>12</sup> to the issue if all religions are the same, it will become obvious very quickly that all religions are not the same. They might look the same superficially, but they are different fundamentally and even contradictory. There are superficial similarities but fundamental differences between religions. Therefore, we must conclude that exclusive and unique truth claims, like the biblical-Christian claims or the claims of Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6) do make sense. We cannot complain about such truth claims. We should examine them to see

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11. See Paul Copan, “True For You, But Not For Me” (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1998), 18.

12. See Mortimer J. Adler, *Truth in Religion: The Plurality of Religions and the Unity of Truth* (New York: Collier Books, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990), 10-12.

if they are supported by evidence and if they are corresponding to the reality and hence true. If they are found to be true, we must accept them. If not reject them. With this frame work in place, we can present the unique and exclusive claims of Christianity and Christ and invite people to honestly and objectively consider their validity.<sup>13</sup> However, what are the essential truths of the historic Christian faith? It is to this question that we will turn our attention now.

**II. The Truths of the Historic Christian Faith:** We are now turning our attention to what we believe, and where those beliefs come from, because unless we know what we believe, we cannot know why we believe and hence cannot raise a testimony to these truths or true beliefs. The Bible is

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13. There is a great need for us to have group discussion, small group meetings, public lectures, scholarly debates, open forums and so on in college and universities campuses on topics like What is the Truth About Truth? Can we Believe in Truth in our Post-Modern and Post-Truth Culture? Does Truth Matter? How Can We Know the Truth about Anything? Should we Deconstruct Deconstructionism? Is Truth Dead or Alive? These efforts will establish the frame work within which the Christian truth claims make sense. We have seen this work in UESI-AP (before the bifurcation into two states). I have been directly involved in these kinds of efforts over a period of close to three decades. We will see more of this in the next segments of the article.

the ultimate source of the truths of the historic Christian faith. For the evangelical Christians the world over, the Bible is the ultimate authority in all matters of faith (or belief) and practice (or behaviour and conduct). One of the 5 Solas that guided the Protestant Reformation Movement was 'Sola Scriptura' (Scripture Alone).

Historically, these truths have been distilled and codified in the form of the Creeds of Christendom and Faith Statements and Catechisms.<sup>14</sup> Many Protestant denominations and seminaries and Bible Colleges also have their doctrinal positions and statements (like we have our 10 essential doctrines). We will do well to refer to these Creeds that have been developed in the history of Christianity or Christian church through Church Councils to most faithfully represent the truths taught in the Bible, the Word

---

14. The word 'Creed' is derived from the Latin word *credo*, meaning 'I believe'. Therefore, the Creeds are summaries of Christian belief. These creeds express the core beliefs of Christianity and Christians. They are the objective truths that all true Christians believe. The Apostles Creed (3<sup>rd</sup> Century), the Nicene Creed (4<sup>th</sup> Century), the Athanasian Creed (late 5<sup>th</sup> and early 6<sup>th</sup> Century), The Chalcedonian Creed or Definition (5<sup>th</sup> Century), The Westminster Confession of Faith (17<sup>th</sup> Century), The London Baptist Confession of Faith (17<sup>th</sup> Century) are some of the most important ones.

of God. What are some of the most important truths of the historic Christian Faith that unite all true Christians and for which we need to raise a testimony? We will list them in the footnote and refer to them in the following sections.<sup>15</sup> But now

15. The following are some of the most important truths of the historic Christian Faith: 1) There is One Infinite and Personal Creator God (with intrinsic plurality – the Trinity) who is both immanent and transcendent, 2) Jesus is God-Incarnate, the Saviour and Lord of all, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, 3)

we will focus on the most important aspect of raising testimony to the truths of Christianity.

### III. Raising Testimony to the Truths of the Historic Christian Faith:

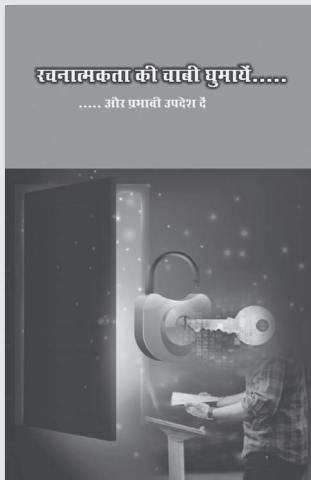
### IV. Showing the Message of the Truths of Historic Christian Faith as the Solution to All Human Problems

(Sections No. III & IV will be covered in a forth coming issue of CL)



**Rev. Sudhakar Mondithoka** is the Principal and Faculty in Apologetics and World Religions at HITHA (Hyderabad Institute of Theology and Apologetics). He is married to Mrs. M. Santa Kumari, Academic Dean and Faculty in Theology at HITHA and their son, Mr. Samuel Susheel is a singer-song writer and is pursuing BS Psychology at Biola University, USA. They have been a part of the UESI family for 45 years.

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# Liberating Truth



## What is truth?

“Truth” is a concept that has been explored and debated across various fields including philosophy, religion, science, and everyday life and plays a crucial role in guiding our understanding of the world and our interactions within it. It is a concept or property of statements, beliefs, or propositions that accurately reflect or represent the world as it is.

## When truth is replaced

The worldview of many is shaped by a myriad of influences, often leading to confusion and falsehood (2 Cor 4:4; 1 Jn 5:19). Not understanding the truth or replacing the truth with a lie result in systems where evils of the world originate and thrive. Some of the evils that we face today are:

a) At a personal level: Academic pressure, relational, loneliness, suicidal tendencies, addictions, fear of failure and the future, and financial.

b) Campus Issues: Ragging, socio-cultural and linguistic, racism, regionalism, relationships, false ideologies, and gender disparity.

c) Social Evils: Human trafficking, terrorism, caste system, child labour, child marriage, dowry, gender disparity, female foeticide, domestic violence, corruption, substance abuse (drugs), body shaming, and poverty.

d) Ecological/Environmental Issues: Climate change, global warming, pollution (water and air), and deforestation.

Lies or wrong standards proposed by an influential few for limited benefit or convenience, confuses many naïve people in the society and the campuses are not immune to it either. Campuses are rather the greatest battle field of ideas. *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms,”* Eph 6:12. (NIV). We are constantly bombarded by ideas, norms, precedence, peer behaviour, outlook or the crowd which can be in conflict with the truth. In today’s world of abundant alternatives and apparent freedom of choice, identifying the truth is a challenging task. When we shift our focus away from the truth and allow ourselves to be distracted by the glittering lies of the world, we end up facing its consequences.

**Jesus is the Truth**

While many have gone a long way trying to find the truth, Jesus, is the only one Who gives a definitive answer. Jesus said, *“I am the Way and the Truth and the Life,”* Jn 14:6. The search for truth as a standard of the divine designer and sustainer of life end in Jesus’ life and teachings. This truth is absolute, objective, and transcendent, rather than relative or subjective. The teachings of Jesus

Christ have profoundly influenced individuals and societies for over two millennia and His message of love, compassion, and justice continues to offer solutions to many of the social and environmental challenges we face today.

Jesus also offers freedom through the power of truth (Jn 8:32). Truth liberates us from the clutches of lies and wrong beliefs and sets us free by disengaging us from the battle already won. For the battle persists till one dwells under the lies of the enemy.

It is liberating, when one seeks and finds answers to issues around them. The clarity at the end of the tunnel gives focus and energy to proceed in the right direction without the distractions.

In such an environment, Christian students can serve as beacons of truth and freedom, living out their faith in a way that offers hope and direction to their peers.

**Know your enemy**

*“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”*  
— Sun Tzu, “The Art of War”.



The first strategy in winning the battle is understanding the game plan of the opponent.

*“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one,”* 1 Jn 5:19. The enemy bases his whole operation on lies, more lies and nothing but lies. He distorts the truth to exert his domination. We gain a lot of advantage by knowing this fact of the enemy and can seal victory by knowing the truth. *“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free,”* Jn 8:31-32. “Holding on” is not just hearing of Jesus or of His teaching but involves a more proactive and consistent attention to an idea and consciously applying it in our everyday life. It is only with truth that victory over

death and slavery brought in by sin and manifested through lies, can be ensured.

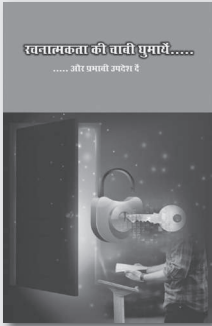
### **Greatest truth**

*“But the greatest of these is love,”* 1 Cor 13:13.

John tells the greatest truth - God is Love. *“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love,”* 1 Jn 4:8.

The whole teaching and life of Jesus points to this truth that God loves every one equally. God’s truth is based on love and from it flows respect, justice, moderation, forgiveness, compassion, peaceful coexistence, balance, empathy, stewardship and all that can be used to counter the designs of the evil one.

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## Personal Issues

The Christian faith offers a robust support system through its community and teachings. The biblical narrative provides a sense of purpose and identity, reassuring students of their intrinsic worth and guiding them through life's uncertainties. Jesus' promise of rest for the weary ("*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest,*" - Mt 11:28) and the assurance of God's provision ("*And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus,*" Phil 4:19) are particularly comforting.

## Campus Issues

For the challenges of campus life, a culture of respect, equality, and justice, as seen in the life and teachings of Jesus on loving one's neighbour as oneself encourages believers to confront these issues with grace and truth.

*"And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself,'"* Mt 22:39.

Christian students, by embodying these values, can challenge and transform harmful practices and ideologies, fostering a more inclusive and supportive campus environment.

## Societal Issues

The historic Christian faith, with its emphasis on justice, compassion,

and love for one's neighbour, provides a powerful counter-narrative to the evils in the society.

Jesus' mission included liberating the oppressed and proclaiming good news to the poor. "*The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,*" Lk 4:18. This mission inspires Christian students to engage with societal issues, advocating for justice, and promoting peace and reconciliation.

## Ecological and Environmental Issues

*"The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it,"* - Gen 2:15.

The Christian doctrine of stewardship calls for responsible management of God's creation. It emphasizes that humans are caretakers of God's creation with the responsibility of protecting the environment and advocating for policies and practices that promote sustainability. Christian students can lead by example in their commitment to ecological stewardship, raising awareness, and participating in initiatives that address environmental issues and contribute to the well-being of the planet (God's creation).



## Conclusion

All evils are based on lies and the Bible offers the truth to refute all lies. By embracing and living out these truths, Christian students become “salt of the earth” (Mtt 5:13) shining as lights in a world often overshadowed by falsehood

and despair. Through their words, actions, and community that demonstrate integrity, compassion, and a commitment to justice they can present a compelling message of hope and transformation, rooted in the eternal truths of the Christian faith.



**Samuel Changkija**, is serving as Chief Conservator of Forests in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh. He was an EU Student in Kohima Science College (1993-97) and Nagaland University (1998-2000) and later served as Secretary and as President Jammu and Kashmir EGF (2008-10 & 2017-23). He is married to Dr. Eunice and blessed with two girls and three boys.

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# Search for the Ultimate Truth



From time immemorial, mankind has been searching for the ultimate Truth in life. As early as 800 BC the sages prayed in the Upanishad, '*Asathoma Sadd Gamaya*' which means 'lead me from untruth to Truth'. About 2000 years ago, Pilate, the Roman governor asked "What is truth?". After Buddha got enlightenment, his disciple came and told him, "Master, tell us now what is truth". Gandhiji wrote a book entitled, 'My Experiments with Truth'.

Buddha admitted that still he could not find the truth. Gandhiji's book deals with his autobiography and not truth. John Keats, an English poet, says 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'. Hitler says that if you tell a lie a hundred times it becomes truth. In Indian philosophy we have the concept: '*Satyam Shivam Sundaram*' which means whatever is truth is *Shashvatam* (eternal) and whatever is eternal is beautiful. For a communist whatever one does to further communism is truth. J Krishnamurthy, our Indian

philosopher, says that “Truth is a pathless ground”. Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, says that “It is impossible to know the Ultimate Truth”. Socrates’ motto was that everyone should know the truth. The motto of the Harvard University is: ‘*Veritus*’-truth. We also have the concept, ‘*Satya meva Jayathe*’-Truth will win. The concepts about truth reveal that man’s search for truth is a vital search and some of the concepts are very difficult to grasp and apply in personal life.

In human history Jesus Christ is the only person Who claimed Himself absolutely and categorically to be the Truth. In Jn 14:6 Jesus declared, “I am the truth ...”

C S Lewis was an eminent English professor in Cambridge University in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In literature there are many allusions from the Bible. While looking for an allusion from the Bible, C S Lewis came upon Jesus’ claim that ‘He is the Truth’. Prof Lewis was gripped by the claim. He wanted to verify whether the claim of Jesus Christ was true, reliable and authentic. He undertook deep research on the claim. After his long research he came out with the following conclusions: when a person claims to be the truth there can be four possibilities: either he is a liar, or he is a pretender, or he is a lunatic or he is really God. Lewis

analysed each of the above issues. Was Jesus a liar at any time? No. Never. He has been the epitome of all that is fair and genuine. He was the best and flawless person the world has ever seen. He never preached anything which He himself did not practice. There was no contradiction between his lips and life. On the other hand, He exposed and condemned the hypocrisies of the religious leaders of His time. Even His own enemies admitted that this man had done nothing wrong, His blood was innocent. He fed the hungry and healed the sick, cared for the poor and downtrodden. In fact the world has received the finest moral teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. Gandhiji was a great admirer of the Sermon on the Mount. Can a liar, a pretender or a lunatic do and teach what Jesus did? Impossible. So, Jesus was neither a liar, nor a pretender, nor a lunatic. Then who really was Jesus? He was God. This was the conclusion reached by C S Lewis. He was an atheist. He became a believer and follower of Christ after he discovered the truth about Jesus.

Jesus Christ is truly man and truly God. Jesus is the eternal WORD (Gk *LOGOS*) Who became a man 2000 years ago, Jn 1:14. Jesus claimed that to know Him was to know



God, to love Him was to love God, to worship Him was to worship God, to honour Him was to honour God, to hate Him was to hate God. He was sinless; He forgave the sins of the people. He had power over death. He rose again from the dead, Rom 1:4. He stilled the sea and walked on water. Because He was God, He claimed to be the Truth. He made Himself equal with God, Jn 5:18.

Truth is not just an idea or thought but it is an unchanging attribute of God like love, holiness, all powerful etc. Truth is a person and that person is Jesus Christ. Only God can claim to be the absolute truth. Personal knowledge of the Truth can impart freedom. Jesus said, "You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free", Jn 8:32.

Generally, people have a wrong idea about freedom. By freedom they mean: say what you like, do what you like, go where you like etc. Once an old lady was walking in the middle of the road and when questioned she said, "I have freedom now". Then she was told that if you have freedom to walk in the middle of the road, a car driver also has the freedom to drive over you. Freedom is a revolutionary idea. It was the motto of the French Revolution. "Swaraj is my birth right" said Bal Gangadhar Tilak. "Man is born free

but everywhere he is in chains," said Karl Marx. We must remember that freedom works best with rules. Imagine playing a football match without rules and goal posts! When boundaries and rules are ignored, there will be utter chaos. Freedom without fences is risky. The freedom of a kite is meaningful only when it is controlled by a string. Someone has said that freedom is not the right to say and do what you like but the liberty to do what you ought. Nelson Mandela said, "To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains but to live in a way that respects and embraces the freedom of others". According to Charles Kingsley there are two types of freedom: where a person is free to do what he likes and where a person is free to do what he ought!

There are different types of freedom - social, political, economic etc. Jesus was talking about another kind of freedom when He said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free". He further emphasized that His freedom was unique and special - the freedom given by only Himself - "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed", Jn 8:36. This freedom cannot be found anywhere else. Only He can give this freedom. It is a freedom from the penalty and power of sin. Jesus came to

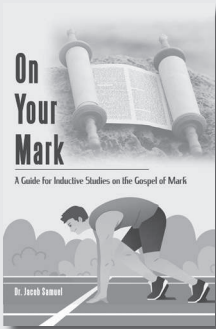
set mankind free from the burden and tyranny of sin. The Bible says, "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned," Rom 5:12. The freedom Jesus gives liberates mankind from the curse and condemnation brought by our first parents - Adam and Eve. **Jesus' freedom can liberate one from the guilt of the past, burden of the present and fear of the future.** Jesus came to set us free from eternal condemnation to eternal life. Jesus Who is the Truth can set one free from the fear

of death. Jesus redeems one from the curse of the law and sin. Jesus invites people to come and know Him as the eternal Truth and trust Him as one's personal Lord and Liberator and get liberated from the curse of sin and eternal death. Jesus invites people who are weary and burdened to come to Him to enjoy freedom from the guilt, power and curse of sin and receive rest and eternal life. Only the Son of God, Jesus alone, can impart this kind of freedom. Jesus is also the ultimate Truth. Know Jesus personally and know this unique freedom He offers!



**A J Varghese is** a retired teacher living in Goa. Along with his family he is associated with the EU and EGF work in Goa.

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# Share the Truth in your Campus



**A**s a Christian college student, being vocal about your faith is never an easy thing to do. Speaking the truth often means you will be attacked with malicious comments and mockery. So, it is very easy to lay back and drift into a passive approach with your faith. Why shouldn't you just be quiet and keep your faith to yourself? It's much simpler that way.

But we are ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:20) and we speak for Christ when we plead "Come back to God!" It is of utmost urgency that our broken, war torn, love-hungry world knows about Christ. And as His ambassadors, we have an amazing opportunity to share His love with those around us.

We live in a country and a world where speaking the truth is mostly rewarded with a jail sentence based

on false charges, or as it is referred to in recent internet lingo, "cancel culture". To keep standing up for God in a world like this is incredibly difficult. Our beliefs are questioned and torn apart mercilessly by society as they mock everything that we stand for. In such a context, small doubts may creep into our own minds whether all this is really worth it, because we seem to be the only ones believing. But God is Truth, and the truth is still the truth, even if no one believes it.

In college, we face hurdles to share the gospel with others since the majority is disinterested or averse to the idea of a 'God'. They are content living life on their own terms without being accountable to a higher power. It is convenient to disregard the truth and continue believing in the lies that comfort them. Our world thrives on lies and

the devil, the “father of lies”, uses every weapon at his disposal to keep people trapped in this web of deceit. They believe that freedom means living life on their own terms. Sadly, what they do not realise is that they are sinking deep into a life of slavery to sin.

As followers of Christ, we have experienced the joy and freedom that comes from knowing Jesus and living for Him. And it is our duty to share the truths of God’s Word which are far more powerful than any lie the devil can throw at us. As we share these truths in love, let us pray that it will set free those enslaved to a life of sin. “ Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free,” (Jn 8:32).

So let us be strong and courageous as we set out to share God’s Word without fear, for the Lord will always be with us (Josh 1:9). Let us remember that we are the letter of Christ, to be known and read by all, written not with ink, but the Spirit of the Living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts (2 Cor 3:2,3). Let us live our lives in such a way that we are the

fragrance of Christ, to those who are saved and a stench to those who are perishing (2 Cor 2:15). When others see this hope in us and ask the reason, we should be able to tell them with gentleness and respect (1 Pet 3:15).

This might seem like a daunting task, but our competence comes from God (1 Cor 2:5) and He will equip us as he equipped Gideon against the Midianites. Let us not be discouraged when people seem indifferent because God will lead us to the right people who have a hunger for Him. I am often reminded of C S Lewis’ ‘Chronicles of Narnia’ series, where the young Calormene Emeth at the end, finds his devotion to Aslan, though he was worshipping the false God Tash his entire life. He writes that “all will find what they truly seek”, so we can rest in the assurance that those who truly seek God will find Him.

So let us **reflect Christ** in us as we go about our daily lives in our campuses and **be witnesses** for Him, because we might be the only Bible some people will ever read.



*Kezia Liz Jacob, doing B.A. LLB, a five year integrated law course in O.P Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana. She is passionate about apologetics, reading and playing music in her free time.*





## Set free by the Truth

Every human being, regardless of age, nationality, or era, yearns for freedom. The ability to act according to one's free will is often seen as the ultimate expression of freedom. However, true freedom, when exercised without grounding in truth, leads to consequences like slavery, self-destruction, and even death. But where does truth fit into all this? According to the foundational Christian truth, humanity's story began in the Garden of Eden, where God created Adam and Eve in His own image. They were given clear instructions not to eat from the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Yet, they chose to exercise their free will, swayed by the deceit of Satan in the guise of a serpent. This decision marked a turning point, introducing falsehood into human existence

and destroying our relationship with God. Consequently, humanity lost sight of divine wisdom and truth, falling prey to self-reliance, sin, and spiritual death.

Since then, humanity has often mistaken self-sufficiency and indulgence in sin for true freedom, forsaking the deeper purpose for which it was created. However, true freedom isn't found in mere autonomy but in aligning ourselves with the unchanging truth that reflects God's character and glory. This unchanging Truth was fully revealed approximately 2024 years ago, when God incarnated Himself to liberate us from falsehood, sin, and death. In the person of Jesus Christ, God's Word became flesh, dwelling among us and revealing the glory of the Father. Jesus declared Himself as the Truth,



demonstrating it by conquering sin through His death and resurrection, then sending the Spirit of Truth to dwell within us.

I personally encountered the transformative power of this Truth during my time at college in Bangalore. Witnessing the peace and purpose in the lives of disciplined, joyful classmates who shared their faith with me was profound. Their testimonies led me to embrace the truth of God, freeing me from the burdens that had weighed me down.

One of the greatest lies perpetuated by Satan is the belief that our identity and fulfillment can be found in worldly pursuits—career, validation from others, or momentary pleasures. However, true identity and fulfillment come from knowing Christ. My own experience attests to this truth: attempting to derive self-worth from worldly standards only left me dissatisfied. It was only through Christ that I found redemption and a secure identity rooted in God's love.

Another prevalent falsehood is the notion that life should be lived recklessly to fulfill every desire. Contrarily, life is a precious gift meant to be lived for the glory of God, with eternal consequences for our actions. Through Christ's promise of eternal life and His reassurance of a place prepared for us, the fear of death loses its sting, offering comfort and peace.

The most profound joy I've discovered in embracing truth is the assurance that my past is forgiven, my present guided, and my future secure in God's hands. This understanding has liberated me from guilt and condemnation, allowing me to experience true freedom—a freedom grounded in the eternal truth and divine purpose.

In conclusion, true freedom is not found in the absence of constraints but in the knowledge of Christ and obedience to His Word. It is a journey of transformation where the truth sets us free from the bondage of sin, reveals our purpose in life, and restores our relationship with God, others, and ourselves.



**Dr. Dolly Ohri** is a Dentist by profession and is passionate to follow Jesus. She hails from a Sikh family of Rajasthan and accepted the Lord at Bangalore in medical school. EU & EMFI helped her to grow spiritually. She is married to Dr. Richard Ohri, (SMO in Punjab) and they are blessed with two children - Dr. Sarah & Derrick.





## Let the Agape Love Overflow

This is the reality that there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by His blood, to be received by faith (Rom 3:22-25).

As we live in a world where the phrase “love is love” is widely used in campaigns for marriage, equality, accepting different adjectives for describing a person; the Agape Love of God remains the same. Each one of us who experience this Agape love, must be able to share it with others.

As we try to serve the society at large; we can use the following tips from Paul’s teaching in 2 Cor 5 as our fundamental guideline to effectively share the gospel.

- **Love of Christ should compel us to share the good news.**

**W**e are living in a world created by God, and the Bible states that God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them (Gen 1:27).

And Paul reminds us that God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God (Rom 5:8-9).

### ***Readers’ Response***

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The love of Christ compels or urges us, because we are convinced of this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; and He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who died and was raised for their sake.

**As Ambassadors of Christ, share the message of reconciliation with Christ.**

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself

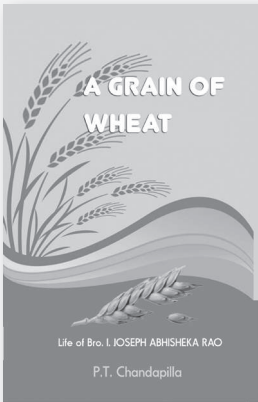
and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation [of the restoration to favour].

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins (1 Pet 4:8).



**Anitha Wesley** is a graduate working in the field of medical research. She currently resides in East Tambaram, Chennai with her husband John Wesley, UESI-TN Staff, and daughters Abigail Johanna and Annshel Jochebed.

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## Loving the Stranger

This article deals with how disciples of Jesus can respond to an increasingly strange and possibly hostile world.

The college campus is an interesting place. It is where you encounter people who differ vastly from you. People with entirely different cultural backgrounds, different languages, different foods and attire, all come together on the college campus. It can be a strange and exciting adventure. The college campus is also a place where we encounter people who think differently than we do. For example, we might encounter people who believe that India should be a Hindu *Rashtra*. We might encounter people who believe that financial

success is the sole purpose that one has to live for in life. We might encounter people who believe that one's gender identity does not always align with the biological sex. Or we might encounter people who believe that the Bible's teachings on marriage and sex are bigoted and outdated.

How do we respond when we encounter such people?

### The wrong responses

There are two wrong responses that we can have when we encounter people who are different. Let's call them tribalism and assimilation.<sup>1</sup>

1. I've borrowed the terms "tribalism" and "assimilation" from Tim Keller's sermon titled "The Meaning of the City"

## **Tribalism**

The tribalist response is to find other people who are just like us and only interact with them. We can always find tribalists on college campuses — people who only hang out with others of the same language or community.

One particular way the tribalist response manifests itself among disciples of Jesus is to find other disciples and only hang out with them. It is to cut oneself off from the world around them. It is an easy response and it is being an escapist.

These are the disciples who know the truth that they do not belong to the world (John 17:16) but forget the truth that they are also sent into the world (John 17:18 and Matthew 28:19-20).

## **Assimilation**

The way of assimilation is to mix with the people so completely that one loses one's own identity. The

disciples who assimilate do so at the cost of continuing to be disciples. These are disciples who forget the truth that they do not belong to the world. They buy into the lies of the world and believe in those lies.

## **The right response**

The disciple of Jesus who seeks to imitate Him has an approach that is vastly different from the other two approaches. This disciple balances the two truths — that he or she does not belong to the world but also that he or she has been sent into the world.

For disciples of Jesus, the right response to encountering people who are different is to love them. It is to love them with the kind of love that Jesus demonstrated towards them - to not compromise on one's beliefs and still love people who are starkly different.

But how do we love people who are different from us? We love

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people by doing the basics right - over and over again. The basics are what the Bible teaches throughout — listen well (James 1:19), keep your word (Matthew 5:37), pray for them (Matthew 5:44), serve their needs (Luke 10:37), be hospitable (Hebrews 13:2), speak the truth to them (Colossians 3:9), and so on. Allow me to talk about four specific aspects here — listen, pray, read, and converse.

### **Listen**

Jesus said in Matthew 7:12 I ought to do that which I wish others would do to me. I would want people who are different from me to listen to me. I wish they would ask me good questions about why I am different from the others — why I refuse to cut corners or why I refuse to step on others to get ahead. I wish they would ask questions with genuine curiosity about why I believe what I believe.

If that's what I wish others would do, I ought to do the same to others. I ought to ask them questions with genuine curiosity — why they believe what they believe, why they do what they do. And love them genuinely. If someone believes in same-sex marriage, I can genuinely ask why they believe so (not with the intent of picking a fight and winning a debate). I can ask how

they feel about their gender, and so on.

Every disciple of Jesus would do well to remember the instruction that James gives — to be quick to listen and slow to speak.

### **Pray**

How many times have we promised to pray for a friend and never kept our word? Jesus specifically instructs His disciples to be people of their word.

We can pray that God would open their hearts to the good news that they can be part of God's Kingdom if they repent and believe in Jesus. We can pray that God's Spirit would convict them of their sin and their need for a Saviour. We can also pray for their various needs — that they would be able to study well or that they would be healed of their illnesses. Our prayers ought to be genuine, sincere, and persistent.

### **Read**

The calling of a student is to study. As much as students are primarily called to study their specific field, they are also called to study general issues that concern our society. This is why the Indian Constitution allows graduates to have a vote in the Rajya Sabha elections, even though not all citizens get a vote.

Students ought to be faithful to their calling and study the concerns of society around them. To have a biblical response to the issue, I first need to understand the issue — in all its complexity. There are no shortcuts to gaining such an understanding. We must be willing to do the hard work of reading, studying, critiquing and engaging with ideas.

### **Converse**

Speaking the truth in love is in itself an act of love. When we warn a friend that what they are eating is potentially spoiled, we are loving them by saving them the trouble of painful frequent visits to the bathroom in the future.

Similarly, warning a friend that unless they believe in Jesus, they are going to Hell is an act of love.

We must be careful though. A *chai* shop is not a pulpit where we preach sermons. Neither is it a debate podium. When we meet friends we engage in conversation, not sermons or debates. A conversation includes both speaking and listening.

We also must be careful that we keep first things first. Believing in the biblical sexual ethic is not what saves a person from Hell – it is believing in Jesus and His finished work on the cross. On some level, it is futile to convince a person of the biblical sexual ethic without talking to them about the good news of being saved when one believes in Jesus.

This does not mean that we shy away from sharing our convictions. It just means that we remember our priorities and that not all conversations need to revolve around the same topic.

### **It has always been about the basics**

Being a faithful disciple has always been the same — whether we live in a familiar conservative world or a strange new world. It consists of doing the basics right. It consists of loving God with one's heart, soul and mind (Matthew 22:37), and loving one's neighbour as oneself (Matthew 22:38).



**Jeyapaul Caleb** lives in Bangalore with his wife Arpana. He is a middle-school English teacher, who likes to muse on culture, current events and politics as a disciple of Jesus.

# Struggles of Youth in Meghalaya



Meghalaya, is known as “the Scotland of the East” for its scenic beauty and praised as “the land of wine and honey” for its fertile land, with a rich history.

In 1841, Thomas and Anne Jones arrived in Sohra, establishing the first permanent mission among the Khasis. They introduced literacy and the Khasi Alphabet, aiming to improve lives and most important, to lead people towards Christ. God brought their efforts to fruition but despite early enthusiasm, the state’s spiritual fervour has waned, with many professing faith superficially while their hearts have gone astray. This departure from God’s path has led to painful consequences, emphasizing the need for repentance and divine intervention.

This article discusses the significant issues confronting Meghalaya’s youth, notably the rising problem of teenage pregnancy. With a prevalence rate of 53%, as reported by NFHS 4, many pregnancies are unplanned and outside of marriage, indicating a societal trend towards accepting premarital relationships. Although abortion may appear as a remedy, it frequently results in enduring regret, underscoring the multifaceted nature of the problem.

Jeremiah 1:5 tells us that God knows us before He forms us in the womb. Psalm 139:13-16 speaks of God’s active role in our creation and formation in the womb. For the Christian, abortion is not a matter of a woman’s right to choose to have a baby. The baby is already present and living. Abortion is a matter of



the life or death of a human being made in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27; 9:6).

I know a young lady who chose not to abort despite an unplanned pregnancy. Despite challenges, she embraced motherhood, completed her studies, and stood independently. Her unwavering faith in God's goodness sustained her through it all. Christians should support, not judge, those facing similar struggles, reflecting Christ's love and offering practical help during difficult times.

Suicide rates are rising, reflecting a tragic reality of individuals feeling so desperate that they see ending their own lives as the only solution. However, suicide is considered a

sin, violating the commandment against murder (Exodus 20:13) and rejecting God's sovereignty.

The Bible speaks of many who felt deep despair in life. Solomon, in his pursuit of pleasure, reached the point where he "hated life" (Ecclesiastes 2:17). Elijah was fearful and yearned for death (1 Kings 19:40). Jonah was so angry at God that he wished to die (Jonah 4:8).

In times of sorrow and despair, we yearn for comfort and support. Not everyone has friends who can provide this, but we can always turn to Jesus, our unwavering friend, who offers solace to the broken-hearted and remains constant in every season of life.

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Youth often turn to substance abuse as an escape, unaware of its addictive nature until it's too late. This blurs the distinction between Christians and others. Yet, as believers, we belong to God and must honour Him with our bodies (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Despite life's challenges, we find solace in God's promises, trusting Him to turn all things for our benefit and His glory and remind ourselves that God's calling must be greater than any other thing that tries to convince us otherwise.



**Rachel Nora Nongrang**, a teacher at Langtor Higher Secondary School. She was an EU Student of Mairang ICEU, Meghalaya and presently an young graduate and a committee member at Maairang EGF.

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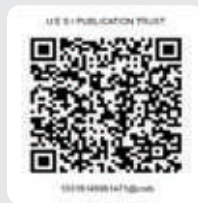
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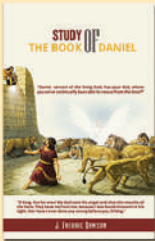
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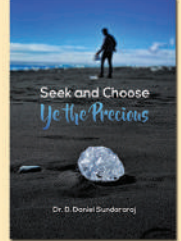
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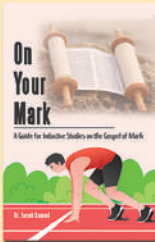
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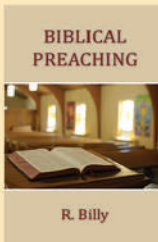
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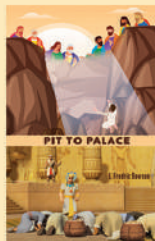
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Published by Mr. Saji Easo & Printed by Mr. D. Devavaram on behalf of UESI PUBLICATION TRUST.

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

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