

ISSUE 01

January – March 2020

# LIGHT

*Jesus: "I am the light of the world." (John 8:12)*

## DARKNESS OF HEART

*We are  
Christ's  
Ambassadors*

- Sin
- Superstition
- Atheism
- Ignorance



**BEHOLD,  
I STAND AT  
THE DOOR**

*A magazine of*

**CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CENTRE**

# Darkness of Heart

- Neville Jayasundara -

**“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”**

**John 8: 12**

This is our present experience. God wants us to enter into the present experience in full measure. There is a comparison in this wonderful expression of the Lord Jesus between darkness and light. He says that if you follow Him, you will not walk in darkness.

What is this darkness that He is talking to us about?

Firstly, the Bible tells us that it is the darkness of sin. In John 3: 19 the Lord Jesus says, “You do not come into the light, you love darkness, and your deeds are evil. So, darkness of sin. and it applies to all of us. Bible says that “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God”. And sin brings death; the wages of sin is death. So, the Lord Jesus says, if we are not following Him, we are in darkness.

And the second kind of darkness in the minds of people is the darkness of ignorance. Luke 1:79 says, “To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” There are thousands and thousands of people who are ignorant of the love of God. They are in the darkness of ignorance.

Third kind of darkness is the darkness of superstitions. And the Bible speaks to us of people worshipping so many things and it is

true, we can see it, other than God they are worshipping the creations. Romans 1:21 says, “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” and verse 23 says, “And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.”

They started to worship the creation. There is so much of superstition believing the wrong thing. And they believe in so many things that they do not know about and they think that they are pleasing someone by doing this.

Then there is a fourth kind of darkness and that is the darkness of human tradition. Our Lord Jesus again and again warned the religious people of His day that they were in that darkness. And Matthew 15:6, “And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus, have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.”; By your tradition, the Word of God is made of no effect. But now the Lord Jesus says, if you follow me, you shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.

What is this light of life? Our Lord Jesus wants us to understand this. Very

helpful verse is found in John 1:4, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." This is the light of life. In Him was life and that life is the light of men. So, the life of Jesus Christ is the light of men. It is not by good behavior; not by good tradition; not by good religion, not even by Christianity. It is by the life of Christ. So, the light of life is the life of Jesus Christ. It is the Lord Jesus Christ and His life that will bring about this light in our lives. So, it is exclusively through the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, what should we be doing now? First of all, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him as your Saviour and Lord. It is all about the Lord Jesus Christ. If you do that God will give you the power to become a child of God. So, we are not asking you to become a better person. but we are asking you to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. You can do it now. By faith look at the cross how He paid the penalty of your sin on the cross.

Secondly, abide in His Word. John 8:31, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed". So, practically we must abide in the Word of God. We must read it daily regularly and obey. Make the Word of God as your spiritual food.

Then imitate Christ. In the Word of God displayed before us the life of Christ. We need to imitate Him. That is how we can follow Him. Matthew 11:29, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Our Lord Jesus says to take His Yoke upon us and learn of Him. Read in the pages of the gospels

the life of Jesus and imitate Him. That is following Christ. We need to be like Christ. How humble He was. How sincere He was. How holy He was. How much He loved the sinners. That is our example. We have this great responsibility to follow Him. So, we have no excuse to be unlike Him.

Fourthly and finally, how to follow Christ? Work in partnership with Him. Become partners in His work. 2 Corinthians 6:1, "We then, as workers together with Him". You and I are invited to work in partnership with Christ. We have to do with Him what He is doing now. What is that work? Matthew 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build my Church". He is building His Church. We are today called to follow Him. That means, we also as partners with Him, we should build His Church.

Let us consecrate ourselves to be partners in this work.

“ And thou, child, shalt  
be called the prophet of the  
Highest: for thou shalt go  
before the face of the Lord to  
prepare his ways;  
To give knowledge of  
salvation unto his people by  
the remission of their sins,  
Through the tender mercy  
of our God; whereby the  
dayspring from on high hath  
visited us,  
To give light to them that sit  
in darkness and in the shadow  
of death, to guide our feet into  
the way of peace.



# Mary Magdalene

What makes Mary Magdalene so special to be the first person to see the Lord Jesus risen from the dead as mentioned in John 20:14-18?

to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Luke 8:29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

Luke 9:38 And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son: for he is mine only child.

Luke 9:39 And, lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him hardly departeth from him.

Matthew 17:15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

We can see the life of a person who is possessed by a demon or demons is pathetic and unprofitable. Mary Magdalene was possessed with seven devils. What possibly could she offer society with this dilemma. Her life was worthless and useless. She was not in the right mind. She could not function in society and the Jewish community would have written her off. Nobody would have considered marrying her. She was a dead weight and spent force.

Just imagine the first time Mary would have run down the streets

## *Mark 16:9 Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene*

To understand how precious Mary Magdalene is to the Lord Jesus let us look at who Mary Magdalene was and what makes her special

Luke 8:2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

To understand what it is to be possessed by a devil let us consider the nature of a person possessed by a devil mentioned in the Bible.

Luke 8:27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.

Luke 8:28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I

naked. The shame that would have brought her parents when people mocked her and laughed at her.

She would have smelled really bad. At times of burnt raw flesh when she fell into a fire or other times into some garbage. Her flesh was utterly tormented and the filth that would have proceeded out of her mouth would have completely written her off from society.

The Lord Jesus showed compassion to such a worthless human being. He gave her hope and life when He delivered her from the bondage of those seven devils. He released her from the clutches of Satan and allowed the love of God to enter into her life.

Mary Magdalene's gratitude and love for the Lord Jesus teaches us the characteristics of a transformed life in the Lord Jesus Christ

### **1) Generosity**

Mary showed her gratitude to the Lord Jesus by ministering unto him with her substance as we read in Luke 8:3

She did not forget what the Lord had done in her life. She followed the Lord and used her substance to support His ministry. She cared for the Lord Jesus. She did not take her deliverance for granted. She showed it by works. When Jesus healed her she wanted many to feel the love she felt from the Savior of her soul. She did not care about anything else.

Even after Jesus her master was dead her generosity towards Jesus did not end.

We have been delivered from eternal hell fire. Eternal burning. How much more grateful should we be. How generous are we towards the house of God, to God's people and towards the work of the Lord. Lord

Jesus said I will build my church. What am I doing towards this? How am I being generous towards this cause?

### **2) Loyalty**

In the suffering of the Lord Jesus in His crucifixion Mary stood by the mother of Jesus partook and shared in her sorrow for her Son. Mary did not abandon the Lord Jesus. She stood and watched even when her life could have been in danger. Her love and devotion for the Lord was seen in her response to the Lord when He was suffering. How far are we willing to go to be loyal to Jesus. Do we value our Salvation enough to be loyal. Is our loyalty based on the amount of blessings we receive?

John 19:25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

### **3) Fearlessness**

John 20:1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Mark 16:1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

Mark 16:2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

Once the Lord Jesus was buried in a cave. Mary Magdalene does not end her devotion to her Master whom she loved. She sets off early in the morning with sweet spices to anoint the Lord Jesus. Her love for the Lord continues to escalate out of gratitude. It was not customary for women to enter a cemetery early in the morning while it was dark. We see how fearless

Mary was. Her love for Jesus has made her fearless. When Jesus saves us we become fearless. She did not have to prove to anyone her love for Jesus. He was dead but yet she continued her love by being proactive through her actions.

It is so amazing that Mary was willing to venture into a cemetery especially knowing she was once possessed with demons who could be loitering in the cemetery. However she did not fear for her safety and sanity. Her total focus was Jesus and how she could continue to show her love to him. She did not care if anyone laughed or mocked at her, she stood up for what she believed. She went with her spices to do what she felt in her heart. We need to be fearless in following Jesus. Our intentions towards Jesus should not be influenced by those around but should be on our own desire to know him and follow him. We should desire to fearlessly follow Christ.

#### 4) Commitment

Mary was a woman after Jesus own heart. She did not stop loving her Lord once He was declared dead. Even His burial could not keep her away from showing her gratitude to Him. When she realized Jesus was missing and the tomb was empty she continued to stay and find Him.

John 20:13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

John 20:14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

John 20:15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir,

if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Mary's love and care for the Lord Jesus was not mere temporal infatuation. It was deeply imbedded in her heart and she was totally devoted to the Lord Jesus.

Her generosity, loyalty, fearlessness and commitment to her Lord and Master Lord Jesus qualified her to see the risen Savior first.

John 20:16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

As children of God after receiving Salvation do we have these characteristics Mary Magdalene possessed?

Are we generous in the things of Christ? What are we doing to support His ministry?

Are we loyal to the cause of Christ? Are we ready to share and partake in the sufferings of Christ?

How fearless are we for the Lord Jesus? Are we willing to take a leap of faith and be courageous?

How committed am I in seeking the Lord Jesus? Am I willing to persevere?

The Lord Jesus will surely reveal Himself to those who display such characteristics.

## DARKNESS TO LIGHT

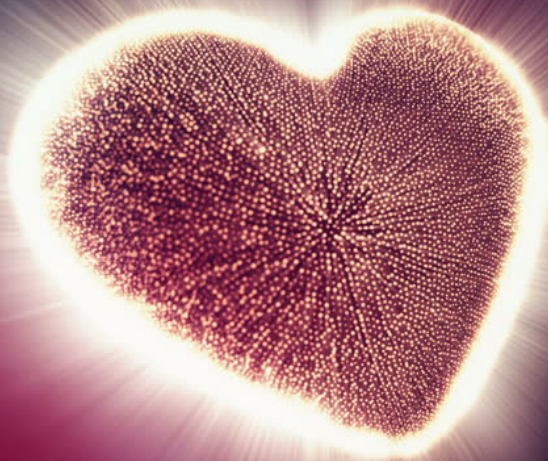
There was a time in my life that believed in many gods and sought help from them. You know that people have imagined gods of different shapes and sizes. Some are like animals and some are like humans with extra limbs and heads. I thought that they were real.

One day I found that my parents and my only brother had decided to believe in Jesus as their only Saviour and God. And to my amazement they had stopped worshipping statues and idols. And this made me really angry. I began to hate this way of belief and said to myself that I would never worship Jesus. In my heart I challenged Jesus to try and change my heart if possible. In the beginning I thought I was winning the challenge. But, as time went by it changed. I started to question myself. I wanted to find an answer.

One evening in February, 2002 while I was thinking on this, I began to have a strange feeling inside me that I should kneel down and pray

to Jesus. I resisted this thought. But finally I knelt down and called the name of Jesus. I cannot describe to you the kind of peace that entered in to my heart when I did that. At that moment I found the answer, that Lord Jesus is the true and living God. I knew nothing about the Bible at that time but that night my heart was changed and I began to say "thank you Jesus for dying on my behalf. Please forgive my sins."

Today I know the difference between the true and the living God and statue gods are man's imagination. The Lord Jesus is giving me true peace and happiness in life. Past 17 years, the Lord Jesus is ruling in my heart. He guides me and teaches me every step of my life. He is my all in all. Praise the Lord.



# My *first* Love

Written by Natali Ratwatte & Joanna Atkinson

I remember the first time I met my first love. It was 12 years ago in my room, on my knees praying to the God I so greatly feared. I had not known what love was until I heard the voice of the Lord Jesus Christ that day. He spoke to me in His still small voice about His work on the cross and how He could redeem me from my sinful state. Oh what a wonderful, glorious day that was. This was my first encounter of His unconditional love (John 3:16).

I used to wonder how and why the church of Ephesus, mentioned in the book of Revelations, was condemned despite the praise they received for their work, toil, patience and endurance (Revelations 2:2) from the Lord Jesus. How could such a church that has all its basics “right” still be condemned for abandoning its first love?

In Mark 12:30, the Lord says the greatest commandment in the Law is to love the Lord your God with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. It goes on to say that if we fail to love our Lord with all our soul, with all our mind and with all our strength then we also fail in keeping the other commandments. This is essentially the mistake the church Ephesus made, and is very well the mistake we make as we run our race. The importance of loving the Lord with all our heart, mind and soul cannot be reiterated enough as we start dealing with the secular world. This love that the Lord speaks of comes with complete dependency on Him. The believer must acknowledge and make the Lord Jesus the Lord of his or her life, completely surrendering their lives to Christ and trusting in the sovereignty of God.



As my walk with the Lord started at the age of 21, my involvement with the world as a working graduate also increased. Trials and temptations were very common and very new to me as I was from a different faith before coming to know Christ. I thank the Lord that His love pursued me daily, and I was able to overcome such trials and temptations as my dependency on the Lord increased.

In John 15:1-6, the Lord teaches us how to depend on Him, using a great example of a vine and branches. He calls Himself the vine and those who love and follow Him – the branches. As the branches rely on the vine for sustenance and survival, we are to rely and depend on Him for everything. He asks us to abide in Him as He abides in us. Once we abide in Christ and depend on Him for all things, then our purpose in life changes from being self-centered to being Christ-centered. Our daily prayer would be similar to the prayer our Lord Jesus prayed on the Mount of Olives saying “Nevertheless, not my will, but yours be done” (Luke 22:42).

I learnt that abiding in Him is not always easy. It was a learning process. When I was confronted with difficult situations and decisions in life and in the workplace, I had to choose daily to abide in Him rather than on myself, my abilities or what I thought/felt was right. He must increase and I must decrease (John 3:30) In spite of abiding in Jesus and striving to put Him first in all spheres of my life, difficult situations would not always

change. Yet I chose to abide in the only true Vine, holding fast to His promise in Jeremiah 29:11 that His plans for us are good and not evil, to give us hope and a future.

I knew that all things work together for good to them that LOVE God and are called according to His purpose (KJV Romans 8:28).

Our purpose would be to glorify Him in everything we do. This becomes quite straightforward for someone who is fully and completely in love with Christ and is Christ-dependent. Life for a believer in the secular world becomes less complicated, as the thinking now is ONLY to glorify Him.

So let us run this race with endurance, the race that is set before us. We need to look unto Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith and complete the race.

Therefore let our hearts forever love Him, seek Him and abide in Him for the sake of His glory.

“**And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.**”

# YES, YOU ARE



Do you often question from yourself, whether you are important? Are you a person crying in a place you feel that the others cannot find you? Do you feel that you are rejected and not loved? Or do you feel circumstances around you are too much to bear or you feel that you cannot forgive yourself for a decision that you have made? Then it is you, to whom I write...

## **You are so important to your Creator.**

For God the Creator says, “ See I have engraved you in the palms of My hand” Isaiah 49:16.

Look at your own palms. There are lines on it and they do not fade away or get erased. So are you engraved onto your Creator’s palms. How important and special you are to Him. He loves you, cares for you and will never forget you nor leave you, for He has engraved you in His palms.

## **Your tears are valued**

“You have collected all my tears in Your bottles. You have recorded each one in Your book” Psalm 56:8

Remember that when you suffer alone that there is a person valuing every tear you shed, because He knows you, He is your Creator. You are so

special no matter what others say. Yes you are important.

## **Jesus died on behalf of you because He loves you**

“For God so loved the world that He gave us His only begotten Son. That who so ever believes in His shall not perish, but will have an everlasting life” John 3:16

God sent His Son to die on behalf of you and to save you from eternal damnation because you are so important to Him. He rose up from the dead and is alive. He is helping you to face your journey courageously.

You are a victorious human being if you have Him residing in your life. What a value to life. A diamond shines brighter after being polished hard. A pearl is created only after a process of suffering and a so is it with a beautiful butterfly.

Your sufferings do not mean you are worthless. But it says you are in the process of being molded to a diamond. He will never leave you; you are so important. For He knew you even before you were formed in your mother’s womb.

God Bless You  
- Dilini Benjamin -



## 10 ASPECTS OF THE MERCY OF GOD

As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ we experience different aspects of God's virtues. The Love, Grace, Mercy and Faithfulness of God are few to name. Even though throughout Christian history many have preached on these and written about these, and composed poetry and hymns, yet one thing we need to clearly understand is that none of these virtues of God can be fully understood by us and neither can it be fully explained by us.

We are going to now consider some aspects of God's mercy.

Very often we speak so much of God's grace, but we fail to speak enough of the Mercy of God.

Grace of God is defined as "God giving us what we don't deserve to receive"

Mercy is defined as "God not giving us what we deserve (Judgment) to receive".

As we read through the Bible we find in the English King James Version different words are used to explain the different aspects of God's Mercy.

I'm fully aware that these words differ in other translations and also languages, nevertheless let us consider the different aspects of the Mercy of God, so that we may be enriched by the knowledge of the scriptures.

### ABUNDANT MERCY – 1 Peter 1:3

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his **abundant mercy** hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead"*

Here in this verse we have the 1st description of the Mercy of God that we are going to consider

We find that this verse speaks to us of the ABUNDANT MERCY of God, and that is in the context of our Salvation.

Very often we have heard and also we may know that we have been saved by the Grace of God – Eph. 2:8. But we need to understand that as much as the Grace of God had an important role in our salvation equally the Mercy of God also had an important role to

accomplish God's plan of salvation in our lives. And here in this verse we find that God's Mercy was in abundance for us to be saved.

God without giving us the punishment due for our sin, by the abundance of His Mercy, saved us.

If I may use a very simple explanation it's like this. The abundant Mercy of God like a Tsunami that flattens everything on its path, just swept over all our sinfulness and wretchedness flattening them all and brought about our salvation from sin. This is the abundance of the Mercy of God. If not for this abundant Mercy of God we would have perished in judgment for our sin

Have you experienced this aspect of the abundant mercy of God in your life?

If you would acknowledge your sin, repent of it, and confess it, and ask the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive you, and if you invite Him to come into your heart, you also can be saved and come into a full experience of the ABUNDANT MERCY of God.

#### TENDER MERCY – Psalm 51:1

*"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy **tender mercies** blot out my transgressions."*

Here we have the 2nd description of the Mercy of God. Psalm 51 is well known as the psalm of king David.

David pens this psalm when he repented of his grievous sin of committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering her innocent husband. Having been convicted of his sin by the ministry of prophet Nathan, David sincerely repents of his sin. And at that instance he banks on the TENDER MERCY of God.

He knew that even though his sin was so grievous and gruesome God's mercy was so tender to forgive him and to bring in reconciliation.

Though we may harden our heart and sin against God, Yet when we acknowledge, repent and confess our sin, God's mercy is so very tender that it melts the merciful heart of God to forgive us

Even today the tender mercy of God is available for you and me if we may go to Him with a repentant heart no matter what our sin may be

Do you want to experience the tender mercy of God? Then draw nigh to God with a repentant heart.

#### GREAT MERCY – Psalm 103:11

*"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so **great is his mercy** toward them that fear him."*

Here in this verse we have the 3rd description of the Mercy of God. We are introduced to the GREAT MERCY of God.

It's so very great that as the heavens are high above the earth God's mercy is great. And we find the context of this great mercy of God is in the context of

verse 10, "God has not dealt with us according to what we deserve for our sin". Instead, by His great mercy he has dealt with us.

In Lamentations 3:22 we read "it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed"

If God dealt with us according to our sins then by now there will be nothing left in us.

In the gospel of Matthew we read the Lord tells us that if our eye offends to pluck it out, if our hand offends us to cut it off. If we go by this principle there will not be anything left in our bodies to cut and chop off for the amount of sins we commit against God on a daily basis.

But thanks be to God for His mercy towards us is so great that He will deal with us not according to our sins but according to His great mercy

Take a moment and examine your life and consider and be grateful for the great mercy of God on which we can rely on

### MULTITUDE OF MERCY Psalm 106:45

*"And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the **multitude of his mercies.**"*

Now we come to the 4th description of the Mercy of God The MULTITUDE OF MERCIES.

When we consider the word multitude it denotes more in number. So is the Mercy of God, it is more in number.

And when we read through Psalm 106 we find that it traces the history of the children of Israel filled with faults, failures and fallings. And in such a situation the multitude of the mercy of God is mentioned.

No matter how many times the Israelites failed & fell yet there was multitudes of mercy to forgive them and restore them.

Even today you and I can trust in the multitude of the mercy of God.

Though we may keep failing and falling time and again yet the multitude of the mercy of God is available to forgive us, restore us and see us through.

How about your life today? Is your life marked with many fallings & failures? Then turn to the Lord by trusting in the multitude of his mercies to help you.

### MANIFOLD MERCY Nehemiah 9:19

*"Yet thou in thy **manifold mercies** forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go."*

The 5th description of the Mercy of God is the MANIFOLD MERCY of God.

Some of these words used in describing the mercy of God may seem to have similar meaning. But when we carefully meditate and examine the words used and the context there is surely a spiritual instruction for us.

Here we have the manifold mercy of God which speaks to us of the different aspects or shades of the mercy of God.

Having said thus as we look into the context setting of this verse we can identify 3 such aspects of the manifold mercy of God.

#### PROTECTION – Neh. 9:19

Here we find that God by His manifold mercies protected the Israelites throughout their wilderness journey by a pillar of cloud and by a pillar fire.

#### PROVISION– Neh. 9:20

God not only protected the Israelites by His multitudes of mercy but also provided for them throughout their wilderness journey.

#### PROVIDENCE – Neh. 9:21

Another aspect of the manifold mercy of God is the providence of God.

God took care of the Israelites so that they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wax old and their feet swelled not.

So God's mercy is manifold and ministers to us in different ways in our lives.

Do you have an experience of the manifold mercy of God experiencing His protection, provision and providence

*To be continued.....*

- Dinesh Malcolm Paul -

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### **There are 10 places where people were raised from the dead in the Bible:**

**Elijah raised the widow's son**  
(1 Kin 17:17-24).

**Elisha raised the Shunammite's son**  
(2 Kin 4:18-37).

**A dead man came to life when his body was set on the dead bones of Elisha**  
(2 Kin 13:20-21).

**Jesus raised a widow's son**  
(Lk 7:11-15).

**Jesus raised the daughter of Jarius**  
(Lk 8:41-42,49-56).

**Jesus raised Lazarus**  
(Jn 11:1-46).

**Jesus was resurrected**  
(Mt 28, Mk 16, Lk 24, Jn 20-21).

**Many dead saints came out of their graves after Jesus' resurrection**  
(Mt 27:51-53)

**Peter raised Tabitha (Dorcas)**  
(Acts 9:36-51).

**Paul raised Eutychus**  
(Acts 20:9-12).

# Jesus in the alphabet

**A**ncient Of Days

Dan 7:9, Rev 1:14

**B**right Morning Star

Rev 22:16

**C**hrist

Mark 8:29

**D**eliverer

2 Sam 22:2, Acts 7:35

**E**verlasting Father | Emmanuel

Isa 7:14 | Matt 1:23

**F**aithful And True

Rev 19:11

**G**overnor | Good Shepherd

Isa 9:6 | John 10:11, 14

**H**oly One Of Israel

2 Kings 19:22, Is 1:4

**I** Am

John 8:58

**J**udge

Psalms 7:11, John 5:22, Rom 2:16

**K**ing Of Kings

Rev 19:16

**L**ord Of Lords | Life

Rev 19:16 | John 14:6

**M**ighty God, Messiah | Mediator

Isa 7:14, John 1:41 | 1 Tim 2:5

**N**ame Above All Names

Philippian 2:9

**O**nly Son From The Father

John 1:14, 18

**P**rince Of Peace

Isa 9:6

**Q**uestion, The

Matt 16:15

**R**edeemer | Rock

Isa 44:24, Deut 32:4 | 1 Cor 10:4

**S**aviour, Son Of God, Son Of Man

Act 13:23, Eph 5:23

**T**ruth

John 14:6

**U**ndivided Godhead | Uncreated,

Col 2:9 | 1 John 2:13

**V**ictor

1 Cor 15:57

**W**onderful | Way | Word Of God

Is 9:6 | John 14:6 | Rev 19:13

**X** - Crucified, The

Acts 2:36

**Y**HWH

Col 1:15-16

**Z**ion's King

Psalms 149:2

*Duties of an*  
**AMBASSADOR  
FOR CHRIST**

**“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.”**

**2 Corinthians 5:20**

Ambassador is not a person who lives in his own country. same way, this world is not our permanent place. We belong to Heaven. We live in this world temporarily. We represent the Lord Jesus Christ in this world. Our mission is to share the message of the Lord Jesus Christ with us.

You cannot become an ambassador on your own. It is a very high-profile job. You have to be identified by the head of the state as a loyal and capable person.

Jeremiah 1:5, “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you; Before you were born, I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations”.

Here it is very clear that the Lord His own plan about us before we were born. The Lord Jesus Christ has chosen us to be His ambassadors. John 15:16 says, that we have not chosen the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Lord Jesus Christ has chosen us.

Since we have been selected by the Lord Jesus Christ as His ambassadors, we have to attend to the requirements given by Him.

### **Availability**

The ambassador for Christ shall be responsible to make him/her available for duty at any given time. Isaiah 6:8, Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”. Here we see the calling of the Lord and the response. So, when God calls you to be His ambassador, what would be your response?

Being an ambassador for Christ we cannot ignore the call of the Lord. During the last year, just think, how many times have you refused the calling of the Lord? How many excuses have we given to refuse the calling of the Lord?

Think about His calling. Haven't He preserved your life? Haven't He protected you from all the dangers? Haven't He showered unbelievable blessing on you? Haven't He met all your needs? Haven't He listened and answered your prayers?

1 Peter 3:15, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the



hope that is in you with.” You must be ready at any time. Your duty as an ambassador for Christ is 24 hours into 365 days a year. You have neither day-offs or vacations.

So, are you ready to say, “Here am I. Send me!”?

### **Reconciliation**

Secondly, the ambassador for Christ shall be responsible for the ministry of reconciliation on a regular basis.

2 Corinthians 5:18, “And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation”

Ministry of reconciliation involves the proclamation of the gospel. Forgiveness of sin is available with the Lord Jesus Christ. But sin prevents us from having a relationship with God. But, Lord Jesus Christ reconciled us with God. Now we can proclaim to others that the forgiveness of sin is available with Lord Jesus Christ. We can tell them that they can repent for their sin and be right with God again. It’s our duty, given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ, to bring back people unto the Lord Jesus Christ. We have to talk to them and motivate the other and bring them back to Lord Jesus Christ.

### **Communication**

Ambassador for Christ shall be responsible to communicate the message of the King. So, first of all we should know the message. What is the message our king has given us?

When an ambassador receives a message, He cannot amend anything

in the message but should read it out as it is. We are not here to please the world but to please the Lord Jesus Christ, our King. What is the message we have to communicate to the people? The Love of God.

John 3:16 is the message we need to share with others. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The Lord Jesus Christ is the son of God, and that Son of God came into this world as an 100% man. He came to suffer and to die for our sins. This is the message.

The Lord Jesus Christ died according to the scriptures. He was buried and rose again on the third day according to the scripture. This is the message of the King; this is the message we need to communicate to the world. So, are you ready for this mission?

### **Conduct**

Shall be accountable for maintaining appropriate conduct in order to promote the awareness of the country and attract more people into the country. Conduct of an ambassador is highly important. Because, whatever they do reflects the one who sent him. So, it is understood that whosoever going to be an ambassador, needs to maintain his discipline very well. Because you represent the Lord Jesus Christ.

As ambassadors for Christ, we should also do the same thing. We need to have a disciplined lifestyle. We need to stop anything that we were doing to take people away from the Lord Jesus Christ. Specially, we

need to think twice before we talk.  
Guard your mouth.

You can either bring people to Lord Jesus Christ or send them away from Him by your mouth. In Matthew 15:11 Lord Jesus Christ said, "it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth".

Even when we make our business deals, we need to remember we are representing Lord Jesus Christ. When we deal with our colleagues, subordinates, classmates or whoever it may be, we should not forget that we are representing the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even when we select our dress we need to think twice because we represent Lord Jesus Christ. We need to be very careful because the way we behave we give others to evaluate the Lord Jesus Christ not ourselves. Because we are different from others. Others can do anything in this world but being Christians, we cannot do the same in the world.

We are the ambassadors for Christ.

- Gunadasa Vithanage-

“ Sanctify the Lord God  
in your hearts: and be ready  
always to give an answer to  
every man that asks you a  
reason of the hope that is in  
you with.

## THE GREAT "I AM"

**I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE**

(JOHN 6:35)

**I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

(JOHN 9:5)

**I AM THE DOOR**

(JOHN 10:9)

**I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

(JOHN 10:11)

**I AM THE RESURRECTION**

(JOHN 11:25)

**I AM THE TRUE VINE**

(JOHN 15:1)

**I AM THE WAY**

(JOHN 14:6)



# ANNA

## The Great Woman Of God

In Hebrews 11:6 we read about the most important aspect of our Christian life. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him. For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him".

This verse above is our faith and prayer life. I mean true believing prayer. This verse says if we want to come to Him in a meaningful way, we must believe that HE IS. This may appear to be a simple statement but it is so important and very basic to our Christian life. If we truly believe that God is, it will affect our lives and it will make the difference in our lives. Do you believe that God is alive? If you do, then it must motivate you to lead a sanctified life. We need to be separated unto God. There is no need for me to remind you that this world is sinful. But the Lord Jesus has chosen us out of this world. John 15:16 says that we have not chosen Him, but He has chosen us. The last line of that verse says... please read... "whatsoever you ask of the Father in the Name of Jesus, He will give it unto you"

So, the first thought that I would like to impress upon your heart is, the need to lead a sanctified life. This is the secret of answered prayer. It is not the number of hours spend in prayer that matters. It is the nature of our life. Do we lead a sanctified life? Sanctification means to be separated and kept clean for the Master's use.

Secondly, we read in the same verse of Heb.11:6 that "they that come to God must believe, that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him". Now, we all like to receive rewards. Don't we? But the Word says that God rewards those who diligently seek Him. So the question comes to all of us 'are we diligently seeking Him in prayer'? Many of us are diligent in many things like cooking, washing, cleaning, serving and other activities. Often we like to be as Martha of Bethany.

Please read Luke 10:40. Martha was doing a good job of work in cooking and serving. She was busy and worried about the good meal she was preparing to give the Lord and His disciples. I'm sure the Lord would have appreciated that. But what the Lord said at that time, is an eye opener to us. He said in Vs.42 – please read. Yes, Mary has chosen that good part. That good part was to be at the feet of the Lord Jesus. So in the midst of all the activities of life let us also learn to be at the feet of the Lord Jesus. One of the most important ministries we have in the Church is the ministry of prayer. With all other activities and services we must somehow take our share in the ministry of prayer.

Now let us see a good example of a life dedicated to prayer which becomes a challenge to us today. Please read Luke 2:36, 37. This lady by the name of Anna lost her husband after a short 7 years of married life.

All would have thought that she was such an unfortunate lady. No one would have ever thought of the purpose of God in all what happened to Anna. We all know how to cry and weep when calamities strike us. But like Anna, we must look for the purpose of God in our lives. God took her husband away because the Lord had a greater purpose for her life. The great thing here is that she did not go into depression after she lost her husband at such a young age. Neither did she become bitter against God. All what she apparently did was to give herself completely to God. She began to fulfil a great ministry in the House of God (vs.37). She served the Lord in the Temple with fasting and prayer, night and day. Our disappointments are God's appointments. Please learn to turn your disappointments into great blessing in your spiritual lives. That is how we could experience Psalm 84:5, 6.

The Lord is challenging us also to be like Anna of old. She fulfilled her responsibility in the House of God even though she herself was going through a bitter experience. We sometimes try to avoid prayer meetings giving false excuses. But remember it is the prayer meeting that gives us the opportunity to fulfil our responsibility in the House of God. It is only as we pray that the work of the Lord would go forward. Anna went on praying for many years and we know as to how God rewarded her for her faithfulness. Lord gave her the unique privilege of seeing the Messiah the Saviour of the world. Wasn't that a great reward? Lord will reward us too if we are faithful in the ministry of prayer. When we meet together as sisters, we must spend more time in prayer and less time in talking about others. Sometimes we may not get immediate answers, but

we must keep on praying. We all must know the parable of the unrighteous judge. It was because of the unceasing going of the widow, that she got the answer.

Finally, I would like to leave with you 4 thoughts concerning this old lady called Anna of the Bible.

### **1. Great Age (Vs.36)**

She was about 84 years. The Lord gives us long life with a purpose. Mainly that we may spend the latter part of our life in prayer. Anna knew this secret. Many of us want to live long but for what purpose?

### **2. Great Faith (Vs.36)**

Only 7 years with a husband. An unfortunate woman but in the eyes of God she was a woman of great faith because she did not give up the Lord in spite of all what happened to her. She believed in the purpose of God – Romans 8:28

### **3. Great Ministry (Vs.37)**

It is not an easy thing to spend time in prayer day after day without ceasing. But she was determined to do that. Apparently she did not go for holidays or sightseeing but was dedicated to prayer and fasting.

### **4. Great Vision (Vs.38)**

She, being a prophetess knew at once that the baby was the Christ. Many other educated people did not know this. What a wonderful thing it is to be a simple believer. We know many things that others do not know. It is the great vision.

So let us remember to put into practice these 4 points in our lives & be a true blessing to others.

# Behold, I stand at the door



The Lord Jesus is seeking entrance into our hearts, our lives and our families. This sentence brings before us the greatest need we have as the children of God. More than anything else, we need the Lord Jesus Christ in our hearts, our lives and our families. Then we need Him in our church. We have good preaching, we have Bible reading, good singing and music. What we need most at this time is our Lord and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ in full measure in us and in our lives.

You may have already noticed that these words were spoken by the Lord Jesus to the group of believers at LC. This was addressed to the church at LC. The Lord knew that they were His church. He was not flatter them by saying, “You are my church” but it was the truth that they were the church, the called-out people. And it was a wealthy church, a well-to-do church. Vs 17 “Thou say.... nothing”.

I am just imaging the kind of service they would have had every Sunday. The service started with a beautiful singing and good prayer. And the worship went on very well. And then the message. At it was one of the best messages you could ever hear. When the offering time came, everyone gave so lavishly, so the church had so much of resources. The Lord Jesus Christ himself say that they were boasting about it. Now the service was coming to an end. The final prayer was prayed. Everybody is happy. They were thinking their hearts that we had a wonderful service today. But as one of the elders was pronouncing

the benediction, they heard a knock at the door. May I add a little further imagination, the doors were all closed fully air-conditioned hall. When the knock was heard, everybody thought that some ‘late comer’, has come just for the benediction. But when someone reluctantly opened the door, who was standing outside? It was the Lord Jesus Christ.

That is the story of this verse. Here was a local church which had everything in abundant measure but without the Lord Jesus Christ present among them in full power and glory.

The Lord Jesus Christ is seeking to gain entrance into our midst. What an invitation! “Open the door, open the door; And I will come in and sup with you. This is the time that God has given us to look at our own lives and all the experience that we have in the church today. The main purpose of the Church is that God may be among us that He may make us His dwelling place. If we lose site of that purpose of God, we have nothing else that is worthwhile talking about.

The time for repentance had come on the church at Laodicea. When the Lord Jesus Christ looked at them, He saw the true nature of every believer.

They had a great balance sheet because they said, “I am rich, and increased of good and need of nothing”. But the Lord Jesus was looking at the spiritual prosperity and not the material. The Lord Jesus says in verse 17, “My children, you do not know

that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked". So, we have that there were things that they did not know about themselves. They did not know that they were wretched. They did not know that they were miserable. neither did they know that they were poor and blind. They did not know that they were naked.

Very often we do not know what we are before God, and we easily forget them, and we are not interested in finding out.

This address to this Laodicea church brings before us, all that the Lord would desire to be found in our lives. This is not to condemn any one of you. But we need to take stock of our lives now, before it is too late. Everything is open before God concerning our lives. God has been patiently waiting for us to sit and think and to realize what we are really before Him, how we have failed and fallen from His grace and His glory.

Verse 19 tells us the words of the Lord Jesus, "as many as I love". "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten". So, His love is assured to every one of us. This love is called the "lovingkindness of God; The unending love and mercy of God".

Yes, we know the Many-faceted love of God. His love is eternal; His love is sacrificial; His love is unfathomable; His love is also unending. God wants us to come back to Him in repentance.

Romans 2:23 says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God". We may have to personalize it and say, "I have sinned and come short of the glory of God". The number one need

among us is repentance. It must start with the Elders and go down to the youngest of believers.

Look at verse 19 later part, "'". This is what we need. Lord Jesus says, as He is standing outside, He says, "Be zealous". Be zealous not to do great works, be zealous and repent. To repent of our worldliness. Love not the world, Bible says, but we love it with all our heart. The word of God says, "Do not be conformed into this world" but we do the right opposite. We must repent of that which is not of the Father, which is of the world. We must repent of our disregarding of God's Word. The Word of God is clear, and we read it or we hear it being read very often but we disregard it.

We seem to be thinking that since we are born again, we are alright, and we will finally make it to heaven. We need to repent of sins of the flesh. It is the Spirit of God that will bring the sense of sadness regarding our lives. Sins of the flesh are so prevalent among believers that we do not consider them anymore to be sin. The Lord is giving us one final opportunity. Be zealous therefore and repent.

He is calling us to a new kind of holiness and separation. We need to repent of the sins of the spirit. There is jealousy all over the church. Anytime a believer is praised for something, there are others that we are jealous, and we talk ill of that praising. Pride of life has gained crown in our lives. Things that we have, we possess, we enjoy. And the sense of completion among God's people. The spirit of criticism and murmuring. Nothing else to talk about when we gather together so let us gossip.

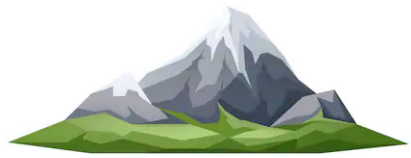
God is watching and waiting. When will the end come? When are we going to repent? To the Laodicean church, the Lord was standing outside the door and He says, “Be zealous, and repent”.

The sin of lack of prayer. Lack of family prayer and personal prayer. The list is so long. But if there is any blessing that should come our way, we must take stock of our lives today.

With the call to repentance comes the knock at the door. That is the true ground of fellowship with God. “If any man or woman hear my voice”, We must hear His voice in our hearts. We are not doing spiritually today. We are spiritual babies. We must grow out of this dreadful condition.

We are playful and joyful to some extent, exhibiting some kind of happiness and seems to be loving one another. Seem to be doing okay even financially. But the Lord Jesus looks at us and says, “You do not know what you are; I can see what you are. In this very dreadful situation, He is assuring His love upon us. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten”. “Be zealous, therefore, and repent”. We need to then open our lives before God. The Lord Jesus must be in our midst. We must give Him due respect and honour. We cannot do two things together that are very important. When we come to worship Him, we must worship Him. We cannot do anything else.

So, let us humble ourselves. What we need is repentance. Do not harden your heart. You need to bring everything before God. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. He desires to come in; into our lives, into our families and into the church.



## **7 Ascents and Descents of Moses**

### **Salvation**

Exodus 19:3 – 19:7

### **Sanctification**

Exodus 19:8 – 19:14

### **Surrender**

Exodus 19:20 – 19:25

### **Statutes**

Exodus 20:21 – 24:3

### **Sanctuary**

Exodus 24:12 – 32:7,15

### **Supplication**

Exodus 32:30 – 32:33

### **Shining**

Exodus 34:4 – 34:29

# OLIVE TREE

- Jenita Ambigapathy -

***“But I am like a green Olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever” – Psalms 52: 8***

During my morning devotion, I was reading Psalms chapter 52. For a moment, I stopped at verse 8 and I started to think about this “Olive tree”. “Why was this Olive tree mentioned in this verse? Why were not some other tree chosen to describe this verse? ” These questions made me to do a research and a study on Olive tree. I was amazed on the facts that were found in the Bible regarding the Olive tree. So let us see, what this Olive tree is about.

Olive tree is one of the most remarkable trees, mentioned in the Bible. The olive tree is an evergreen tree that is native to the coastal areas of Eastern Mediterranean, Southern Eastern Europe, Western Asia and Northern Africa. They are beautiful to look at with their unique gnarled and twisted trunks and evergreen tops. It grows best in the direct sun, and is suited for rocky or hard subsoil. The olive tree ranges in height from 3 to 12 meters (10 to 40 feet) or more and has numerous branches. Its leaves, leathery and lance-shaped, are dark green above and silvery on the underside and are paired opposite each other on the twig. The wood is usually not affected or harmed for anything and the root system is



capable of regenerating itself even if the trunk is destroyed by fire. If the top dies back, a new trunk will often arise from the roots. Some Olive trees had been estimated to be 2000 years of age. Olive trees bloom in late spring; and the flowers are feathery white and it produces an edible fruit (the olive). Olives are grown mainly for the production of olive oil.

Generally olive tree/olive is considered as a symbol of peace. Also, it is associated with color green which signifies the life. It should be obvious that several of the characteristics of the natural olive tree have very significant spiritual meaning. Clearly our Lord Jesus created the olive tree this way and then used its characteristics to reveal or symbolize the spiritual truths/principles.

There are so many instances where the olive tree itself, along with its leaves, oil and wood mentioned in



the Bible. Therefore, let us look at two points in the Bible which speaks about and related to olive tree.

### **Olive Leaf** **New Life/New Beginning**

In the Bible, the olive leaf first came in to the view in the story of Noah. That is in Genesis 8:10 – 11 which speaks about an olive leaf. Noah had waited for seven days and he sent a dove and it came back that evening. The number seven signifies the completion of which is in view or divine perfection. When the dove brought Noah “a plucked olive leaf in its beak,” the olive leaf represented, a new life sprouting on the earth (Genesis 8:11). The word of God clearly says that this leaf was not a dead leaf but it was freshly picked up. The olive tree was fresh and growing. The promise of the dove’s olive leaf was a new beginning to Noah, his family, all the animals on the ark and as well as for humanity. Also, another significant fact was “the dove” it was not some other bird brought the olive leaf; for dove is the symbol of the Holy Spirit. We see this most clearly in the baptism of Jesus. (John 1:32, Mark 1:10) The dove signified the Holy Spirit who gives us a new life which is confirmed by Jesus in John 6:63. Also, one of the works of the Holy Spirit is that He guides us John 16:13

### **The Mount of Olives** **The Blessed Hope**

The Mount of Olives is a prominent place mentioned in both Old and New Testament. In the life of

Jesus the Mount of Olives (mountain of olive trees) is mostly associated. Let us look at three instances related to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus often went up on the Mount of Olives to be with His Father in prayer (Luke 21:37; John 8:1). Lord Jesus, the son of God, always spent time with His father in prayer. Even though Jesus was restless, with His ministry; He made it a habit to talk to His father in heaven.

As we look at an Olive tree, it needs to grow well to produce olives, whatever the weather condition is. Similarly, our life situations, problems, trials and tribulations should not be a disturbance for our prayer life. A believer’s growth is based on prayer life.

After having the last supper with His disciples, Jesus and His disciples went out to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30). He entered the garden of Gethsemane (meaning: oil-press) at the foot of the Mount of Olives, which was probably where the oil was pressed out of the olives taken from the surrounding hills. Here Jesus’ soul was overwhelmed with sorrow (Matthew 26:36-57).

As we look at the production of olives; the olives are crushed or pressed to produce the oil which had a wide application of uses in ancient days and even today. This reminds us that our Lord Jesus was crushed and beaten and was crucified to give us salvation and the eternal life. Jesus

the son of God who lived a sinless life suffered and died as a sacrifice for our sins and rose from the dead according to the Bible.

Finally, the Lord Jesus ascended to His Father in heaven from the Mount of Olives, with the promise that He will come back (Acts 1:9-12).

As we look at the growth of Olive tree; it grows direct in the light of sun, faces drought, rain and wind; sometimes destroyed by fire, but whatever happens, it stay firm and at the end it flourish and gives the hope that it can produce fruits.

We have rejected God and walked our own way. But Christ's gracious surrender to the Father at Gethsemane, leading to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection has made it possible for our redemption. Therefore believe in the Lord Jesus with the glorious and the blessed hope in our life; to spend the eternity with our Lord Jesus.

Is it any wonder why the olive tree has such great spiritual meaning in the life of a believer?

*- Article was written based on a study -*

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

## **GOD'S LOVE EXPERIENCED**

### **Mercy**

**God's forgiving love.**

### **Grace**

**God's undeserved love.**

### **Peace**

**God's comforting love.**

### **The will of God**

**God's unerring love.**

### **Providence**

**God's caring love.**

### **The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ**

**God's proven love.**

### **Sanctification**

**God's nurturing love.**

### **Heaven**

**God's rewarding love.**

### **Eternity**

**God's unending love.**

*- Benjamin Devadason -*

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

## PROMISES 2020

**I will give them one heart,  
and will put a new spirit within you.**

**Ezekiel 11:19**

**Go therefore, and make disciples  
of all nations... behold, I am with you always.**

**Matthew 28:19,20 ESV**

**I will fill this house with glory,  
saith the LORD.**

**Haggai 2:7**

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