# Kirkspire



Be a Witness

**MAY & JUNE 2019** 

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Matthew 28:19

Editor: Mrs. R. Chandy



#### Word from the Pastor

#### Singular identity, Singular Intention

I am writing this message clubbing the themes of both May and June. Think about this situation, what if you taste a pinch of salt and it tastes sweet?? Then you wouldn't call it 'salt ' or use it as salt. The reason is that the singular identity of salt is in its taste, more than colour or anything else. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus is telling His listeners, 'You are the salt of the earth'. What an honour given by God to His disciples. In effect, God is saying that we are catalysts, influencers and path breakers. It is when we stoop down to get people's attention and approval that we can lose our saltiness. You and I are given an identity of dignity, let's not trade it for mediocrity.

The second theme is to be a witness. Only Salt Christians can be Witnessing Christians. People around us know that we are Christians but have you ever thought why?? Is it because of our names or is it because we take a stand for the faith we claim to profess. Let me give a couple of examples. In your office, you choose to work with integrity in the face of compromising situations like Daniel because you choose to say 'because I am a Christian'. In your family, you choose unity, peace and contentment in a world of contention, competition and greed because you say 'because I am a Christian'.

As I conclude, I want to acknowledge a person who lived as salt and a witness whose saltiness and Witnessing life rings louder even in his absence. Our beloved brother, Bharath Solomon. We miss him dearly here but he lived what we talk and walked the message all the way individually and as a family. He is a winner.

Let's live for Jesus.

Rev. Isaac Johnson

#### **Personal Motivation**

Sometimes situations and circumstances leave us wondering where to turn for help or sometimes, we feel we are left alone with no one to hold on to. Such was the experience of King David in 2nd Samuel 30. David found his strength in the Lord. When he and his men were facing a tragic situation. David was left alone when his own men who were going through the same experience wanted to stone him. At that moment when fear and uncertainty gripped him, he remembered His God. It says David found his strength in the Lord. When there was no support to lean on, David immediately sought the hand of God, the refuge and strong tower as he mentioned in Psalm 61:3. Life may throw many things at us, where at some point when we feel we are stuck and left alone with no one to hold on to, and that is when our relationship with God plays a significant role. Only our communion with God can save us from any anxiety and depression. So hold on to God; as David experienced the great help of God in the midst of chaos, God will continue to show himself when we cry out to him.

We need not look for an external act or look to people to motivate us in our worship of God. It reminds me of the time when our church went on a missionary trip to Gujarat. As I was worshipping along with the believers there, it dawned on me that worship can be and should be done from within without any external motivation, which in turn will make us strong. This kind of worship alone can create in me a desire to worship Him – something that no music or singing or gathering of people can do. When I rejoice in his presence, with or without anything to push me towards it, my walk with God and worship of Him would be genuine. And that's what God is looking for, as mentioned in John 4:24, 'those who worship me must worship in spirit and in truth.'

Looking at the situation that David was in, this verse from the bible is so appropriate. 2 Corinthians 12:10 says, 'For when I'm weak, then I'm strong.' Our personal time with God is very important because the grace of God abounds within us as we quieten ourselves before Him. Not just a Sunday worship, or a gathering on other occasions, should draw us closer to God; even when such things may become difficult, our personal time with God will become a great motivator in walking with God when everything else seems cut off.

Roselin Johnson



#### **Medical Corner**

#### PROTECTION IN SUMMER

"Doctors treat but Jesus heals"

In summer, due to intense heat and humidity, sweating occurs, with loss of water and electrolytes. Dehydration in common.

#### **Protection**

- Drink plenty of water, Juice and coconut water. Seasonal fruits like watermelon, Musk melon, Mangoes contain electrolytes, enzymes, amino acids, vitamin C, and anti oxidants. Coconut water has been used as a way to rehydrate after exercise or illness. Watermelon is incredibly hydrating (up to 92% water) and is naturally low fat. The lycopene in watermelon is especially important for our cardiovascular health and is now being recognised as an important factor in promoting bone health. Rich in potassium, watermelon is a great natural electrolyte and thus helps regulate the action of nerves and muscles in our body. Watermelon is a wonderful source of beta-carotene (that rich red hue of watermelon = beta carotene) which is converted in the body to vitamin A. It helps produce the pigments in the retina of the eye, protecting against age-related macular degeneration and preventing night blindness. Vitamin A also maintains healthy skin, teeth, skeletal and soft tissue and mucus membranes.
- 2. Wear a wide brimmed hat or use an umbrella to avoid sun stroke.
- 3. Wear light cotton clothes to absorb the sweat. White colour reflects light, so light colours are recommended.
- 4. Apply sun screen lotion (sun block) half an hour before venturing out to avoid sun burn. In some people exposure to excess sun rays can cause skin cancer.

- 5. Avoid going out between 12 noon and 5 pm.
- 6. Wear photo chromatic cooling glasses with UVA, UVB (Ultra violet ray) blockers and anti reflection coating. One should never look at the sun directly or through binoculars or telescopes. It can burn the most sensitive part of the retina (solar burn) with loss of vision.
- Constant exposure to sunlight can cause early development of cataract
- 8. Taking a shower twice a day will cool the body.

#### Dr. Rajini Kantha Narendranath

#### Answers to Bible Quiz No. 99 – April 2019

- 1. Ecclesiastes 3
- 2. Paul. Ephesians 5:16
- 3. The stork. Jeremiah 8:7
- 4. At Christ's coming. Luke 21:24
- 5. The restoration of the Kingdom of Israel. Acts 1:7
- 6. The devils. Matthew 8:29
- 7. Herod. Matthew 2:7
- 8. Paul to Timothy. 2 Timothy 4:6
- 9. "Discern the signs of the times". Matthew 16:3
- 10. "At all times". Proverbs 17:17

#### The winners are:

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

Hearty congratulations!

Usha George



#### SOLITUDE

by (Late) T Samuel Kanagaraj

'After leaving them, He went up on a mountainside to pray." Mark 6:46

'After He had dismissed them, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray.' Matthew 14:23

'The man Christ Jesus felt the need of perfect solitude — Himself alone, entirely by Himself, alone by Himself.<sup>1</sup>

Each of us face a time of solitude at some stage in our lives – students studying away from home, Mothers whose children have flown the nest; a wife who's lost her loving husband, or a husband who's lost his doting wife; or a daughter who's lost a loving father; an accident or calamity striking the loved ones – the list is endless,

'We know how much interacting with men draws us away from ourselves and exhausts our powers. The man Christ Jesus knew this, too, and felt the need of being by Himself again, of gathering all His powers, of realising fully His high destiny, His human weakness, His entire dependence on the Father. If ever there were one who could dispense with special seasons for solitude and fellowship, it was our Lord. But He could not do His work or maintain His fellowship in full power, without His quiet time.'

'How much more does the child of God need this — *himself alone* with spiritual realities, *himself alone* with God the Father.'2

Let us observe the great works for the Kingdom of God, when in solitude:

a. In the solitude of captivity, Paul not only stood the tests in Christian activity, but evangelised and wrote and wrote. Paul's epistles to the Church leaders while he was in captivity in Rome give us a deep insight into his burden for the Church leaders and the congregation

on how to follow the teachings of Christ and implement them to the hilt. His epistles are applicable and widely used even in today's times and referred to for many a clarification while ministering the Lord's word.

b. John Bunyan's lips were silenced in Bedford jail. It was there that he did the greatest and best work of his life 'The Pilgrim's Progress'. There he wrote the book that has been read most, next to the Bible. He says "I was at home in prison and I sat me down and wrote, and wrote, for joy did make me write."

c. And for those in the captivity of their minds, because of sorrow, grief, depression, illness, Dementia, or Alzheimers', etc:

One may stand the strain of the most intense labour, coupled with severe suffering, and yet break down utterly when laid aside from all religious activities; as if forced into close confinement in some prison house.

That noble bird, soaring the highest above the clouds and enduring the longest flights, sinks into despair when in a cage where it is forced to beat its helpless wings against its prison bars. You have seen the great eagle languish in its narrow cell with bowed head and drooping wings. What a picture of the sorrow in inactivity.

But be of good cheer. Let us make time to be *alone with God*, a high and lofty privilege that every believer may and must have, his time when he/she is indeed *alone with God*. That every servant of His understand and practice this blessed art of being *alone with God*. Oh, the thought to have God all alone with me and, to know that God has me all alone to Himself!

Oh, the heavenly consolation that has poured forth from places of solitude!

#### MEDITATION:

My soul, practice being alone with Christ! (It is written that when they were alone He expounded all things to His disciples.) In such a universe thine every thought would be "God and I! God and I"! And yet He is as near to thee as that – as near as if in the boundless spaces there throbbed no heart but His and thine. Practice that solitude, O my soul! Practice the expulsion of the crowd! Practice the stillness of thine own heart! Practice the solemn refrain ""God and I! God and I!" Let none interpose between thee and thy wrestling angel! Thou

shall be both condemned and pardoned when thou shalt meet Jesus alone.  $^{\prime\prime}$  3

Are you alone? Are you lonely, even in a crowd? Spend time with our Lord *Jesus Christ* alone. Practice that solitude, and you will do Great things for God, and God 'who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us' (Eph 3:20), will do much more than you can ask or think, through you.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Andrew Murray as quoted in the 'Streams in the Desert' Vol I by Mrs. Charles Cowman, © 1965,1953,1925, published in India by Zondervan Publishing House, Michigan US.

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 2}$  Andrew Murray as quoted in the 'Streams in the Desert' Vol I

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> George Matheson as quoted in the 'Streams in the Desert' Vol I by Mrs. Charles Cowman, © 1965,1953,1925, published in India by Zondervan Publishing House, Michigan US.



#### Vacation Bible School 2019

Vacation Bible School at Kirk was held from April 24 to May, 2019. The theme was 'Unmasked' taken from Ephesians 4.22-24 About 164 children, 34 teachers, 19 volunteers and 22 church staff were part of VBS all learning to be like Jesus after removing masks of fear, hatred, selfishness, etc. Here are a few responses from students, teachers, parents and volunteers:

#### Young adults

The young adults discussed ten relevant topics like quiet time, time management, career, marriage etc. The sessions were handled by ten faculties from different walks of life - Pastors, Missionaries, Bible teachers, Home makers, Businessmen, Entrepreneurs, Apologists, IAS officers etc.

After years of wanting to be seated in the choir room for class I finally found myself there this year. Being a young adult made me realise that I'm not nearly an adult yet but I do have certain responsibilities that I need to carry out. The speakers sent for us were very helpful in the direction we should take our lives in. Overall it was a wonderful experience and I'm looking forward to next year

#### Kiara - Student - Young Adult

VBS was great this year! Within a span of 10 days I had learnt a lot. Every day, we had a different person who would come and speak to us about how God wants us to be, what He wants us to do during this life he's given us, what He has in store for us etc. It was a great learning experience. I had fun spending time with my friends and working with kids! Can't wait for next year.

#### Rakib-Student - Young Adult

#### Seniors, intermediate, Junior, Primary

Children belonging to these classes had one Bible lesson and one Missionary story or one session on Bible archaeology. The students were taught to think and take life changing decision

The theme of VBS 2019 was applicable to all of us and taught us to not have double standards. We were taught to love God more and give up our sinful ways. The songs were meaningful and the classes helped us in clearing our doubts.

#### Sujay ShanthaKumar - Student - Seniors

I enjoyed this year's VBS from the assembly to the snacks and the class. Everyday we learnt about one Bible character and then about archaeological sites about that character to show that God's Word is real. It was a very good experience.

#### Akshay Shanthakumar - Student - Juniors

I have been going to Kirk VBS for the past five years. In this year I learnt to love one another. I learnt to remove weakness and receive the mask of power. I learnt not to fall into temptation and I learnt love one another. My favourite memory verse is in Proverbs 10:12 "Hatred stirs up conflict but love covers all wrongs".

#### Sasha Ashok - Student - Junior

I thoroughly enjoyed VBS this year. What I really liked about this year was the singing, my teacher Miss Maria, the activities and the lessons. I learnt a lot of new things. One of my favourite activities was nailing all my sins which I wrote on bits of paper to a cardboard cross that my teacher taught us to make. This represented how Jesus took all my sins upon Himself and washed me and made me clean. During love feast, I learnt how to share. Working for labour day, I learnt how hard it was to earn money. We also had a lot of fun practising for the final day program.

#### Susan Percis - Student - Intermediate

The ten days of VBS were the most lovely days ever. My friends and I would rush to the front to tell the memory verses. I loved the time we learnt the Bible together. I learnt that God should be our priority; God is the most worthy God: God is the master planner- God has a good plan for each of us; we should confess our sins. I learnt about Christian missionaries and martyrs- Thomas, Polycarp, Lottia Moon etc

I loved this year's VBS personally. I would like to come to VBS every year.

#### Chris - Student - Intermediate

I was new to this church and felt very shy at first. Then I started loving the VBS and learnt many things about Christ. We learnt many new songs in the worship session. I was very delighted to do the actions and sing. Then came the classes. I was very excited when I learnt the lessons . The most important lesson I learnt was to keep God as my priority. I also learnt that I have to read the Bible and pray every day. Above all everyone was very kind and friendly . I will always cherish these memories

#### D Jeditha - Student - Intermediate

#### Parent:

From day one onwards my son Hadriel enjoyed coming to the VBS in St.Andrew's church. Ms.Priya so willingly, lovingly and wonderfully taught the children in an innovative method the books of the Bible and the Bible verses and made us happy. We are looking for the next (2020) VBS eagerly. God bless you all for the efforts you have taken to encourage the kids to learn more about the Bible.

#### **Teachers**

The students of I got were those who were going to 10th std. They were bright, noisy, naughty but very enthusiastic- ready to go up during morning assembly every day and share what they had learnt the previous day.

They were quick to learn, reading each day's Bible passage sincerely, completed their work books very diligently and took turns to pray after class. They were very interested with the missionary martyrs they studied. This motivated and encouraged them to start their daily Bible reading also. It was a joy to encourage and guide these young minds.

#### Dr Vimala Samuel - Teacher - Seniors

Teaching at Kirk VBS 2019 was an enjoyable and rewarding experience. This year's theme 'Unmasked' based on Ephesians 4:22-24 taught us how to remove masks of selfishness, hatred, uncleanness etc and put on a godly nature. Teaching God's word using practical examples, illustrations, games and activities was learning through fun both for me and my lively bunch of juniors. We started each day with a short teachers devotion taken by Mrs Meera Ninan – a booster shot that charged us for the day. To see the Asha children join in singing and

worship during the general assembly was a delight. The enthusiasm of the children as they walked into the sanctuary everyday inspite of the searing heat outside was very encouraging. All glory to God and kudos to the Kirk VBS 2019 team for a fun filled 10 days for both teachers and children.

#### Rhea Devaprasad - Teacher - Juniors

After 18 long years this year I taught in VBS. I was entrusted with 6 year old kids (Primary). It was a pure joy to be with them - listening to them and teaching Bible stories and missionary stories. The expressions they give when listening to the stories were priceless. I went with one primary goal for VBS - to inspire every kid in my class to memorize 10 verses at the end of 10 days for I believe the verses they memorize at this young age will stay with them forever. I am super joyful that the goal was achieved - all my kids memorized 10 verses! Yayy!!! I praise God for the wonderful opportunity to minister to kutty chellams.

#### Priya Juliet - Teacher - Primary

#### Volunteer

I have been part of VBS at Kirk for many years. This year witnessed some members of the congregation take time off their careers and give time for God and His Kingdom - there was a banker, two officers employed in private sector undertaking, three college professors, one school teacher, two in transition - changing careers and a person from an NGO. I was thrilled. When I walked into the sanctuary every morning, it was as if I heard a voice ' take off your slippers you are standing on holy ground' - there in the quietness of the church were two of our church staff in prayer. I was blessed and humbled

Dr. Sujatha Elizabeth Prasad Director

VBS 2019 was a blessed time for me. There were so many things God wanted me to put off and put on, specifically to put on courage and entrust everything to God. It was a time of rejoicing to see children share what they learnt about God and share it during the testimony time. We had around 160 plus Children this time from different churches and schools. The best part is we all learnt together as one family. To God be all glory and honour.

Florence Devanesan

## Workshop conducted at Balaramapuram by KWF and CCM on March 26, 2019

"Therefore put on the whole armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13)

This workshop was a continuation of the one we conducted in August last year. A small group of us visited the site to attend it and to have a close interaction with the families (mainly spouses) of alcoholics. There were about 30 women and a handful of their toddlers waiting for our arrival!

Session I started with a short prayer by Mrs Julia Santosham. Mrs Jessie welcomed the gathering with great joy. She appreciated the diligence, steadfastness and enthusiasm of the women.

Dr Samuella of Rainy Hospital was the resource person. She started her talk with definition of alcoholism and the personality of typical alcoholics.

She pointed out that the wife of an alcoholic is involved in spiritual warfare on a daily basis. "The way we fight the battle shows our identity in Christ; when we fight under the banner of Christ there is no room for fear or anxiety" she said.

Dr Samuella described the typical games all alcoholics play at home. They are basically guilt-ridden and remorseful people and hence defend themselves giving many excuses for their substance abuse. For some it is "stress at work place", and for others it is "peer pressure" or "unhappy atmosphere" at home. Yet another group blame their wives for their predicament. This is a very painful situation for the wife: whatever she does is not recognised and she is mostly treated like an object of no value. Then, there are family members, relatives, friends and neighbours who have nothing to offer but a lot of advice: she should be more understanding, patient, and so on. It is a situation where the one who committed the crime often goes scot free and the innocent is punished! There are occasions where the husband makes dire threats if she "harasses" HIM. The hapless wife takes all these hurts deep into her heart and in the course of time, suffers from severe depression, dysfunction and very low self-esteem. The above

technical terms were clearly explained by Dr Samuella in her characteristic style: simple, lucid and brief.

After Session I there was a skit staged by Dr Samuella's assistants. It depicted very clearly how an alcoholic and his wife interacted at home, and how slowly but steadily, the family is overpowered by the enemy, the devil. God created family out of great love and wisdom, for His glory. The skit showed how an otherwise happy family is driven to hopelessness and disease due to greed, alcoholism, adultery, ego and deceits.

The skit was followed by a group discussion in small groups. It was lively and spontaneous. After this, there was a call for giving testimonies. One lady testified how her husband was saved and baptised through her fasting and prayer. She was totally convinced that Jesus could do the impossible through prayer.

Then there was a short break for coffee and snacks. In Session II Dr Samuella exhorted the women to stand firm in faith and fight against the evil of alcoholism, not in their strength but with the strength they receive from above. They should not worry about what people think, or listen to their advice, whether they were closest family members, relatives, friends, or neighbours. They should not seek a shoulder to weep on but take all their concerns to the One and only One who really cares and is ever willing to help. His love is fathomless and His wisdom beyond human understanding. The women, in unison, agreed to fast and pray. Then Dr Samuella concluded with a beautiful prayer and asked the women to repeat it after her. It was indeed a time of joy and Hope. There is Power in the name of Jesus!

The workshop ended with encouragement and exhortation by Mrs Diana Paulraj and Mrs Jessie. Pastor Isaac Johnson prayed the closing prayer of victory over darkness.

Mrs Susan Abraham

P.S: The workshop was indeed very helpful and we pray more of us will join the visit next time.



#### Bible Quiz No. 100 - May & June 2019

Give only one reference

#### A Dairyman's Quiz (King James Version)

- 1. Who reported to their leader "a land flowing with milk and honey"?
- 2. What Old Testament character reminisces about the time when he "washed his steps with butter"?
- 3. What famous story mentions a manger?
- 4. From what animals did the people of Bible times get their milk?
- 5. Who said of his enemies that "the words of his mouth were smoother than butter"?
- 6. Did David, Job, or Solomon say: "Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese"?
- 7. Which New Testament writer speaks of "the sincere milk of the Word"?
- 8. What woman betrayed a soldier, after she had "opened a bottle of milk" for him?
- 9. Proverbs 30:33 says: "The churning of \_\_\_\_\_\_bringeth forth
- 10. Which New Testament writer speaks of feeding weak believers with milk, and not with meat?

Kindly send your answers to the church office by 16th June 2019.

Usha George



#### John's Corner

#### Calm Down

(Read Isa. 54: 17, Matt. 8: 26, Ps. 37:7-11)

Calm yourself when persecuted, Remember God is in command, Nothing can bring down the righteous, Who cling to God's upholding hand.

Events of the world confuse us, Terrorists strike with foolish zeal, Wicked people seem to prosper; Is no one there our wounds to heal?

Be still, assured that Jesus reigns, Secure under His wings we are, Never will He ever leave us, None can prevail against His power.

Fear not! rise up and persevere
To do what's right though hard it be;
When we trust and look to Jesus,
The victory's ours ultimately.

John H. Bala Singh



### Work of the Holy Spirit

by Aimee Semple McPherson

JUST as God the Father promised, with ever increasing emphasis in the Old Testament the

coming time in which His Son should be manifested, so during the latter months of Jesus' ministry He promised when He went away He also would bestow a gift upon the world, even the Holy Ghost. As the hour of his departure approached, and Calvary's cross cast its shadow over the fearful hearts of His disciples, Jesus more and more sought to impress upon the minds of His people the necessity and importance of receiving His gift the Comforter.

So many times did the Lord promise the Spirit and explain the importance of His coming and His work in our lives from conviction to baptism, and on to perfection, that time and space will permit our giving only a few quotations at this time.

In the 16th chapter of John, Jesus said: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you." Here and in other places He begins to enumerate the different reasons why we should receive the Holy Ghost, and to explain still more fully His office work in this world:

- (1) When He is come He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. John 16:8.
- (2) Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. John 16:13.
- (3) He will not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. John 16:13.
- (4) He will shew you things to come. John 16:13.
- (5) He shall glorify ME. John 16:14.

- (6) He shall receive of mine, and show it unto you. John 16:14.
- (7) But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me. John 15:26.
- (8) But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. John 14:26.
- (9) But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. Acts 1:8.

Jesus' parting words to His little flock after His death and resurrection, as His pierced feet were rising from earth as He ascended to His Father, rang out clear and plain: "Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49.

True to His commission, Acts 1:12 shows the little band of faithful followers (one hundred and twenty in number) wending their way to Jerusalem, to tarry until they should receive the promised gift. "And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter and James and John, and Andrew and Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren. Acts 1:13, 14.



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