

The background of the page is a white surface with vibrant green ink splatters and leaf-like patterns. The ink splatters are concentrated in the upper and lower portions of the page, creating a dynamic, organic feel. The leaves are scattered throughout, with some appearing as soft, out-of-focus shapes and others as more defined, detailed structures. The overall aesthetic is fresh and natural.

Kirkspire

Be filled

FEBRUARY 2019

CONTENTS

Word from the Pastor - <i>Rev. Isaac Johnson</i>	3
Church Camp - 14 and 15 January 2019	5
Diamonds Out of Dust - <i>Usha George</i>	7
Purpose of Life : Part 18 - <i>M M Narendranath</i>	8
Health Hazards of Plastic Pollution - Part 2 - <i>Rajini Kantha Narendranath</i>	11
Answer to Bible Quiz No. 96	13
John's Corner - <i>John H. Bala Singh</i>	14
The Dynamite Power of the Holy Spirit - <i>Michael Youssef</i>	15
Bible Quiz No.97 - February 2018 - <i>Usha George</i>	17
15 Keys to Success	18

Editor : Mrs. R. Chandy



Word from the Pastor

Half empty or Half full??

*And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation;
but be filled with the Spirit..(Ephesians 5:18)*

At some point or the other, you might have come across the title of this devotion asking the question, whether the glass is half full or half empty. I would like to add a third dimension to this scenario especially in our relationship to God. Where being FILLED with the Holy Spirit is concerned, whether a person feels half full or half empty, both mean **fully empty**. Think with me as we look at these three necessities of life and why God very explicitly commands us to be filled with the Spirit.

1. Spirit of God is the Commander of our lives

In John 14:26, the bible says, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." This teacher teaches gently, patiently but we should never think that his teaching is not so urgent. Some look at only the 10 commandments as commandments. Not so, God's words are God's commands to us and the Holy Spirit is our teacher and Commander.

2. Spirit of God is Concerned for our lives

In John 16:13, we read, 'However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.' God's word shows us God's love for us and the Holy Spirit teaches us because He is concerned for us.

3. Spirit of God is the Comforter of our lives

One of the titles that our Blessed Holy Spirit carries, along with being a helper, teacher etc, is that He is also our beloved comforter. John 14:26 carries the meaning of teacher and comforter. When a believer is weak, discouraged or disheartened, we know that it is the presence of the person of the Holy Spirit that revives our soul, resurrects our hope and reassures our faith.

We are talking here only about the essential power of the presence of the Holy Spirit. What are the obstacles, opportunities and operational heights one can climb to will be studied in our Sunday sermons. Remember, you are not 'half-full or half-empty', you are FILLED.

Walk in His fulness this month and all the days of your lives for the glory of God.

Rev. Isaac Johnson



Church camp - 14th and 15th January 2019

GROWING IN GRACE, INTIMACY AND GIVING GLORY TO GOD!

On the pleasant morning of 14th January 2019, we the family of St. Andrew's Kirk gathered at Pleasant Days Family Resort to have fellowship and learn more about Christ and His Grace.

The first day's sessions were conducted by Dr. Rajkumar Ramachandran. He started us off on the theme of the camp 'Growing In Grace'. Speaking on it, he enlightened us from the Word of God on how it was available in Abundance (Rom 5:17), and to all who ask. He also detailed out '6 Hindrances to growing in Grace'. Those among the thought provoking points ranged from Pride in the form of Spiritual Pride, with a call to leave our Idols of the world, to a heeding not to miss out on God's grace because of Bitterness, but be God's faithful Labourers, slaving for His Dear Cause. We also had group discussions that helped us ponder real life situations, led by Pastor Isaac. These discussions were helpful and made us better Christians.

The youth conducted few games that were not only enjoyable, but also provided us with an opportunity to learn and memorize bible verses. This was a time when we realized that our ages didn't matter when it came to memorizing scripture. The first day ended with a small session of praise and worship led by the youth and a satisfying dinner.

Our 2nd day's session was taken by P.C. Verghese uncle. He had illustrated his points of being 'Born Again' to that of 'New Born' by illustrating the '9 Evidences of a New Born'. Pondering over such

questions like, Do we cry out for the Holy Spirit as a child cries for His mother? Do we hunger and thirst for Spiritual food in our Daily walk? We felt a conviction as we reminisced how a young child fresh from the very Hands of God has a built-in homing instinct, how we need to tune back to God's frequency from which we drift if we don't grow. Uncle further talked on 'Enemies of Grace'- warning of the dangers of 'Meritorious living' and 'Self-righteousness', and emphasizing that the only justification before the Holy throne room of God is through the 'Blood of Christ'.

Another joyous occasion was when the children brought the message they learnt in their sessions led by Mr. Robin and team. They presented all that they had learnt in the camp in the form of dance and action songs. The entire church was compelled to participate in an action song for 'Every Move I Make'. We truly felt 'Waves of Mercy' opening up from the Floodgates of Heaven; as all age groups (ages 8 – 80 years) did the actions, pure joy filled our hearts and we laughed along.

Our Q&A sessions over the 2 days were composed of varied questions and ideas, with a unique feature of hearing responses of questions from audience members in addition to the speakers. Topics ranging from- how only the 'Prajapati' (Jesus Christ) could fulfill all the rituals needed for salvation, to the importance and the need for a Christian to Fast and Pray, interceding for the world and the characteristics of a true disciple.

As we concluded our session we sang the Hymn 'In the Garden' and reflected on how, though we are here for a short time on earth, our duty should be to Grow in the Grace of Our Lord; just as a bird knows where to migrate during the winters, or a child knows his father's face, do we have our Homing Instinct, setting our eyes heavenward?

Diamonds Out of Dust

Everything around us in the natural world is wonderful - the sublime mountains, the grand oceans, the fragrant blossoms and the tender juicy fruits, the gentle zephyrs and the raging storms. There is beauty in both sunrise and sunset, the procession of seasons, the heavens above and the limitless space with hundreds of million galaxies – all spoken into existence by our Master's design and will. Everything symbolizes and proclaims the glory and power of God who can only be described by us in broken and imperfect words.

God's crowning act of creation that surpassed all else was the miracle of man. All creation was made for man to enjoy and delight in, to study and search out its mysteries. Our Creator formed man of the dust of the ground (Gen. 2:7), but He 'breathed into him' and 'man became a living soul'. Man is no longer just dust. He is not merely a collection of organs for seeing, hearing, breathing and eating. Being endowed with the gift of God's breath, we are responsible to Him alone. To be obedient to Him alone.

Precious gems too are drawn from the hidden depths of dust and decay. This mineral also has humble beginnings making a start from a very basic material. To bring out the radiance and brilliance of the jewel is an arduous and grueling process. It starts from the removal of grime, to its flaws being chipped and cut, crafted and polished till its beauty and light is laid out. Diamonds, sapphires, rubies, emeralds, topaz, onyx, jade, garnets all go through this highly pressured process.

Like a diamond chip we too lie in the world's dirt and decay. Our God and Creator will never leave us this way. He refers to us as His precious jewels. "He is mighty to save". He draws us out of this murky dark world when we are blinded and unable to see, suffocated and sullied with sin, disobedient, and making willful bad choices. Yet, He considers us as His treasured people and paid the ultimate price of His blood to redeem us. He rescues us, chipping and polishing our rough, wicked edges to make us flawless diamonds.

We then "become a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation belonging to God..." (1Peter2:9). Enmeshed in sin and its fatal entanglements, we are saved by our Helper's unfailing love, grace and gift of salvation. He alone can transform us to be His perfect jewels whose quality and design will surpass the physical realm to sparkle as lights for the glory of our majestic Lord and Creator Jesus Christ.

Usha George

Purpose of Life Part 18

God Is Beyond Needs

We reasoned out in our earlier write ups that if God had gone ahead with the creation in spite of knowing that He would have to sacrifice His own Son as the sacrificial Lamb (1 Peter 1:18-30) to redeem the mankind that would fall, which He would have definitely known through His foreknowledge (Isaiah 46: 10), then He would surely have had a definite plan in creation.

In order to understand the plan let us revisit the creation narrative as revealed in the very first verse of scripture and ask logical questions and seek divine revelations.

Creation

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1 :1

"In the beginning" denotes the "**time**" aspect of the creation. "**God**" signifies the presence of the creator God, who is the "The Almighty", "the alpha and the omega", "the first and the last", "without beginning or end" who pre existed before creation. "**Created**" signifies that "heavens and the earth" were created and did not "pre exist" or "evolved", but created by God from nothing. "**Heavens**" indicate the "space and other objects that we see in the sky" and "**Earth**" meaning "matter". Thus we can conclude that "**time**", "**space**" and "**matter**" were created at the time of creation, from nothing, by the Almighty God who pre existed before time began

Questions to be asked

In our earlier write ups we reasoned that we must ask questions and seek for answers as God Himself encouraged us to ask (Jeremiah 33:3) and only mankind can ask and no other creation here on earth can.

Why did God create what He created?

We create things like food, clothing, and shelter or for that matter anything we are in need of want. But why should God create things as though He needed something. He is beyond needs or wants as He

Himself provides things to others and so wouldn't need anything. Being "all sufficient", He didn't need to create what he created. So, why should God create what He created?

Mind of God

God's actions cannot be fathomed by mankind who is finite as we cannot know the mind of God.

"Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?"

Romans 11:34

Further, no one had gone to heaven and returned to earth to understand the plans of God except Jesus as revealed below.

*I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven — the Son of Man. **John 3 :12,13.***

Only Jesus came from heaven and hence will know the purpose behind creation and we may have to wait till we reach heaven and meet God face to face to fully understand as revealed below.

*Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. **1 Corinthians 13:12***

Secret and Revealed things of God

God has revealed some things to mankind and kept the rest as a secret.

*The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law. **Deuteronomy 29:29***

Thus we may not understand all God's secrets. But we can ponder on the revealed things of God. We may not know the purpose behind the larger parts of the heavens like billions and billions of galaxies and the other heavenly beings, but we can understand the reason behind closer objects like sun, moon and the stars. While sun gives light and heat during day, moon gives light at night and causes the tides. Stars display God's glory and indicate seasons and all these together sustain life on earth essential for mankind to live. Thus if heavens were created for earth and earth for man, we can logically conclude that mankind should have been created for God.

But as we have already reasoned if God is beyond needs why should God create mankind?

And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else.
Acts 17:25.

Why should God then create mankind in His image and likeness especially if He needs no service from his hands? There is one clue in **Isaiah 43:7**

*"Everyone who is called by my name, whom I created **for my glory**, whom I formed and made"*

We see from this that God has created mankind for His glory. It is therefore mankind's responsibility to bring Him glory by getting transformed into His image. How can mankind do this?

To continue.

MM Narendranath



Medical Corner

Health Hazards of Plastic Pollution - Part - 2

“Doctors treat but Jesus heals”

What is Plastic Pollution?

Plastic pollution is when plastic has gathered in an area and has begun to negatively impact the natural environment and create problems for plants, wildlife and even human population. Often this includes killing plant life and posing dangers to local animals. Plastic is an incredibly useful material, but it is also made from toxic compounds known to cause illness, and because it is meant for durability, it is not biodegradable.

Next time we go shopping, it will be an excellent idea to carry a paper or cloth bag. Also, we could avoid bringing plastic bags home and purchasing items with too much of packaging. This way, we can help in contributing towards the environment in the form of reducing plastic pollution whose ill effects are irreversible.

Trash dumps and landfills are unfortunate major problems, as they allow pollutants to enter the ground and affect wildlife and groundwater, for years to come. Therefore, if it is in a landfill, it will never stop releasing toxins in that area. When disposed, off it does not decompose easily and pollutes the land or air nearby when burnt in the open air. Burning plastic is incredibly toxic, and can lead to harmful atmospheric conditions and deadly illnesses.

Because it comes in sizes large and small, polluting plastics even affect the world's tiniest organisms such as plankton. When these organisms become poisoned due to plastic ingestion, this causes problems for the larger animals that depend on them for food. It means that plastic is present in the fish that many people eat every day.

Solutions to Plastic PollutionThe reality is that the only way this problem can be addressed is by individuals and companies around the world agreeing to implement practices that reduce waste at every level. The top tips for reducing plastic waste are:

1. Shop Friendly

Carry cloth bags which are foldable, and washable. Bring your own shopping bags to the Super market

2. Get Rid of Bottled Water

Use glass or metal bottles to store water. Carry a refillable water bottle.

3. Use metal Containers

We would be surprised at how much plastic is involved in the making of food containers. The coffee shop's paper cup is likely to be lined with plastic for insulation. For buying food we can take our own steel Tiffin carriers / Tiffin boxes.

4. At work place one could use individualized reusable coffee mugs, during coffee break.

5. Educate Businesses

Speak to local restaurants and businesses about options that they can switch to for packaging, storing, and bagging items. We could stop using plastic straws and cutlery. Many companies are starting to come up with excellent low-cost replacements, such as bamboo utensils in place of plastic ones.

6. Get Involved

Speak to lawmakers and get involved with government on any level, and you'll see how many special interest groups have made it so that we are dependent on plastic without needing to be. Pressurise your local authorities to improve how they manage your city's wastes. Encourage development of items, and propose alternatives when applicable. There are a number of things that Government can do – from running public awareness campaigns to offering incentives for recycling, to introducing levies or even banning certain products outright.

Dr. Rajini Kantha Narendranath

Answers to Bible Quiz No. 96 – January 2019

Based on Genesis (King James Version)

1. Jacob – Genesis 28:12
2. The Flood – Genesis 6: 6-7
3. Babel – Genesis 11:9
4. Joseph – Genesis 41:14
5. Abraham bought the field and cave of Machpelah – Genesis 23:9
6. Reuben – Genesis 30:14
7. On a river flowing out of Eden – Genesis 2:11
8. Aprons – Genesis 3:7
9. Earring and bracelets – Genesis 24:22
10. Deborah – Genesis 35:8

The winners are:

- 1. Mrs Aruna Asir**
- 2. Mrs Peace Rani Sudhakar**
- 3. Mrs Minnie Devadoss**
- 4. Mrs Victoria Basker**
- 5. Dr Joseph M Manoharan**
- 6. Dr (Mrs) Elizabeth Sujatha Prasad**
- 7. Mrs Snehalatha Bright**
- 8. Mrs Leela Coilpillai**
- 9. Mrs Indira Rajanayakam**
- 10. Mrs Helen Satya**

Hearty congratulations!



John's Corner

NOT ELUSIVE

(Read Isa. 26 : 3, Mat 11 : 28)

It seemed like I had everything
That promised to give happiness,
Position, wealth and a good home,
What more you'd think need one possess.

Yet deep inside and constantly,
True, lasting peace eluded me;
I failed to see the reason why,
Till on my knees I prayed humbly.

My eyes were opened and by grace,
The Lord helped me to understand,
Peace can't be earned but peace is ours
When we with faith cling to God's hand.

"Come to Me ye heavy laden,
And for your weary souls find rest."
Hearken to the Saviour's calling,
And with His peace be richly blessed.

John H. Bala Singh

THE DYNAMITE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

by Michael Youssef

When we speak of the power of the Holy Spirit, many people—even Christians—misunderstand the meaning of *power*. They tend to define power as the world defines it.

In the world's view, power conveys the ability to control people, events, and circumstances for our own advantage. In the world, power brings independence and self-sufficiency, with no need for God's help or the assurance of others.

The world's power is temporary, leaving a person always wanting more.

While many devote their lives to achieving this goal, this type of power can never satisfy the soul or bring joy or peace. The world's power is temporary, leaving a person always wanting more.

In describing the power of the Holy Spirit, the Bible paints quite a different picture (see Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 12:9). The word translated as "power" in the English Bible is the Greek word *dynamis*, from which we get the word *dynamite*. In Acts 1:8, Jesus told His disciples that before they would be able to evangelize the world, they must receive the *dynamis* of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit possesses a dynamite-like power that works within a believer to blast out anything that is unlike God. It is not a power that exalts one person above others. It does not manipulate or control others. Instead, the Holy Spirit uses His power to break us so that He might remake us. The more we get self out of the way and yield our will to His, the more powerfully He is able to pour Himself out through us to others, and the more powerfully He is able to transform our lives. We are merely the conduits, the channels through which God's power moves.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to be witnesses of God's love, to live in a way that pleases God, to meet fully the demands and pressures of life, and to resist temptation. The power of the Holy Spirit is the only power that is sufficient to win spiritual battles against our own selfish desires and the wiles of Satan.

Set aside some time today to ask God to free you from the desire to control others and to lead you to become a clean vessel that can be used to transmit His power. Ask Him to do the same for your spouse, your children, your co-workers, and your friends.

Prayer: Lord, teach me about the true power of Your Spirit and grant me the willingness to submit to Your power. I confess that You alone are God. Please display Your power in and through my life today. Make me a clean and willing vessel. I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

"My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power" (1 Corinthians 2:4).



Bible Quiz No. 97 – February 2019

Long Live the Ancients

Based on Genesis (King James Version)

1. How old was Adam when he died?
(a) 969 (b) 930 (c) 905 (d) 890
2. Seth's only son mentioned by name was:
(a) Jared (b) Maleleel (c) Enos (d) Cainan
3. Was Methuselah Enoch's father or was Enoch Methuselah's father?
4. What happened to Enoch?
5. Of these three people, who had the shortest lifespan?
(a) Seth (b) Enoch (c) Methuselah
6. Fill in the blank: Lamech begat _____
7. Choose (a) or (b): (a) Lamech (b) Noah ... lived 777 years.
8. How was Methuselah related to Noah?
 - a. Noah's grandfather
 - b. Noah's great grandfather
 - c. Noah's great-great grandfather
 - d. Noah's great-great-great grandfather
9. How old was Noah when his sons were born?
 - a. 130
 - b. 270
 - c. 65
 - d. 500
10. Name Noah's three sons.

Kindly send your answers to the church office by 17th February 2019.

Usha George

15 Keys to Success

(by Karen Conrad, Entrepreneur)

1. Be a Finisher!
 - John 19:30
 - Luke 14:28
 - John 17:4
 - 2 Timothy 4:7
2. Enthusiasm
 - Hebrews 12:2
3. Habit Force
 - Your life is a result of what you do each and every day
4. Develop a Positive Mental Attitude
 - Romans 8:28
5. Make a Commitment to Excellence
 - Hebrews 11:4
 - Luke 14:28
6. Learn to Speak on your Feet
 - Matthew 22: 17-21
7. Handle Emotions
 - Ephesians 4:31
 - Proverbs 15:1
8. Learn to Handle Criticism
 - Kinds of Criticism- one if out of a heart to help you, the other isto tear you down, know the difference
 - Criticism (the one to tear you down) has no power; we give itpower. It has no authority except what we give it.

9. Law of Attraction – Favor
 - Proverbs 12:2
 - We are Ambassadors; we are the first glimpse of Jesus that people see.
10. Persistence and Perseverance
 - Romans 5:3
 - Ephesians 6:18
 - 2 Timothy 3:10
 - 2 Peter 1:6
11. Conquer Worry and Pressure
 - Stop creating a mental picture of what you don't want.
 - "Problems are the sign of life. Wonderful problems to solve- I want them all, it might make me strong!"- Peter Daniels
 - Matthew 6:27
12. Be Decisive
 - James 1:2
13. Financial Reserves
 - Stewardship
 - There is a reason most divorces are caused by money issues
14. Ask Questions- be a life learner
 - Jesus is our best example of asking questions- it keeps you leading the situation.
 - Proverbs 18: 12-13
15. Power of Choice
 - John 19:10
 - You are in charge of you!



47 : 02

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