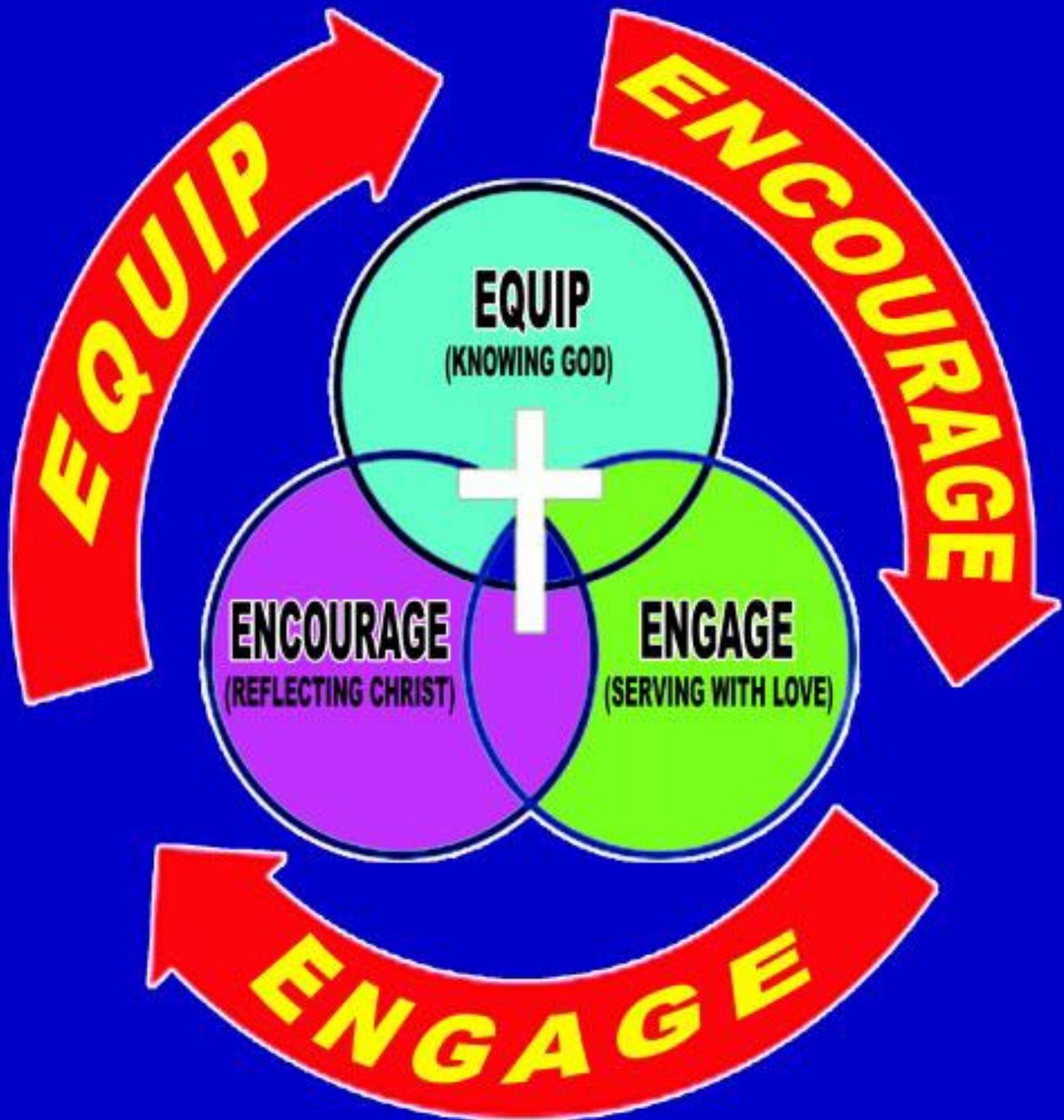


THE ANSWER

The Voice of the Indigenous Missions in India

Vol. 32, No. 1, Mar. - Aug. 2016



COTR Theological Seminary Graduation - Feb. 2016

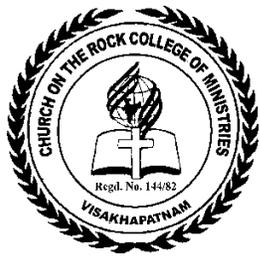


Seminary Inauguration



Spiritual Emphasis Seminar





The Answer

The Voice of the Indigenous Missions in India
A Christ For India Inc. Ministries International,
New Testament Church of India and
Church On The Rock Theological Seminary Publication



Vol. 32 No.1
Mar. - Aug. 2016



Late Apostle Dr. P.J. Titus
Founder

Publisher
Mrs. Helen Johnson

Editorial Board
Mr. Hirendra Prasad (Editor)

Mr. Suhas Dandey

Mr. Josfin Raj

Contents

	Page No.
<i>Editorial</i>	2
<i>Greetings from President...</i>	3
<i>Greetings from NTC President...</i>	4
<i>Equip to Excel</i>	5
<i>Some Unconventional Proposals for Equipping, Encouraging and Engaging.</i>	7
<i>Exhortation to be Well Equipped</i>	10
<i>The Word of God in the Therapeutic Process of Equipping and Engaging</i>	13
<i>To be engaged in the Lord's work: Luke 9:28-36</i>	18
<i>Equip, Encourage and Engage: A Dialogical Model for doing Disability Theology in India</i>	21
<i>Encouragement to the Youth for their Sanctity of Life</i>	23
<i>EEE; Is Essential to Every Christian</i>	26
<i>A Theologian's Life</i>	27
<i>New Testament Church of India - Report</i>	28
<i>COTRTS Department of Extension Studies</i>	30
<i>Report of Nava Jeevan School & Nava Jeevan Christian Junior College</i>	32

The Answer is an official magazine of COTR College of Ministries, charismatic in commitment, published half-yearly. Opinions expressed are those of the authors, and not necessarily those of *The Answer*, its editor or publisher.

Annual subscriptions: India Rs. 60.00; U.S \$50. Subscriptions Payable by Money Order, Demand Draft/Cheque in favor of "COTR College of Ministries."

Unsolicited articles, poems, and advertisements are invited. Manuscript, subscriptions, change of addresses, inquiries, and other communications should be addressed to The Editor, **The Answer**, COTR Ministries, Dorathota, Bheemunipatnam, Vishakapatnam- 531163, India.

Ph : (08933) 200097 / 200182 / 9490074897 Email :info@cotr.in / johnsontitus@hotmail.com

Editorial . . .

Dear friends,

Greeting from COTRTS to you all in the precious name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. At the outset we praise God for allowing us to begin another academic year. God also helped us to publish this first edition of our bi-annual magazine, THE ANSWER for the academic year 2016-17 with the theme “EQUIP, ENCOURAGE, and ENGAGE”.

Dr. Titus began this ministry with a purpose to equip people for God’s service, not only that he became a great encouragement for people to do the service of God, and alongside equipping people and encouraging them, he also concentrated on practical ministry by engaging people in the service of God. As COTR College of Ministries celebrates 35 years of God’s faithfulness this year, we remember the motivation of our Founder late Dr. P.J. Titus to Equip, Encourage, and Engage people of God in His service.

In this present world of Christianity, people emphasize more on preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to lead them to Christ, which is really great, but to follow up on building the lives of saved people is neglected many times in many places. A saved person must be equipped for his/her further and farther Christian life and service. In the process of equipping, people need encouragement to be well equipped because a person can be there to be equipped, yet it is not impossible for him/her to be ill equipped. Judas Iscariot was there with the Lord for three and a half years but was not equipped well. After a person is equipped, s/he needs again encouragement to be engaged in the work which s/he is equipped for. After getting engaged in his/her service will prove how well s/he is equipped. Anyone with the call of God can be engaged in the service of God, but only a well-equipped person can be more effective. Equip is not just the theoretical equipping, it is more than that in which the complete preparation takes place in that person to be useful for God. The mind should be equipped, the heart should be encouraged, and the total being should be engaged.

Different articles are there in this edition written by the faculty members and a few of the students of COTRTS. We pray that the articles presented in this magazine will motivate, strengthen, and renew our readers’ commitment to equip, encourage and engage others for and in God’s service. Also we ask the prayer support of the readers of this magazine and invite you all to witness the celebration of the 35th anniversary of COTRCOM and be blessed.

*Mr. Hirendra Prasad is on the
Faculty of COTRTS*

Greetings from President...

Dear Prayer Partners, Friends, Family,

We pray that you are all doing well in Spirit and health. Thank you for your prayers and support since the last issue of the Answer. God has been so good to us in our lives and ministry. We praise Him for His Faithfulness, Grace and Mercy in all the things he does for us as we work to expand His Kingdom.

We will be celebrating COTR College of Ministries, New Testament Church of India's 35th Anniversary this coming Feb. 22-25, 2017, through our pastors meeting, alumni day, and seminary graduation. We cordially invite you all to come and fellowship, and to glorify God for this great milestone in our ministry.

Please inform all the COTR Seminary, Nava Jeevan High School and Jr. College alumni that you are in touch with to come and celebrate with us.

As we began this academic year in the seminary, our theme for this year is "Equip-Encourage-Engage", the articles, stories and events will carry this theme throughout all our activities, and programs.

We pray that all who read these articles and hear of what God is doing in our ministry will be blessed and encouraged to do more for His Kingdom.

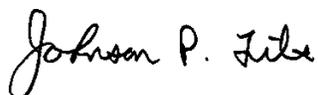
For many years many of our friends have been asking us to conduct a seminary training program for those who are in ministry that are not able to do a residential program, we are happy to announce that COTR-DOES (Department of Extension Studies) has now been launched. Starting this Oct. we will commence this program, please see the ad in this magazine for more information, also let others you know that are interested to contact us. We also have begun our PhD in Missiology also, if any candidates are there have them contact us for further information.

I will be traveling to USA to meet our prayer partners and friends of COTR after a long gap; please keep me in your prayers that we have a blessed time in reuniting with our family and friends, and that God opens new doors for our ministry to grow.

Please keep COTR in your prayers for protection, new growth and greater things to do for His Kingdom.

God Bless

In His Commission



Rev. Johnson Titus

President of COTR College of Ministries

Greetings from NTC President...

Greetings to all our prayer and financial partners!

We pray that you and family are doing well and are in good health!

We continue to pray for each of you for the ministry that God has placed you in, to be fruitful and a blessing to your community, state and the country!

As a fellowship we are growing and improving on how we are doing what we are doing and how we can do it better, to be more effective and fruitful in the mission field, as India is changing, NTC is also changing.

We are planning on doing more regional and statewide meetings to be more effective locally and regionally. I am excited to be going to Chhattisgarh in Nov. with Pastor S. Jacob who is hosting the meetings to encourage and strengthen the local churches.

Persecution is coming in many new ways, with the changes the govt. has done and is continuing to do, many things we need to be made aware of and discuss the strategy for the future plans of NTC.

I am looking forward to seeing each of you at the upcoming NTC pastors conference Nov 9-12, to be held in Visak main campus. Our focus and theme in this new season is: To Equip, To Encourage, and To Engage all in our mission fields, as the Holy Spirit Empowers us to fulfill Christ's Great Commission in India!

I have been travelling and am now with Drs. Gladwyn and Helen Turner in Australia, we are grateful to all our friends and partners who pray and support the work in India.

Thank you for all the prayers for my health, travels and meetings while I am travelling.

Blessings



Jameson Titus

President of New Testament Church of India

EQUIP TO EXCEL

God wants His people to increase or abound or excel in both what we are (inward character) and in what we do (behavior or good deeds). Therefore, the pursuit of excellence is both a goal and a mark of maturity. However, for this to be true, it must be motivated by the right values, priorities, and motives. If we go astray here, the pursuit of excellence can quickly become a mark of immaturity and a perilous pursuit.

There is one distinction that needs to be stressed up front. As Edwin Bliss once said, “The pursuit of excellence is gratifying and healthy. The pursuit of perfection is frustrating, phobic, and a terrible waste of time” (Edwin C Bliss, *Getting Things Done*, New York: Scribner, 1993, p.79).

As finite human beings, none of us ever arrive, as they say, and there will always be room for growth and improvement (Phil. 3:12-14). While this reality should never promote negligence or apathy or slothfulness, and while we should seek to grow, mature, and do our best, understanding this reality should help us all to be at ease and to rejoice in the Lord.

To equip means to furnish, to prepare, to train for a purpose. The effectiveness of a person, in ministry, establishment, and corporation is dependent upon the training and preparation given in their work and to the service that is expected of them. The church is no different from other establishments, because it is people who make the

church, and excellence demands equipping the members to excel in his/her gifts and services. Paul’s exhortation to the Ephesians church describes the nuances of this process (Barth, Markus. *Ephesians: Translation and Commentary on Chapters 4-6*. New York: Doubleday, 1960, p.62-64).

1. Equipped by Whom? (Ephesians 4:11) Paul gives us a five- fold ministry team of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher; he exhorts them as equippers, because their role is to exemplify the Lord in such a way that they prepare the body to live like Jesus. William J. McRae mentions that the equipping ministry is a two-fold ministry. He talks about equipping in terms of being a repairing ministry and a preparing ministry. The verb “equip” in Ephesians 4:12 is also used as a fishing term in Matthew 4:21. The disciples were “mending” their broken nets. And in Galatians 6:1 it is used more like a medical term. The spiritual brother is to “restore” a dislocation or a broken bone (William J. McRae, *The Dynamics of Spiritual Gifts*: Zondervan, p. 28). So equipping to excel involves preparing, repairing or mending broken and dislocated people so that they might actively serve again.

2. Equipped To Do What? (Ephesians 4:12) The Pastor-Teacher may equip the members by conducting class sessions, ministry trips, assigning

tasks, etc. The equipper has a goal in training the members. Though some may have personal goals, the common goal of the pastor-teacher is to help them to do the work of ministry. Ministry's work includes, Sunday School, Youth, Ladies, Men, Hospitality, Stewards, Community Service, Evangelism, Counseling, Prayer, Practical helps, Altar work, Follow up and much more. If every Christian is willing to be equipped and prepared to do the work of God, the ministry can grow rapidly and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19,20) can become a reality.

3. Equipping Whom? (Ephesians 4:12) Paul says, "... for the equipping of the saints...". Who are the saints? In the New Testament, each believer in Christ is known as saint in Christ (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:2). Do saints need training and preparation? Our spiritual life is a journey, and it takes time and space to reach Christ-like maturity. We learn the skills of life and ministry by experience, equipping and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Saints are expected to reflect a teachable spirit in order to gain the maximum level of understanding and skills from the equippers.

4. Equipping till When? (Ephesians 4:13) "... till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." This verse clearly spells out the extent and ultimate goal of the ministry of equipping. It means the ministry of training, teaching, mentoring and

preparing is an ongoing work by the equippers under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

To live a life in pursuit of being equipped and in equipping to excel means having an insatiable hunger to the one need to make a positive difference in people's lives, pursue in his or her own stream, dreams with deepest passion, sharing the expertise and enthusiasm willingly with the world, striving to do things better than you initially expected; better than other people would do in the same situation.

To live a life in pursuit of being equipped, and in equipping to excel, means showing enthusiasm to improve yourself by expanding your boundaries and raising your personal standards. Learn something new daily by updating your knowledge, by staying informed, by reading books, and by developing new skills. Learn from experience through self-reflection especially from mistakes, failures, and through other people's endeavors. This process does not mean all failure is avoided, but these failures will teach us a better way.

Good is the enemy of best. If you settle for something passable, you will not try to improve. Pursuit of excellence means efforts towards doing your best. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times; having all you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8). May we excel in our being equipped and in equipping others. There is a need to expand the craft of equipping from the classroom to the living room and from the sanctuary to the streets.

*Dr. Pari Titus is Principal of
COTR Theological Seminary.*

Some Unconventional Proposals for Equipping, Encouraging and Engaging.

Theological training consists of equipping a person, encouraging him/her to engage in the ministry field. Therefore, the theme 'Equip, Encourage and Engage' is taken as the key words for the 2016-17 academic year of COTR Theological Seminary. It provides a positive energy to the life of students, faculty and the entire family of COTRTS. This article deals with the purpose, process, period and plan of equipping, encouraging and engaging. This thought paper may bring some unconventional thoughts in relation to the theme to the readers. So reader's discretion is encouraged.

Purpose of Equip

At the outset the ultimate aim of equip, encourage and engage is to be equipped, encouraged and engaged in our ministerial places. We are expecting a positive result from this perspective. The disciples of Jesus Christ were equipped, encouraged by Jesus to engage in their mission activity of going to the end of the world, preaching and making disciples from all the ethnic groups. It is the sole purpose of Christian ministerial training.

Though there is a positive aspect in these terms - equip, encourage and engage, they also can be misused. We are aware of ISIS, which trains people to be suicide bombers and terrorists of different kind. Such training follows the same pattern of equip, encourage and engage in the world with a negative purpose of destroying others existence with all sorts of terror and to establish their own

existence. It is a selfish act. Such activities are considered to be the negative side of the theme. This reality cannot be bypassed.

We have to introspect on our motivation behind equipping, encouraging and engaging. Are we here to equip, encourage and engage for establishing so called Christendom? Or to engage in the life of the people meaningfully? If the purpose is the later one, how can we engage into the lives of people meaningfully? We must answer an another important question - is our process of equipping really equipping them to engage in the common people's life? What will be the difference between the 'equipping period' and 'engaging period'? These questions must be answered clearly.

Process of Equipping

During the 'equipping period', disciples may enjoy a complacent life in which many will be there in the assistance of equipping. During this period the encouragement also happens. A student or disciple must take for him/herself the encouragement from others to be engaged in the mission field. In the mission field, seldom we will receive encouragement, we may receive only criticism.

However, the process of equipping, encouraging and engaging is cyclical. When one person engages in the mission field, s/he is equipping himself or herself. Experience is one of the best teachers, by doing one learns or equips. In addition, if the

engagement is fruitful, s/he receives encouragements from those around them. When one receives the encouragement, s/he is motivated to engage more meaningfully. This process would continue, therefore, it can be called as a cyclical process.

(Unconventional) Plan for Equipping

The primary purpose of equipping with encouragement is to engage with the people's life meaningfully. The context of engagement is distinct from where one is trained. Therefore, the process of equipping must be dealt carefully, ensuring the meeting of both contexts of the engagement and the context of the training.

The context of engaging is totally different from where one is equipped. One finds no seminary atmosphere in the ministry field. The ministry field is the market place in which people are concerned about themselves six days a week and one day for church, leisure or relaxation. The Church is a place in which people find fellowship, comfort, a good place to be in. More than church, I would suggest, the graduates or trainers should engage people in their work places where people spend all their time in.

To engage in such market places, the seminary curriculum also should be re-directed accordingly. Conventionally, we think of those who do a secular job after theological education as a backslider, and given a 'satanic' effect and are isolated from the church activities. They are like 'prodigal graduates.' But, wait a second and rethink! Who has more access to the market place? Is it the so called 'self acclaimed graduates', who chose the profession of preaching, teaching and pastoring, or the so called 'prodigal graduates' who work

with a number of people throughout the week? 'Prodigal graduates' may not be able to do the so called 'full time' ministry or Sunday ministry, because of their family obligations and other valid reasons. I know friends of mine who have finished seminary studies and are working because of unexpected and unexplainable situations in the family. Present day pastoral ministry is meant only for those who have politics, family background and money. Other dedicated and poor graduates, who become pastors are becoming the scapegoats and usually are trampled under so called Central Pastors. Leading sacrificial life is suitable to the poor pastors only, not to those who are in leadership roles.

My proposal is to engage people's life is to be there in the market place along with people. To be with people is to engage with them including doing job. Doing job will give you a bunch of mixed groups of friends or colleagues and gets much occasions to witness Christ with our life. We should not be blind enough to see the vast opportunity open for the seminary graduates to influence the society, people much greater than a pastor or a preacher or a theological teacher can. Once they are able to secure a good placement in the marketplace, they become more reachable and approachable to the people. So evangelisation is much easier in such situations. Here, evangelism means witnessing Christ to others with our life. If that is the case, why don't we plan our curriculum or training programmes towards such direction so that in a much deeper and meaningful way the so called 'theologically graduated prodigal children' can influence the people. The thought may feel much radical, but it is an unsaid truth.

The following matter also must be noted. Approximately graduates of two hundred Bible Colleges in India produces thousands of candidates from B.Th. to PhD every year. Where are they? If one conducts a survey on the thousands of seminary graduates' profession, majority of them would not be in the so called ministry. Though it is unsaid fact, much of them are teaching in schools, some do social work, some do other jobs to meet their daily provisions other than the pastors and theological educators. We have to acknowledge such fact emphatically. That is the reality. We should not by pass such reality.

Now, pause a moment and rethink about our process of equip! The matter of the fact is that the people those who are not the so called 'full (fool)-time' ministry field are much influential people in the society than the so called in the ministry. They can influence the people's life more meaningfully than a pastor who influence only church congregation. Pastors' influence is also limited in Sundays. But the so called prodigal sons of seminary graduates is deeply influence people's daily life. Here, the issue is that such attempt is de-promoted or discouraged by pastors and traditional seminaries in the equipping process. Therefore, they develop an inferiority complex about their call of God in the secular field, which is so dangerous and has to be removed. This is the time to remove such blinded mask and come to the reality.

It is the responsibility of the Seminary to train students by providing diversified missional contexts such as of the market place to meet its contextual

needs. Training in the life skills can be one of the minor example. In that way, Seminary equipping would transcend the nomenclature of 'theology' and would enter into dialogue with daily life of the people, which we call 'secular space'. We are doing evangelism or pastoring (ministering) not mainly to godly saints, but should be for the broken common people who tirelessly works for six days in market place. We meet them at office, we meet them at market places, not inside the church always. Six days they are out of their house, eight hours per day they spend at their office or market space, where they are influenced much. That is the suitable engaging context. We can identify with them and become one among them to be a Christ's witness. With fishers, Jesus travelled with them and influenced his disciples. By doing the jobs, people engaged in the ministerial activity of engaging with the people's life meaningfully. Best way of evangelism is to live a "Christ life" in the context. Training should be directed to such direction. Theological training is not meant only within the limited space of the church and congregation, it must be vast and entering into the public life of the people. It is a witness outside of the four walls of the church. By this I would encourage the readers to avoid parochial mindset and to see God's invisible presence in the secular space. So let's start to equip and encourage to be engaged in the people's life meaningfully.

Mr. Josfin Raj is on the Faculty of COTRTS

Exhortation to be well Equipped

The meaning of the word “Equip” is to provide with (something) usually for a specific purpose, to furnish for service, to prepare with a skill for doing something. Equip is one of the components in the theme of COTRTS for 2016-17. The Scripture gives instructions that one should be well-equipped for the service of God. The present article deals with the issue of how certain Biblical figures were equipped, then makes a brief comparative study on equipping between Bible and Hinduism.

1. **Moses** the great leader of Israel did not become a leader overnight, it took years for him to be the leader. Although he thought that his education in Egypt was sufficient enough for him to serve God as the leader of Israel, but his supposition was proved wrong. After finishing his forty years in Egypt, his real equipping began in the wilderness. And it took forty years for God to equip Moses for His ministry.
2. **Samuel** was equipped by God from his very childhood. It was necessary for God to train him from his very childhood under the priest Eli because God knew that there will be a great transition in Israel as Samuel is going to be a priest, a judge, and most importantly “first in the order of prophets”. Before he takes up the ministry of prophet and becomes the first

prophet in the history of Israel, God has to train him from his very childhood as the office of prophet was going to be a vital one both in the OT and NT.

3. **David** was equipped by God in the jungle. He was a shepherd boy not by chance, rather God took him to Jungle to shepherd the sheep so that he will learn to lead, to guide, to protect, to be the companion of the sheep of Israel. God trained him to be a warrior and his brevity is seen in his delivering the sheep from the mouth of lion by tearing its face. A person who can fight with lion and tear its mouth, he can fight with any human being without any fear and difficulty, and he proved it when he killed Goliath the Philistine giant. Israel demanded a king so that the king will protect Israel from her enemies. When David was enthroned as a king he became the protector of Israel and there was no defeat in his rule, rather he extended the territory of Israel by his conquest.
4. **The disciples of Jesus** were well-equipped except Judas Iscariot. It took three and half years for Jesus to equip the disciples who became great missionaries to the nations in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and martyred for Him.

5. Paul was from the famous Greek city Tarsus, and instead of studying Greek philosophy and graduating from Tarsus university, he studied and equipped himself well in Jerusalem under the feet of Gamaliel, grandson of the great rabbi Hillel who was the founder of school of Hillel in Jerusalem. Later he became a great missionary, apologist, theologian, and great writer of NT Epistles.

6. The fivefold ministries God gave in the New Testament with a purpose to equip the saints (Eph. 4:11-12). The idea is that an apostle has to prepare/train a saint/believer to become an apostle, a prophet has to prepare/train a believer to become a prophet, an evangelist has to prepare/train a believer to become an evangelist, a pastor has to prepare/train a believer to become a pastor, a teacher has to prepare/train a believer to become a teacher. Although there are five different ministry but have one goal, i.e., to equip. Therefore, equip should be part of any ministry for believers to be useful in the service of God.

I propose that today churches and seminaries need to equip believers and students as disciples makers. Other than reaching the unreached, churches and seminaries should focus on Christ's imperative to make disciples. A disciple should make another disciple. A teacher should equip a student with a purpose that his student will disciple others. True disciple makers should be established and developed by the churches and seminaries

today. Although to make a person disciple, master's role of equipping is quite important, yet how well a disciple is equipped has to be proven by the disciple himself as it used to happen in the ancient Hindu Gurukula, where a sishya (disciple) could not leave the Gurukula until he proves himself well-equipped to his Guru (master). The Old Testament speaks about a disciple who proved himself a well-equipped disciple. The Old Testament character Elisha demonstrates how a disciple should be well-equipped for the service of God.

As a well-equipped disciple Elisha did not leave his master for any reason. Elisha was asked by his master three times to stay in particular places. First Elisha was asked to stay first in Gilgal, second in Bethel, and third time in Jericho. But Elisha was showing unwillingness to leave his master. A true disciple always follows his master at any cost.

As a well-equipped disciple Elisha desired the best to be given to him by his master in his departure. Unlike in Gurukulas where the Gurus desired the best to be given to them by the sishyas at the end as the token of their honour, loyalty, thanks to their gurus for learning from them without paying fee, Elijah asked his disciple Elisha after they crossed the river Jordan, "Tell me, what I can do for you before I am taken from you?" Unlike in the Hindu epic Mahabharata, sishya Eklavya was asked by his Guru Dronacharya to sacrifice his right thumb as Daksina, Elijah asked what he should

give to his sishya Elisha. In reply to Elijah's question, Elisha said "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit". The term "double portion" reminds us about the law of God concerning the eldest son's inheritance (Deut. 21:17). The eldest son is the privileged man to get the double portion of his father's property. And the loss of spirit-filled and empowered prophet Elisha will be so great which couldn't be replaced perhaps by anyone not even by Elisha. Therefore, Elisha wants to claim his position as the first born and asked for the firstborn's "double portion". He wanted to receive the spiritual power and the anointing of God that his master had. Master realized that his disciple is well-equipped. Consequently, he granted Elisha's desire to continue his ministry as his successor and as the symbol of succession the master left his garment for the disciple. A Guru finally gives what his sisya asks him. Parasuram gave what Dorna asked him, he gave all his weapons and taught the art of using the weapons. After Parasurama, Drona received the former's title "acharya" and became Guru for the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

After the ascension of his master, Elisha had to come back from the other side of Jordan and in his return he struck the water and divided Jordan. The performance of this miracle by Elisha answers his own question "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah"? Since he was able to duplicate what Elijah had done, the true succession was confirmed. As in Gurukaula system a well-equipped sishya used

to take over (succeed) the Guru at the latter's death, so the well-equipped Elisha (sishya) succeeded Elijah (guru).

After the death of Guru, in Gurukula system, the well-equipped sishya becomes guru and rest of the sishyas accept him as their new guru unhesitatingly. So, after Elisha returned from Jordan, the company of prophets who were standing afar off Jordan saw Elijah coming and understood the "spirit of Elijah has come upon Elisha". Therefore, they came and bowed down before him. They accepted him as Elijah's successor, but with a doubt. They wanted to go and seek Elisha thinking that "spirit of the LORD might have caught him up and thrown him down on some mountain or into some valley". After three days search their doubt was cleared and they completely confirmed the departure of Elijah and succession. In Gurukula system no Gurus wanted their sisyas to be equal with them or surpass them, but Elisha continued his prophetic and miracle working ministry more than his master. Jesus said that his disciples would do more than their Master. A sishya can be more effective in God's service than his guru provided the former is divinely equipped. A well-equipped disciple succeeds not the position, but the service of his master. Elisha is an inspiration for all to be well-equipped for the service of God.

*Mr. Hirendra Prasad is on the
Faculty of COTRTS*

The Word of God in the Therapeutic Process of Equipping and Engaging

Introduction:

God does exist and He does care about His creation-man, from the heart of compassion and love, He has revealed Himself to man. These are the presuppositions of this topic “the Word of God in the therapeutic process **of equipping and engaging**”, without these presuppositions, it does not matter whether a counselor uses the Bible or not, if God does not exist and if He has not revealed Himself through the written word of the Bible, then this topic is irrelevant. Because the Bible is divine revelation, it makes a difference when introduced into the counseling process for equipping and engaging in the life of the counselee.

Since Scripture is the divine revelation of God to man, the Christian counselor has a source of truth that enables him to deal accurately with his subject. The authority and truth of the Scripture makes a difference in the counseling relationship; they are distinguishing a unique aspect of Christian counseling. Therefore I would like to bring some of the aspects to a better understanding of this topic based on “All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly *equipped for every good work*” (II Timothy 3:16-17).

1. The role of the Word of God for equipping in the therapeutic process:

The Bible is not just a symbol of authority, but that it has actual meaning as well. As a symbol of authority, the Bible is both a sword and a shield for counselor or Pastor. Wayne E. Oates, *The Bible in Pastoral Care* (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1979), 18. Some of the important roles of the Word of God in the process of counseling for equipping and engaging are:

1. Encouragement (the feeling level) – the role here is to under gird and support a troubled person by being a shoulder to cry on. It involves the ministry of comforting, reassuring and sustaining.
2. Exhortation (the behavior level) – the role here is to help a person face up to, and deal with their problems by way of a clear Biblical strategy. It involves resolving personal conflicts in accordance with Biblical principles.
3. Enlightenment (the thinking level) – the role here is to explore wrong basic assumptions and bring about a change by the renewal of the mind. It involves a clear understanding of how to change wrong thought patterns by way of Scripture.

4. The Word of God provides a true understanding of people's basic needs; it not only helps to understand the basic needs of people, but it gives answers to their needs. It lives through the presence of the Holy Spirit who brings life and meaning through the Scripture.

5. The Word of God brings light into our human situation (Psalms 119:105).

6. It shows the mind of God and encourages us to bring our own thoughts and link them with His thoughts (Isa. 55:6-9).

7. It shows the way to believe in Jesus Christ and find new life in Him (John 20:31).

8. The Word of God offers correction, instruction, exhortation and thereby shows us a right way to live (II Timothy 3:15-17).

9. The Word of God offers us encouragement, comfort and hope in times of distress and difficulties (Romans 15:4).

10. The Word of God enters deep in to our inner lives and helps us to recognize and understand our own inward thoughts and desires (Hebrews 4:12).

2. The Word of God in the therapeutic process for equipping:

Biblical counseling, which has its foundation on the presuppositions of a special revelation, is distinct from counseling (science)? that has a different foundation. The secular professional strives to be objective and often argues that a person's religion or ethics make little difference in a counseling situation. In reality, the presupposition

on which a person's life is based on makes a great difference. People in the secular world of psychology, psychiatry and counseling are learning that a person's ethics and religion can be divorced from the therapy in which he / she are engaged.

However, many Christians today are convinced that counseling which integrates psychology and scripture is more helpful than purely secular counseling or psychotherapy. Of course, it must be acknowledged that the success of any counseling experience depends heavily on the ability and personality of the therapist.

Martin Lloyd-Jones, the Christian counselor affirms, "...every conceivable view of life and of men is invariably dealt with somewhere or another in the scripture". Jay E. Adams, *The use of the Scriptures in Counseling* (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1978), 6.

Many individuals engaged in counseling believe that there are a number of distinctives that they use by using the Word of God in the process of counseling for equipping and engaging, they are as follows:

2.1. The total person :

Based upon the presuppositions in scripture, it has an accurate knowledge of the nature of man and an accurate perspective of the total person. The scripture teaches that man was created in the image of God and man is incomplete until he is in a proper relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Counseling that ignores man's spiritual needs does not minister to the total person.

One of the dilemmas that the secular world faces today is the dilemma of mankind's goodness and evil. From the heart of man can come great and noble deeds, man can serve others well. Yet, the same man is capable of such depraved acts of violence. How can this paradox be understood? The true nature of man can only be understood in light of scriptural revelation that explains how man's nobility comes from being created in God's image and his depravity comes from the fall.

2.2. A source of authority:

The Bible gives an absolute source of knowledge and definite guidelines and authority that enables a counselor to speak with confidence, and to counsel with boldness and direction.

2.3. A unique goal :

Today in secular counseling and psychology there is more agreement about what is sick than there is about what is healthy. The goal of using the Word of God in counseling involves more than alleviating an immediate problem, in that the Bible gives a picture of an emotionally healthy person. The aim is to enable the counselee to become more like Jesus Christ, not just act like Jesus.

2.4. Supernatural power and guidance :

Through the indwelling power and presence of the Holy Spirit, the counselor has a source of knowledge, understanding, and guidance that enables him to be more effective. He is not limited to mere human effort or wisdom, and he is not dependent upon himself alone. The combined power and authority of the Word of God and the

Holy Spirit gives the counselor power for healing that goes far beyond human ability. The counseling relationship involves a trinity of person - the counselor, the counselee, and the Holy Spirit working in both lives.

2.5. A unique love relationship :

The motivation and depth of the relationship when Agape love is the uniting factor gives a unique relationship in the counseling process. The counselor reflects God's love and concern in addition to his own personal concern. The counselor puts his arms to God's love and enables the counselee to see God's love for him. The counselor actualizes the character of God to the counselee, and the relationship becomes the therapy and it is in this relationship where the healing then takes place.

2.6. A God – dependency :

Instead of festering an unhealthy self-centeredness, the counselor seeks to encourage the counselee to build a dependency upon God. In this way, by using the Word of God in counseling the counselor become a growth facilitator. He assists in removing hindrances in the counselee's life so that he can make rapid progress. The counselee is taught to find in the Bible and in the Lord, strength, hope, and comfort for every situation to meet daily needs.

2.7. A unique model :

By utilizing the Word of God the counselor should demonstrate a unique quality of life in the counseling relationship. His life should manifest

the quality that desires to develop in the counselee's life. His life should be a message so when he shares his life in counseling the other person will be able to receive his message. The counselor should reflect the character of God to his counselee and actualize the attributes of God through using the Word of God.

2.8. A different perspective :

Biblical based counseling has an eternal perspective and not just a temporal perspective. Through the Word of God the counselor recognizes that each person has an eternal destiny, and he can utilize this perspective in his counseling. Proper use of this perspective can provide motivation for change in a person's life. It also can be a source of hope and encouragement in suffering and grief.

2.9. A unique attitude towards the past:

The counselor can help a person or counselee find freedom from guilt and condemnation and the willingness to yield to the sovereignty of God through the Word of God. These attitudes towards the past help the counselee gain a unique perspective of everything that touches his life and enables him to thank God for everything.

3. The Word of God in the therapeutic process to be engaged in the Indian context:

Today we live in a fast changing world, we experience that our life is closely and globally linked and that our existence is interconnected and interdependent. However, the opportunity to grow, access to material goods, land, wealth, health and education are not equally made available to all.

This is because humanity has divided the one single world into different worlds - the first, the second, the third and the fourth world based on economic development. One can witness all the four worlds even within a nation or a state itself. When we perceive it a little more closely we see the world of exploiters (oppressors) on one side and on the other side the world of the exploited (oppressed).

The results are - the poor are more and more exploited, small industries are closed, hundreds and thousands are made jobless, the existing local social, economic and cultural orders are threatened. India is fractured into caste, communalized religions, and party politics, this is the world in which we live. In this context how effectively can we use the Word of God in our counseling process in order to facilitate and enable people to experience total human development.

In order to bring total human development our counseling should be an integral ministry of engaging. By integral ministry we mean that it embraces all spheres of human life in terms of economic, social, political, cultural aspects, education and health. It is the whole person in all dimensions. It implies inclusiveness, wholeness in a broken sinful world, it means liberation from that which divides, diminishes, and destroys one's wholeness.

There are certain basic qualities of the spirituality of Jesus, which in my opinion are foundational in the counselors' spiritual formation to prepare for an integral ministry of engaging. They are incarnation, prophetic and kenotic.

3.1. Incarnation

Incarnation means, 'to enter into or become flesh'. Incarnation therefore means God's identity with humanity in history, the revelation of God's saving mission for all mankind, and the saving mission is realized by God in Jesus Christ living in the midst of the poor and outcast.

It is incarnation because the spiritual formation today demands that the counselor needs to pitch their tents in the midst of the poor and oppressed. The counselor should identify oneself with the poor and the outcast with whom God identifies, because God himself has pitched his tent in the midst of the poor and oppressed. It becomes possible for the counselor only when they express their solidarity with the marginalized and other groups of people like Dalits, the Tribals, the unorganized laborers. The counselor expresses their authentic love for them, and establishes contact with them concretely.

3.2. Prophetic

It is prophetic because, having pitched their tent or having established their contact with the poor, or having known the reality of the unjust situations in which the poor are forced to live, they can't be indifferent to such a situation of poverty and oppression. Both in word and deed they are compelled to protest against all those customs, traditions, and practices.

The counselor should observe and analyze the current anti-poor and anti-people structures systematically in the light of the gospel values, and protest against the sins of the oppressors, both individuals and groups, against the unjust structures, against the silence and sinfulness of the oppressors who are not allowing human beings to live as

children of God. Hence, prophetic protests are bound to bring struggle and suffering which is the relevant spiritual formation for the counselor today.

3.3. Kenotic (Self emptying)

It is kenotic because, the counselors imbibe (take in) the character of the wheat which falls into the ground and dies (struggle and suffering).

The counselor needs to live a life of self emptying, by giving up riches in order to identify themselves with the poor and oppressed.

Conclusion:

Traditionally the Bible has been used by counselors as a means of reassurance and comfort to people who come to them for counseling help.

As we do the Lord's work, the Holy Spirit is always the primary counselor and he works powerfully, sovereignly through His own Word. The Holy Spirit brings people to a conviction of sin and to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ through His Word. It is by the scriptures that He teaches and equips them in how to love God and through the scriptures the Holy Spirit comforts, rebukes, corrects and trains them in righteousness. In this way people of all ages and from various walks of life are helped; all kinds of personal, interpersonal and family problems are resolved and God is glorified.

It is, therefore, essential for us to be thoroughly equipped with the scripture, prepared for every good work. The better equipped we are the more effective we will be in helping others to be engaged in ministry.

Rev. Rajasekhar is on the Faculty & Dean of Students at COTRTS

To be engaged in the Lord's work:

Luke 9:28-36

The verses of this passage tell us of a marvelous incident in the lives of three of Jesus' disciples. On a mountain (name is not mentioned) as Jesus was praying suddenly His face changed, His clothes changed, and alongside Him, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glory. It seemed like the disciples had been sleepy, but when they were fully awake they saw this vision. The sight must have been awe-inspiring and really glorious, to see a glimpse of the heavenly majesty right here on earth!

At such a glorious sight, Peter, always the foreman of the group, said to Jesus "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" (v.33). Though this seemed like the most plausible advice or request, yet Jesus did not allow it but rather the vision disappeared and they had to come down the mountain. This question by Peter showed something of the way he saw things. Let us turn to the context of the passage.

The Context

Lk. 9:28 began with the words "Now about eight days". So the Bible placed this event as something that happened "eight days after" something. So the question is eight days after what? Eight days after "these sayings" (Lk. 9:28a). So the miraculous glorious events of the mount of transfiguration are connected to what Jesus had said to His disciples eight days earlier. Going back to Luke chapter 9 we see that there was a day in

which Jesus was alone with His disciples, and He asked them a very important question "Who do the crowds say that I am"? (Lk. 9:18). The disciples gave the answer. Then He asked them "Who do you say that I am"? (Lk. 9:20) at which Peter answered, "The Messiah of God". This was a time in which Jesus was surely testing His disciples of what they think of Him. This was vital as there were many who saw Jesus in their own way, but short of a "Messiah of God". The answer by Peter must have surely pleased Jesus to see how His disciples understood of Him. Yet amazingly Jesus asked that they tell no one and more than that He told them something which was not good news at all (Lk. 9:21ff). He told His disciples that the Son of Man must suffer and be killed and be raised from the dead. More so, He also said something about the state of the disciples of the Son of Man. He told them that if they wanted to be His disciples they must be ready for suffering and cross bearing. All this must be shockingly depressing and in the least perplexing to the disciples.

Jesus showed His identity and showed them the Messiah-Disciple relationship; in that what a disciple must go through. The relationship a disciple has with the Messiah in this life affects the relationship he will have in the next life (Lk. 9:26). So eight days after these sayings which were ground breaking revelations to the disciples, Jesus took them to the mountain where the

glorious vision took place. How wonderful it must have been for the disciples, for they had a revelation by word and then a revelation by sight or vision only eight days apart.

The Reasons

There could have been many reasons why Peter responded to the vision by saying “Master it is good to be here; let us build three dwellings...”. I would like to discuss two:

1. Reaction not Discernment

At a glance it was plain to see that Peter did not know what he was saying. The verb translated *knowing* stands to mean *perceive by any of the senses or discern*. So clearly Peter could not or did not discern or perceive properly. Surely this vision was an overwhelming contrast to the words Jesus said eight days earlier. The vision was glorious, all the top notch of Jewish theology were there. The most prominent representatives and leaders of Jewish history both socially and religiously were present. It must really be a ‘good’ place to be, and a ‘good’ presence to be with. Contrast to this was the revelation through Jesus’ words about the agony the Messiah will face and that the disciples must be ready to identify with suffering. The verses, Lk. 9:23-26, indicates that the disciples in the future will not be standing in the presence of the great men of Jewish history. Rather the disciples would have to stand alone against a ridiculing antagonistic world. To add to this, these three persons in the vision were discussing about the Messiah’s death and suffering. Thus the first reaction possible to Peter was that staying on the mountain is ‘good’. If they have to descend down the mountain then there awaits for them death for the Messiah and suffering and

opposition for the disciples. Thus Peter was reacting not discerning.

There is the temptation to take the life of following Christ as an easy going task. It does not look hard at all. At times it looks like we are basking in the glory of the presence of God. It is enjoyable, praiseworthy and noble. The reaction to such a state would always be that it is good. But if it disengages us from acting on what Christ has called us to then we are ‘undiscerning’. It turns into a sin of omission or negligence. As disciples of Christ there are tasks we are called to do, to take responsibility and face the challenges; escape is not always a choice. Discern carefully the kind of worship that disengages us from the responsibility we are called to.

2. Confinement not Diaspora

Peter was after all a Jew who respected prominent figures like Moses and Elijah, and he stood in awe of them. It looked like he was very interested to build tabernacles for each of them. Peter displayed a typical Jewish mentality having the concept of the glory of God confined locally – the Zion theology. Ever since the first Temple had been built and the Ark of the Covenant placed in the Temple, Jews had an understanding that the Temple is God’s dwelling place and Zion his city; it gave a localized idea of the presence of God and that Zion will never fall. There was truth in this and as in the case of Hezekiah’s defense against Sennacherib, God did miraculously defended His city. However, the false sense of security the Israelites had was shattered to pieces when they failed to abide in God’s law and ended up as Babylonian slaves.

However humorous it sounds, Peter was willing to build dwellings for Jesus and the prophets to stay on the mountain. Peter had a narrow vision of confined glory; Jesus had a vision of diaspora glory.

There is a temptation to feel so spiritual in church as though that spirituality must be contained and it is our obligation not to let the world contaminate it. There is a temptation to have a sense of sanctity of Christian life only in church but not at home, at work or in the market place. A well-known joke says that a preacher was preaching so beautifully on how to demonstrate love to one another in the family, when his wife cried and said “If only we live in this church building, Oh! How different it would be from living at home”. Jesus revealed through words and vision to the disciples so that this vision would encourage and empower them to engage in the sinful world. Confinement equals to disengage, diaspora equals to engage. Should we not learn from our own history? Christianity in India is as old as Christianity itself. Yet these Christians had kept the gospel message to

themselves instead of becoming the diaspora. The disciples of Jesus and so also we today, are called to spread around – the message of salvation, the love, the light, yes the glory revealed to us in God’s Word and in our personal experiences with Jesus.

Conclusion

This is not a message to encourage uncalled for self-inflicted suffering. Neither is it an admonition that Christians should feel guilty if they are not suffering. Yet the passage clearly tells us that there are challenges and responsibilities we must not run away from. We have to face them as cross-bearing disciples. We are also given a message through the Scriptures and the experiences we have in our personal encounter with Jesus, this must not be silenced or confined. The message will not be contaminated by spreading; it will decontaminate as it spreads. May Christ continue to mightily use His followers in India to be willing to bear the cross and to spread the Gospel message to all. AMEN.

*Mr. Wankitboklang Wanniang,
Church History (M.Th. II)*

Invitation

COTR COLLEGE OF MINISTRIES
INVITES YOU TO OUR CELEBRATIONS OF THE
35th ANNIVERSARY
ON **22nd - 25th FEBRUARY, 2017**
PLEASE COME, WITNESS, AND BE BLESSED

Equip, Encourage and Engage: A Dialogical Model for doing Disability Theology in India

Introduction

Christian Theology is done by the able bodied people for the able bodied. Theology from the perspective of persons living with disabilities is silent in the Christian tradition. Christianity has always looked down upon the disability, labeling it as sin and work of demons, or as punishment and curse from God (Longchar and Cowens, 2007). The society has set standards for beauty and perfection and there is no “beauty” in the disabled. Disabled are considered less human – not created in the image of God and they don’t reflect God’s image and can’t be considered as a perfect being of God and for this very reason society keeps them at bay.

Disability in India

India is the second most populated country in the world with over 1.252 billion people. The Census of 2001 shows us that there were about 21 million people in India who were suffering from one disability or the other (censusindia.gov.in/Census_And_You/disabled_population.aspx). The recently published 2011 census reveals that more than 28 million out of the total population are affected with some sort of disability (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Disabled-population-up-by-22-4-in-2001-11/articleshow/28072371.cms>).

Disability in India is seen as a result of one’s karma and the PWD (PWD – Persons with Disability) may be feared as evil, as cursed, spiritually afflicted. Earlier when there was no support/

awareness available to include PWD’s in to the main stream society, discrimination was much rampant in the society where a PWD was often distanced and this was visible by the non-acceptance of the PWD in social functions, religious services, workplaces, marital relationships which lead to economic and social isolations. In the recent years, there has been an increasing recognition of the abilities of persons with disabilities and emphasis on including them in mainstream society based on their capabilities. (Longchar and Cowens, 2007:40-41).

Disability in the Bible

The Bible portrays disability as a disease. The most common diseases mentioned in the Bible are blindness, deafness, dumbness, leprosy, and paralysis. The general view of the Old Testament writers is that God brings disability as punishment for transgressions for sin or as an expression of God’s wrath for people’s disobedience. It is seen as a curse and as a result of unbelief and ignorance. The Bible portrays disability as a curse and as a result of disobedience, unbelief, and ignorance. The New Testament also supports the link between sin and disability. This link is well illustrated in John 9:1-3. The bridge between sin and disability confirms the religious model of disability, which views disability as a punishment inflicted upon an individual or family by God as a result of sin. Consequently, disability stigmatizes

not only the individual but the whole family. The implication is the exclusion of PWD from the social, economic, political and spiritual spheres of society. (The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible: 1962; Encyclopedia Judaica: 1972).

A Dialogical model for Doing Disabled Theology in Indian Church

Disabled theology is one of the emerging trends in theology today, where it invites churches and communities to enter into a dialogue offering viable solutions for inclusion for PWDs. Churches need to introspect and deconstruct their own prejudices and mindsets towards PWDs. Jesus in his interactions with the disabled people in the bible, challenges us to have an equal and disabled loving society and church where PWDs will be acceptable.

Equip: To equip church leaders and pastors with practical knowledge and effective tools for disabled ministry, who in turn can equip persons living with disabilities who will find space to grow among our inclusive communities, reclaiming their rights as God's children as an integral part of the church and society at large. (Longchar and Cowens, 2007: 23-27).

Encourage:

To encourage the body of Christ and people to get involved and network with PWDs creating holistic support and care groups, bringing the persons with disabilities in to the life of God's community, continuing in celebrating and rejoicing in our diversity as God's creation in which every human being is created in the image of God, at the same time making the world a place of justice, grace and love.

Engage:

Engaging people and caregivers in a supportive global network of persons with disabilities, educators, community workers, church pastors and leaders, theologians, advocates and concerned citizens who can continue facilitating the holding of local, regional, and international dialogues, conferences, and consultations that address the core issues which affect the PWDs, while stressing and intensifying the need of establishing an inclusive affirming and empowering global society where all can mutually co-exist with each other in harmony. (Longchar and Cowens, 2007: 157).

Conclusion

The Bible reveals to us that our God is a God of all nations and people, whose love and compassion is for all. This is also revealed in His son Jesus Christ, who invites us to enter into a covenant relationship of hospitality with others. Through our openness to others we may encounter God in new ways as the grace of God is with one and all and His glory permeates into the whole creation. The presence of disabled people should be seen as precious gifts to the society and to the church. The need to include disabled people into our community will portray our holistic togetherness and about our community as a whole, including our ability to love and be responsible for one another and by doing so we are willing to be hospitable to people who are living with disabilities, irrespective of who they are and what they are, revealing God's compassion and love in us as Christians.

*Mr. Sovan Kumar Mallick,
Church History (M.Th. II)*

Encouragement to the Youth for their Sanctity of Life

Introduction

For young people it is a very special time especially in the growth and development process of maturity, enthusiasm, skills and abilities. Characterized by growth in all areas of human life, it serves as a time of great searching, exploring and designing one's concept about life, family, God and the world.

When we talk about sanctity of life it basically refers to one's sexual purity. The problem or issue of sexual purity is directly or indirectly related to the issue of pre-marital sex, and the issue of pre-marital sex leading to abortion. Therefore, the issues of pre-marital sex and abortion will also be discussed briefly. This is an attempt to help young people realise their worth and uniqueness as God's special creation.

The Question of Sanctity of Life

The dictionary defines youth as being characterized by growth, expansion and changes in organ structure and function where physical energy, mathematical, inventive and creative skills come to their peak in late adolescence. Nevertheless behind the great progression of energy and maturity also comes different influences such a peer pressure, media or social influence. These builds up the platform for many to question and even struggle with their own perceptions and values of life. But as all human beings differ from each other, life is perceived and appreciated depending upon one's circumstances, perceptions, achievements,

expectations, and sense of self. However, the concept of sanctity of life is not clearly spelled out, but the search for identity and security among youth today is found everywhere. This often takes the form of premarital sex in a relationship and is the result of a basic need every person has: the need to be accepted.

Pre- Marital Sex: The need to be accepted?

Sex outside marriage which is completely outside and against God's will is called Pre-marital sex. It is a wrong way of expressing love, it takes but never gives. This destroys relationships as they are, bringing confusion and tearing down the climate of respect, trust, credibility which is so essential for solid marriages and a secure environment to raise children. Many who get involved in this have the mistaken idea that 'love' makes premarital sex acceptable and so they disregard the biblical value of moral purity. However, it is not only a biblical prohibition to protect one from unwanted pregnancy or venereal disease, but goes beyond the external or the risk of physical illness. Instead people who get involved in pre- marital sex loose their value of identity and dignity given to them by God.

Abortion, an eye opener

Most of the abortion cases these days are the result of teenage pregnancy or pre-marital sex. It occurs because of improper guidance, lack of

knowledge, curiosity and peer pressure. Not realising the consequences of an abortion many youth run for it as the best remedy from fear and shame. But realise later the guilt and pain of their past they have to carry on even in their future. Abortion then can be defined in two ways. Firstly, it is the spontaneous termination of a pregnancy after the implantation of blastocyte in the lining of the womb, but before the foetus has attained viability. Secondly, it is popularly known as the deliberate termination of a pregnancy, whether for therapeutic or other reasons.

According to medical concerns, a person is determined to be “alive” if there is either a detectable heartbeat or brain – wave activity. This serves as an eye opener for us to realize that unborn children have detectable heartbeats at eighteen days (i.e., two and one – half weeks) after conception and detectable brain –wave activity forty days (a little over five and one half weeks) after conception. To know that essentially 100 percent of all abortions occur after the seventh week of pregnancy is unbelievable. One survey estimated that 95 plus percent of children killed by abortion are killed for reasons of convenience and not because of incest, rape, physical condition of the unborn or for the threatened health of the mother. This is an alarming phenomenon about the reality of abortion issue in today’s context.

Ethicists view about abortion

Among the many opinions, there are two generally accepted views regarding this highly debated issue, they are the *Pro-life* and the *Pro-choice*. The former advocates stress the value of each unborn’s life by ascribing greater weight to the fetus’ life although they may feel great compassion for pregnant women caught in their painful dilemmas. While the latter group emphasizes the value of self

determination which is expressed in each woman’s right to reproductive choice. Although they may believe the fetus has a right to live, they claim priority for a woman’s right to freedom from intrusive, often male-dominated rules that undermine her very humanity. But unlike ethicists, essentialists argue that a human organism is a human person and possesses a right to life simply because it is a member of the human species. Robert Joyce who is a defender of this view says that to be a human person is to possess the natural capacity to become what one already is: one is a person; therefore, one acts personally. A fetus therefore, is a developing person, a person in the process of development.

Biblical Standpoint

The Bible bases its authority from the Decalogue especially the sixth commandment, ‘Thou shalt not kill’, which enunciates the principle of the sanctity of life. The commandment is not in the general terms of prohibiting the putting to death of another, as our word kill might suggest, yet the term used is the specific one to denote what we call murder or the violent, wilful, malicious assault upon the life of another. Even as Genesis 9:6 says, “whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made him”, therefore *to kill a person was to kill one made in God’s image*. The assault upon a man’s life therefore is an assault upon the life of God ‘for in the image of God made man’. It is the sanctity of life that validates the death penalty for the crime of murder. It is the sense of this sanctity that constrains the demand for the infliction of this penalty. The deeper our regard for life the firmer will be our hold upon the penal sanction which the violation of that sanctity merits.

Regardless of who man is, he alone “bears and

represents”, the image of God which makes him unique, distinctive, and valuable. All people therefore possess the qualities that distinguish them from animals: morality, reason, creativity, and self esteem. It is said that human life begins within the womb, where God personally and sovereignly superintends the development and maturation of the fetus before birth. That kind of life begins at conception and continues to develop in the womb where God is at work, shaping the child into the precise kind of person He desires it to be. Therefore, it is God’s will that every child’s life be protected before and after birth; it is certainly His will that such protection be applied to the child in his or her prenatal state. He preserves and protects human life as no other life on earth. Thus, the meaning and value of any life is given by God’s purposes and caring for that life. Therefore, respect for life requires it to be protected rather than attacked, preserved rather than destroyed.

Conclusion:

Apart from childhood and adulthood stage, youth is the most sensitive and risky period in human life. The reason because it is the peak of a persons life where everybody gets automatically attached and attracted. Both in negative and positive ways, it serves as a period of influence. We serve as a person of influence to others and vice versa. More of the negative aspect of youth has been looked in the paper, but that does not degrade the strong points young people possess in their youth. Nevertheless to completely ignore the trends breaking down today’s youth and society in general is irrational.

In human perspective, we see that life has no meaning, respect, value, or morality. It is diminished to fine dust. But looking at God’s picture of life we see God’s great love and care towards his own

design. *Sanctity* as the word suggests implies morality or purity which in other words means good values or behaviour acceptable to God. Yet many youth today fail to develop sanctity in their lifestyle primarily because of *identity loss and insecurity*. Without proper guidance and mentoring many fail in their endeavour to lead the right life God purposes for them. While others choose to follow behind for sheer pleasure and fun. What we need to realize is that we are accepted as children of God, promised with good life. Our calling and promise then comes from a God who demands not the least but the best from us...a life of sanctity.

Mr. ThepfuneizoYhor, Church Histroy(M. Th I)

PROMOTED TO GLORY



With deep condolences we the NTC of India report this for your prayers that Pastor Wilson passed away on September 5th, 2016 who was serving the Lord in Bhimadole. Please pary for the church he left behind that the Lord would take care of the church and comfort his family.

EEE; Is Essential to Every Christian

Greetings to all in the matchless name of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I thank God for giving me this opportunity to share some words that will help you to grow in Christ.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, when we see EEE many will think about the course that is offered in colleges and universities. But here EEE means “Equip, Encourage and Engage”, it is very important to all disciples. Due to the lack of these principles, there are so many people who are yet come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ and some of the churches have not yet developed into the fullness of Christ.

Equip: The word equip means “To prepare by training or to dress for certain purpose”. If we see (Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:39-42, John17:1-5), they say that Jesus Christ was equipping himself to a purpose for what he came from heaven to the earth. The purpose of Jesus Christ is “To seek the lost and to save that which was lost” (Luke19:10) and Acts 1:14 says that the disciples were equipping themselves to receive the power of the Holy Spirit. So, as a Christian you must equip yourself to glorify the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ all through your life for the purpose you were called for by our Lord.

Encourage: The word encourage means “To courage, support, to give confidence”. If we see some verses from the Bible (Genesis26:24, 2 Kings 6:16, Isaiah41:10, 43:1) here the Lord himself encouraged Isaac and the Israelites through His

words. In the New Testament also we can find in John chapter one which says that Andrew encouraged Simon (Peter) and Philip encouraged Nathanael (Bartholomew) to come to the master. So, as Christians we must practise the spirit of encouraging, as we find in Hebrew 10:24 and 3:13 that we encourage one another in order to stir up love. So, let us encourage one another to bring glory and honour to the name of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Engage: The word engage means “To take part, be active, involve in oneself”. In Luke 4:14-15 Jesus engaged in sharing the good news in synagogues, Mark 1:14 says he engaged in preaching about the kingdom of God. After Jesus ascends to heaven in Acts chapter 2 it says Peter engaged in preaching about the resurrection of Christ, similarly in acts chapter 18 we can see about Aquila, and Priscilla and Paul they engaged in work (tentmaker) and also as well as the spreading of the gospel together.

I encourage everyone to equip, encourage, and engage in the Lord’s ministry. If every Christian practices this EEE in your personal life, then you will be able to be a channel of blessing to the world. It will be fulfilled when you practice the EEE in your lives. You will definitely fulfil the greatest commission of the Lord Jesus Christ and bring many lives to Jesus Christ. So let us mould ourselves to equip, encourage and engage in the work to glorify the Lord.

Paul Manohar (B.Th I)

A THEOLOGIAN'S LIFE

Equip:

Christians are to be equipped with a lot of things to be able to survive in this kingdom of the 'Fallen one' (World). Equipping oneself in a theological seminary is a very basic thing for a servant-leader/minister of God. Being equipped is by one's own personal interest on one side, and by God on the other. Theologians are well equipped by the Word of God that is done in the part of God's creation in a human being (Body), whereas the Spiritual Equipping of the theologian leads to the acknowledgement of the Word of God as it applies to our Spirit (Soul). Since the source which is needed for equipping is from God, it's advisable to be equipped by Him.

Encourage:

To encourage someone is a peacemaking process which shows how to be able to be engaged with others. As we are looking at the theme of this year, "Equip – Encourage- Engage" the term Encourage plays a vital role and connects both the other terms. Encouraging a Theologian will lead to a drastic change in his life and many other lives. An Encouraging person must be found to be capable of encouragement. Encouragements results motivates a person to be more engaged, bringing more encouragement in seeing God working in people's lives. Seminaries will provide an atmosphere of encouragement, but it is one's work in the real world that brings satisfaction in doing

His ministry. Theologians must undergo the process of encouragement from God, leading to a higher level of ministry for God.

Engage:

Engaging in work or doing something related to work involves a part of our body, mind and soul in it. A commissioned person will engage in the studies and the values of spirituality in the seminary with great interest in spite of all his/her weakness. Engaging the heart, soul and mind in the completeness of God's Word is a very important thing to be followed. Engaging in the spiritual activities with the fellow theologians in the seminary will yield into long standing faith in God. There are two divisions of engagement and they are inside and outside Engagement. Inside engagement deals with the works and things to be done and committed within the seminary activities and involvements in seminary ministry. Outside engagement involves with after leaving the seminary, engaging in ministry with all commitment and dedication. But the beginnings of both start in the seminary.

Equipped, Encouraged and Engaged servant-leaders are needed in the field to build the kingdom of God. It's important to cross-check the characteristics of each person who stands by God in the field having these attributes. COTRTS aims its best for this academic year and gives the best qualities in this theme.

Sherin Livingston.K.A. (B.Th I)

New Testament Church of India - Report

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I, on behalf of the New Testament church of India brings to you few praise report and prayer request. It has been wonderful to experience the marvelous things the Lord is doing for the people of God. In relation with New Testament church of India, we, as whole community thank God His great work. Thank you all for your prayers and support that has been extended to the great task of Kingdom building.

CO-FOUNDER'S RETURN FROM U S A

Almost after 6 months of itinerant, Mrs. Mary Titus (Co-founder) had come back to the campus with lot of gratefulness to the Lord for His help in her stay and ministry in different places, and meeting with friends and relatives. The people in campus and in different institutions are happy, because the mother of the campus back at home. As the ministry we are thankful to the Lord for her life and happy for her very presence, the rich experiences in ministry and relationships.

CHURCH DEDICATION

We are grateful to the Lord for the provision for constructing a church building in Rangarayapuram of Ramabhrapuram area. This church has been dedicated for the Glory of God by Mrs. Mary Titus on the 15th May 2016. The believers of this church worked very hard day and night, even the Sunday school children worked after coming from their schools. With much gratefulness, the believers and



the Pastor acknowledge the sponsors especially the South West Harvest Church for their help in completing this building. May God continue to do great things through their lives.

AREA CONVETION

Pastor P.Premandam of Madyakompalu of Ramachanrdapuram area had three days of meeting from May 1-3, 2016. It was a wonderful meeting, Rev. Johnson Titus, Rev. Mathew Jacob and other servants of God also preached the word of God, many people from different villages attended the three days meeting. It was a time of great awakening for the people. The word of God had penetrated the heart of the people who came to the meeting that resulted in re-commitment and surrender to the will of God. Pastor Premandam conducts meeting every year for the people of the village to come to the Lord and renew themselves by the word of God

BORE WELLS FOR CHURCHES

After a long time of prayers and waiting the Lord has provided bore wells for another eight

more NTC local church locations. Total of 16 local churches and the surrounding villages are experiencing very good water facility. The Pastors and local church members and the surrounding villagers are happy for the provisions that the Lord has given to them. The people expressed their thanks and appreciation to the organization and individuals who become the instrumentals to this



great venture. The Pastors who got this facility in the second phase is Pastor T. Benarji Kumar of Anakapally, Pr. Rajarao, Penikkeru of Mandapeta area, Pr. K.Philip of Savaravalli of Vijayanagaram area, Pr. K.Daivaprakash Dowleswaram of Mandapaet area, Pr. Y. Israel, Mungnapalii of Vijayanagaram area, Pr. BenharYesudas, Nidigattu of Bhimili area, Pr. K.Joshua Namavaram of Devavaram area and Pr. P.N. Yesupadam of Kakinada area.

NTC ANNUAL CONVENTION & GRADUATION

It was a refreshing time for all NTC Pastors to come to campus for the Annual convention and COTR Theological Seminary graduation. During these meetings Dr. David Sibley and Dr. Sonny Conatser were the main speakers. It was time of celebration for everybody gathered especially for

those days. The servants of the Lord Dr. Shibley and Dr. Conatser are the long time well wishers and partners of this ministry. They came with much preparation to equip the servants of the Lord and also the young seminary graduates. Everyone who attended those meetings were challenged and encouraged to do ministry more effectively.

DISTRIBUTION OF MEGAPHONES

During the annual convention of New Testament church of India, 30 Megaphones were distributed to the Pastors for the purpose of outreach ministry. We want to thank the servant of the Lord and the church who becomes the instrumental of contributing for this cause. Our Pastors are grateful to Rev. Mike for helping them with such good equipment; all the pastors who received these



gifts are doing the ministry faithfully and bringing people to the Lord. Still more Pastors to have this provision. This is our prayer that the Lord would help this man of God to be an instrument in the hands of the Lord to be part of this good venture.

*Rev. Mathew Jacob is Registrar of COTRTS
& Vice-President of NTC, India*

COTRTRTS DEPARTMENT OF EXTENTION STUDIES (COTRTRTS-DOES)

Good News... COTR Theological Seminary is now offering Bachelor of Theology and Master of Divinity through COTRTRTSDOES (COTRTRTS Department Of Extension Studies). This program is initiated by us to give a specialized program for pastors, Christian workers, laities and working group who are interested in theological training.

What are the Objectives?

The purpose of this mode of theological education is:

- To give Biblical and theological exposure and knowledge for pastors in ministry and working Christians to be a better witness in the work place.
- To prepare competent Christian ministers and believers in the knowledge of Holy Scriptures in applying them more relevantly.
- To give comprehensive knowledge in communicating the love of Christ with the people of other faiths effectively.
- To educate the Christian ministers and believers to serve both the church and the community.

What is being offered?

Bachelor of Theology	– 3 ½ Years
Master of Divinity (Regular)	– 3 ½ years
Master of Divinity (B.Th Up-graders)	– 2 ½ years

The language of instruction will be English

Who can apply?

Pastors, Christian workers, laity and working people interested in theological studies.

B.Th : +2 or equivalent or mature candidates with a minimum 10 years ministry experience with SSC or equivalent (Age 25 years +). Must pass qualifying exam.

M.Div (General) : mature candidates - 10 years of ministry and (age 30 yrs +). Must pass qualifying ezam. Any degree from a recognized university or equivalent.

M.Div (Up graders): B.Th from A.T.A recognized College with higher B grade.

What are the course requirements?

B.Th	– 36 Courses
M.Div (Regular)	– 30 Courses
M.Div (Upgraders)	– 20 Courses

A student must attend minimum 35 lectures per semester (five days). Failing to do so, the student has to redo the course. Five days, seven lectures per day.

Those who fail to acquire 40% (pass) will have to retake the exam. Those who fail in retake must redo the course.

The registered student should find a mentor (living nearby) with M.Div qualification (if possible an M.Th) to discuss the subject matters and to write the exams. A qualified and experienced pastor would be more than sufficient.

Student should complete all the course requirements such as assignments, field reports and exams to complete the course.

What are the fees?

1) For B.Th it costs Rs1000 per subject. 2) For M.Div it costs Rs 1200 per subject.

There will be seven semesters for B.Th and M.Div. Five semesters for B.Th upgraders.

There will be a minimum fee of Rs1000 charged for food and accommodation during the week residential seminars at COTRTS campus.

Travel fare must be borne by the student.

Venue and Dates

There will be one week of residential seminars (Monday to Saturday) per semester. These will be mostly in the months of April/ September.

What is uniqueness of these Courses?

Encourage, Equip and Engage – is the theme of the academic year 2016 -2017 for COTRTS. This program is to **encourage** pastors, Christian workers and interested laity by **equipping** them with a substantiate academic, as well as mission oriented courses so that it will help them to **engage** within the Indian Church more effectively.

This is not a correspondence course, rather equivalent to regular, recognized and academic degrees.

Students will be provided with a compendium (compiled materials from books and articles) and textbooks for each subject which can be purchased from COTRTS Book Shop at the campus during the registration.

Academic activities and the courses are inbuilt with special emphasis on Spiritual formation, practical dimension and mission focus.

This program is ideal for pastors, Christian workers who cannot do residential courses and laities who are interested in theological education.

Accreditation

ATA accreditation is sought

For further details, please contact:

**The Co-Ordinator,
COTRTS Department Of Extension Studies
COTR THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
P.O. BOX – 3, DORATHOTA,
BHEEMUNIPATNAM
VISAKHAPATNAM, A.P. – 531163
PH. 08933-200182,
EMAIL : director4cotrdoes@gmail.com
cotr-does@cotr.in
Website: www.cotr.in**

Report of Nava Jeevan School & Nava Jeevan Christian Junior College

It is with great joy and immense pleasure I present yet another new report of Nava Jeevan School and Junior College. Both the institutions were re-opened on 13th June 2016, for the 2016-17 academic year. On 20th June 2016, a joint assembly of School and College was held at the school ground. The School Correspondent, President, Secretary of COTR College of Ministries were present. President, Rev. Johnson P. Titus prayed and declared the new session open. Teachers, wardens and students of both the institutions were present on this occasion.

Admission being over, there are 900 students in all including Junior college. 300 students are hostellers hailing from various states of our nation. In the Public Board final exams of 2016, Gaurav Jaiswal and Kum Swetha were toppers in the ICSE and SSC Exams respectively in school level, and Emmanuel Raj and Ganesh were the high scorers in 2nd year and 1st year respectively from Junior College.

On 30th July 2016, senior students of Nava Jeevan Christian Junior College conducted Fresher's Day at the Global Advance Center and the first year students were given a warm welcome.

On 15th August 2016, the COTR Community celebrated our Nation's 70th Independence Day at the Nava Jeevan Campus. Dr. Arthur Jeyakumar unfurled the Tri colour, followed by the

National Anthem. The Chair Person, President, Secretary, Faculty, all COTR Department heads, Staff and the students of COTR Theological Seminary, Nava Jeevan School and Junior College were present. The March Past, the pyramid display and cultural programs were spectacular and full of excitement. Indeed it was celebrated with full pageant and pride.

Sunday school classes, evening devotion, moral education classes and Sunday worship are already on at the school campus under the leadership of Rev. V. G. Thomas. Thank you all well-wishers for your fervent prayers and suggestions. I once again humbly solicit your prayers for us. Our prayers are with you.

A word for the educators

Having worked very closely with children for many years we have learned that we cannot teach children. But the interesting fact is that they learn. The best way that anyone learns is through experience. So the best we can do is to create experiences for our children that will enable them to learn. We as educators have to make lesson for life, make lesson of life.

*Mr. Victor Joseph is Principal of
Nava Jeevan Public School*

New Testament Church General Convention - Feb. 2016

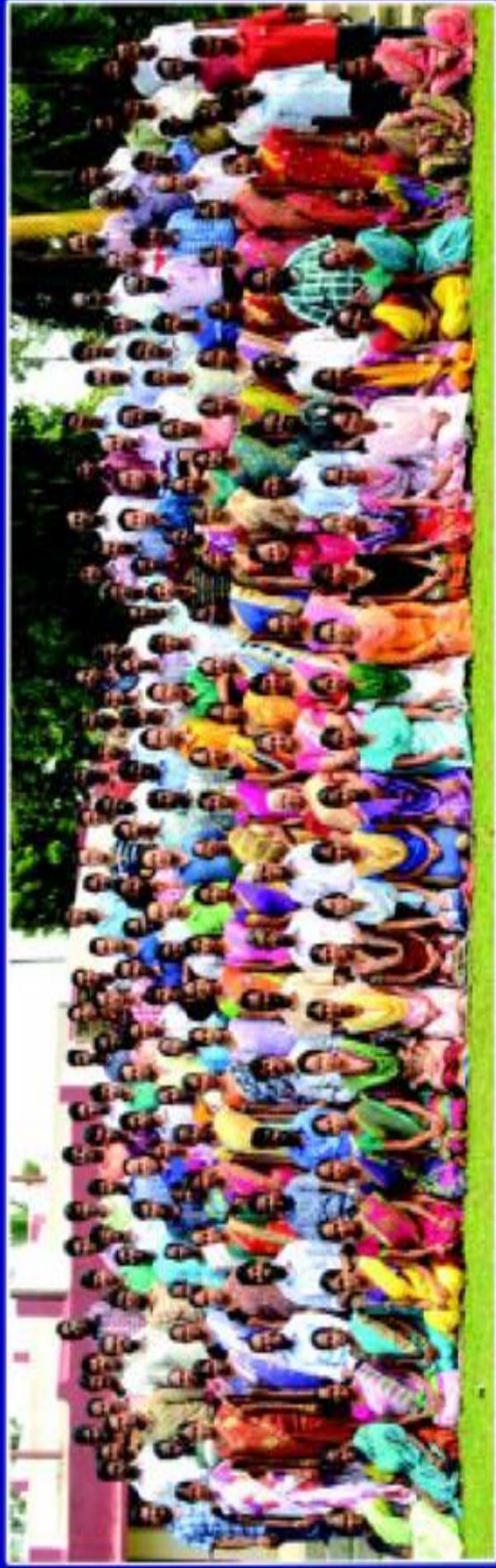


Ramachandrapuram Area Convention



School, Jr. College & Seminary Independence day Celebrations





COTR COMMUNITY



Seminary Graduates - Feb. 2016