

Editor

SAMSON PAUL

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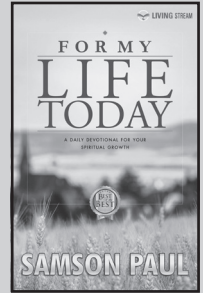


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Living Stream
2021

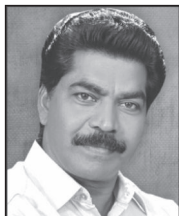
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Dearly beloved in Christ,

Behold, a New Year has dawned! The time limit of this New Year has started to melt. On this occasion, I greet my dear readers to have a New Year filled with love and joy. Once the New Year begins, automatically new expectations would enter into us. The question whether this year would be yet another year of disappointment or would bring good results of new hopes, is natural.

Let us view the New Year with new hope, renewed vision and new perspective. Let us expect to reach new goals. A year has passed! But let us see whether the unwanted nature hidden in us that worked against all good things and the mentality that brought losses, the bitterness that did not cause us anything good and the selfishness that refused to accept changes have left us. Without removing them from us, our hope to receive benefits from God would not yield us any good result.

Another promise of God is not what we need to be blessed. Rather awareness about God's purposes alone is the important need. If we begin to act focusing on living according to the word of God, we would not fail to attain the new benefits in this New Year. 'When would God bless us? When would He fulfil our desires?' - These questions may arise in us. But let us now keenly examine whether we have obtained the spiritual preparations needed to get benefits from God. Then He would bless us from today onwards.

Last year, the deadly virus called Covid 19 shook the entire world. The whole world witnessed a crisis as never before in the history. Humanity had to pass through lot of unimaginable distresses. It is unsure when this world would get freed from the horrible attack of this Corona virus. The God, who specially showers His grace upon those who faithfully hold on to Him in any situation would be of support to us. Darkness may cover the earth. Deep darkness may cover the people. Yet, the Lord will shine His light upon those who trust Him.

May the Lord be with you!

Your brother,

Samson Paul





FOUR LAWS FOR A BLESSED LIFE

Most people consider deliverance from sickness, loss, failure, and financial crisis as an important matter. However, they are not concerned about their slavery to unwanted thoughts. They do not worry over their bondage to wrong desires or their addictions to evil nature. God does not want us to get delivered from difficulties even while continuing in such slaveries.

The Hebrew people, the descendants of Abraham, underwent several distresses in Egypt. God heard their groaning. He saw them; He remembered them (Exodus 2:24,25). Now God wanted to help them. To be precise, He wanted to deliver them from those distresses and bless them.

However, what is important is how God accomplished it. He did not remove their sufferings on hearing their cry and make them live well right there. They had no issue with living as slaves to the Egyptians. As far as they

were concerned, all that they needed was a slightly comfortable life, devoid of all problems. But God did not want to remove their difficulties right then and make them live there.

He wanted to give them a vision. It was a vision concerning the level that they should reach. They had to settle down in a prosperous land, flowing with milk and honey and live with the status of being called as His children (Deuteronomy 7:6). He wanted them to accept this plan and go out of Egypt, the land of slavery.

If they did thus and set forth for the land shown by God, then He would lead them. If they thus went to that land and lived in obedience to His words, He would then bless them.

Two things are important here. One - the Hebrew people getting delivered from their afflictions. Two - living a good life of blessing. In order that these two good things should be fulfilled, they had to accept God's important instructions.

1.They had to accept the vision based on God's plan

2.They had to come out of their then situation of slavery and step towards the direction shown by God

3.They had to surrender themselves to Him in order to be led by God so that they would successfully reach that land.

4.Once, they reached that nation, they had to give priority to God's words in order to enjoy a good life.

In short, it is through the four spiritual steps of 'vision, getting out, being led, and accepting God's word, we can find a blessed life. Most often we want to get delivered from difficulties and live a good life through activities such as prayer, fasting, worship, doing certain godly actions, giving offering etc., Several people believe that they would be delivered from problems, if some popular servants of God prayed for them.

However, whether we pray or others pray for us, the above four laws are very important for God to deliver us from our difficulties and make us enjoy a good life. God wants to deliver us according to His ways and bless us and not as we wish. Hence, we, who want to get His help, should receive His blessings only by following God's laws related to it.

God's Vision should be Accepted

Vision of God is not seeing a scene or having a dream. It is, willingly accepting and working towards the goal which needs to be acted upon by us, according to God's plan. Most





"It is difficult for those who do not want to come out of their slaveries to wrong nature, desires, habits and wrong attitudes to be delivered from their afflictions."

often we consider getting delivered from our problems to be our vision or goal. Living a comfortable life and reaching a blessed state is mostly considered to be the vision. However, God's way is different. He calls us to accept His vision so that we would be delivered of our troubles. In other words, God wants us to reach a particular level according to His divine plan. When we accept His purpose in our life, He delivers us accordingly. The Hebrew people in Egypt expected that their difficulties should be removed. However, God did not want them to have a life devoid of difficulties but wanted them to live as a holy tribe, pleasing to Him.

God wants to reveal Himself as the One who would deliver the people who accept His vision, from problems and not the people who suffer with problems. We need to live as God's people and reflect Him through our life's mode. We should follow a holy life. We need to honour God through our characteristics that are pleasing to Him. This is God's heart's desire. He hastens to deliver the people who wants to accomplish this kind of vision. Anyone, who wants to get help from God ought to first accept reaching a holy standard which is pleasing to God as their goal and vision (I Thessalonians 4:3); they should not trust only on prayers. God

will deliver only such people and fulfil His vision in their lives.

Should set forth from slavery

The Hebrew people, who suffered in Egypt, expected only deliverance from their hardships. Living in Egypt, the heathen land and in a slavery situation was not a problem to them. However, God's plan was not that they should live, devoid of problems but that they should live well in Canaan, the free land which was prepared by Him for them. It is not that they should live in the land which did not know God and mix with the people who did not honour Him; but that they should come out of the yoke of the unbelievers; they should reach the place ordained by God; they should walk upright as the people of God (Leviticus 26:13).

Yes, most people consider deliverance from sickness, loss, failure, and financial crisis as an important matter. However, they are not concerned about their slavery to unwanted thoughts. They do not worry over their bondage to wrong desires or their addictions to evil nature or their slavery to wrong worldly culture. God does not want us to get delivered from difficulties even while continuing in such slaveries. Rather God wants us to be concerned about our slavery to the above mentioned wrong things and come out of them.

That's why God considers it important that we get delivered from slavery to sin before being delivered from our difficulties. It is difficult for those who do not want to come out



Today, most of the people, who give importance to and who expect God's miracle working power and His ability for wonders, do not give the due importance to His words. Rather they think to which servant of God they should go to receive a miracle and which prayer meeting they should attend to solve their problem.

of their slaveries to wrong nature, desires, habits and wrong attitudes to be delivered from their afflictions. That's why Jesus asked us to first seek the Kingdom of God to be reigned by Him (Matthew 6:33).

We should come out to be set free from sin to become slaves of God (Romans 6:22). We should be willing to set forth towards holiness. We should be willing to step out of the life that is displeasing to God. Then God will surely solve our problems and difficulties.

Should Accept to be Led by God

Getting delivered from problems and afflictions does not happen merely by the power of God. God has to lead us first. It is through His leading, there would be deliverance from our difficulties. Leading of God means 'being helped by God to make us proceed towards the goal based on God's plan'. God can bless only those who go towards to His holy goal. He would lead all those who want to head towards His holy goal, even through all adverse situations.

Getting delivered from problems and living a comfortable life should

not be our goal. Rather we should have the goal of living a high standard of holy life, pleasing to God. Then God would lead us through the Red Sea, Jordan, the walls of Jericho and the like which come against us as hindrances. When we accept this leading, there would be deliverance for us from all hardships and sufferings. Many consider prayer, fasting and offering as the means to get delivered from problems. But they do not diligently seek for the experience of being led by God in their daily situation. The Spirit of truth leads us into all truths (John 16:13). Only when we are led by God, it would be confirmed that we are His children (Romans 8:14).

Though the Israelites went towards Canaan, they did not whole heartedly accept God reigning over them. They did not yield to God's leading. Hence, instead of getting delivered from their problems, they invited more trouble into their lives. God, who led the Israelites through Moses that day, leads us even today through the Holy Spirit. We need to have a good relationship and fellowship with God

so as to understand His leading. When He leads us as the good Shepherd, surely there would be solutions for our problems and afflictions.

Should give Importance to His Words

Today, most of the people, who give importance to and who expect God's miracle working power and His ability for wonders, do not give the due importance to His words. Rather they think to which servant of God they should go to receive a miracle and which prayer meeting they should attend to solve their problem. However, by giving importance to the words of the Lord alone, our problems and afflictions would depart from us. The Bible says that man shall live by the word that proceeds from the mouth of God (Deuteronomy 8:3).

God did several miracles in the course of the Hebrew people's journey towards Canaan. Yet He did not tell that such miracles would continue in their lives even after they reached Canaan. God did not promise to bless

them through miracles and wonders. Instead He gave them words of truth and counsels and laws (Deuteronomy 28:1,2). Through Moses, God said that they would receive good things and elevations only by walking in the ways of His good words.

God's benefits are the results of respecting His words and following them. When practising the word of God is considered to be important there would be solutions to problems and afflictions. Some people would be much interested in hearing messages related to miracles. But they would not be interested to hear God's words related to how we should live and with what nature we should live.

Yes, accepting the vision based on God's plan, we should be willing to get out of the situations of slavery to sin, as God expects us of. Willingly accepting His leading, we should commit ourselves to live according to His word. Then all afflictions would flee; and a good life would blossom.





IN SEARCH OF PROMISES ON THE NEW YEAR...

“Blessings would be enjoyed by us only on the basis of faith founded on our relationship with God, as His children. A father need not give promises to his children. If the children’s relationship with the father is genuine and strong, blessings would automatically reach them. On the first day of a new year, they need not ask the father what he would do for them that year, like a stranger would ask. True children of God would act not on the basis of promises but on the faith they have on God.”

In the year 2017, during the New Year service, the pastor of a church announced that God had given the congregation a particular promise. It was the promise, **“The days of your sorrow will end”**. The message shared by the pastor based on this promise, made the congregation very happy. He preached saying, “Last year, you had to undergo several sorrows. But now the Lord tells you that your days of sorrow are over. This year is

going to be a year of joy for you...” As the congregation heard this, a flood of hope swept over them!

2018 arrived! The promise claimed to be given by God was ‘Sorrow and sighing shall flee’. The pastor said, “Last year was a year of sorrow for you; this year, your sorrow shall flee; You’ll have joy from now on”. The thrilled congregation thanked God with shouts of joy. 2019 arrived! As usual, the pastor announced the



promise said to be given by God and it was, 'You shall weep no more'. When the message was shared on the basis of this and the promise card was distributed, the congregation thanked God with a sense of deliverance.

Here are a few questions - The promise verse given for the year 2017 was "The days of your sorrow will end". If the sorrow had ended according to that promise, there would not have been any need for the promise of the year 2018 that 'sorrow and sighing shall flee'. If sorrow and sighing had fled away as per the promise for 2018, there would not have been any need for the promise, 'You shall weep no more' for that year 2019.

Is it true that the Promise was received?

Today, the church pastors and evangelists fail to keep in mind the promise given for the church the

previous year and give another promise for the next year. Today, the church people forget the promise that they had heard the previous year and rejoice in the new promise given for that year. It has become a tradition in churches to give promises which they claim to be given by God though they were not actually given by God, just to encourage those who hear their messages.

It has become a Christian tradition to give a promise for that respective week, month and year. However, these are not based on the Scriptures. There is no Biblical evidence to show that God gives a special promise of blessing once a week or month. Hundred churches give hundred different promises and claim that they are given by God. Hundred pastors give hundred different promises! Hundred magazines give hundred different promises!

It is not wrong to preach on the basis of the hundreds of promises given by God. It is not wrong to encourage the congregation by teaching on God's promises and the way they are fulfilled. It is not wrong to expound on the hope given by God's promises and what should be done for those promises to be fulfilled. However, at the same time, saying that God has given a promise for that week or month or year is an act of telling lies. It is a fact that this act of telling lies happens in the churches, at the beginning of the first day of the New Year.

It is not correct for the shepherds and pastors who should speak the truth to preach that that specific promise had been given by God when it is not so. Saying something which God never said, right on the first part of the first day of a new year, is an act of beginning a year without the base of truth. It is indeed good to preach

on the promises which are already given by God and encourage the people by explaining that the Lord is prepared to do it in our midst even today.

This is not True

There is every chance that God would give His promise to an individual, personally and encourage him. At the same time, it is not spiritual to give a promise commonly in a place which has a gathering of people of different kinds and different spiritual standard and tell them that God would do according to that promise. Anyone who attends a church or a gathering may take that promise for himself/herself. However, only when a believer walks in the ways expected by God, he would be worthy to inherit the blessings of the hope giving promises.

Mostly people are eager to know what the Lord would do for them. But they are not very much interested to





know what they should do before the Lord. “Lord, what do You want me to do this month or year?” - This is the attitude that should be seen in any true child of God. Asking the Lord, “God, how should I live this week/month/year to be blessed?” and getting to know about it should be the spiritual practice of God’s children.

Relationship Given by the New Testament

The blessings of the Old Testament predominantly are received on the basis of a person’s actions. All of them are conditional promises. Every promise of the Old Testament covenant that God gave for the people of Israel was conditional. The New Testament, on the other hand, is totally a different ordinance. The New Testament relationship is not that of a master and his servant. But it is the relationship of a father and son (Romans 8:15). Servants have certain conditions. But the children do not have any conditions. The children’s blessings depend on their fellowship

and relationship. Blessings would be enjoyed by us only on the basis of faith founded on our relationship with God as His children. A father need not give promises to his children. If the children’s relationship with the father is genuine and strong, blessings would automatically reach them. On the first day of a new year, they need not ask the father what he would do for them that year, like a stranger who would ask.

True children of God would act on the basis of their faith on God and not on the promises. They would live with the confidence that God would be with them throughout the year and do what should be done in any situation. On New Year, the people of the church should gather not to hear what God would do for them but to hear what He would ask them to do. It is good if the pastors and preachers stop telling lies under the name of ‘promise’ and pay attention to teach them how to live on the basis of the truth of the New Testament. ■



WHAT IS LOVE?

Love is acting in such a way to exhibit our concern and care for the other person. This is the simplest explanation for love. Since we derive satisfaction and joy while showing our concern and interest for the other person's welfare, we enjoy exhibiting love.

Many are the actions that show the extent of our eagerness and desire to reveal our concern or care for the other person.

Loving Word

Only a few people are able to live without hating others or turning bitter or jealous or inimical towards others. When there is no reason for us to hate or turn bitter against someone, we wish to greet them, welcome them and inquire of them. We inquire about the welfare of certain people; we give them good counsels; we tell them words of concern saying, "Take care of your health; eat well; be happy' and so on.

Showing this kind of love is not difficult and does not involve any expense. However, many do not have even this 'love' which does not need any spending on their part. They do not have the quality to inquire of someone's welfare or greet them. Expense and efforts are not needed to exhibit love every time. For some people, we need not take any pain to give something or do something. At the same time, it is essential that we should greet them, inquire of them

with concern and share thoughts of love with them.

Unaffected Love

Love cannot be exhibited without any effort, all the time. Sometimes, we need to spend a little to do certain deeds to show our love. A man may have Rs.1000/- with him and he may need to give Rs.100/- out of it to someone who is in need of Rs.100/-. Giving hundred rupees to the other man would not be a heavy loss for this man though Rs.100/- would be taken from his saving. However this will not bring him any loss.

This love, that does not affect in any way, cannot be seen in many people. They would not have the quality of giving something to others despite having a lot with them. A particular family had enormous wealth. But they never helped any

known people or relatives who were in need even to a small extent. Rather they wanted to save more and more for their children. Even in a state when they would not lose much by helping them from their riches, some people fail to show their love through even a small act and this is quite regrettable. Such people's name could be listed under the names of the most useless people in the world.

Love that enjoys sharing

During my college days, sometimes, when I did not take lunch with me, one of my friends used to share his lunch with me. Sometimes, I would share my lunch with him, if he did not bring his lunch. At such times, one cannot have a stomach full of food; both would have to accept the shortage of food.





Sometimes, to exhibit our concern on others, we need to have a sharing attitude. We should reduce our own needs a little and give for others. There were two friends. One of them wanted to buy biryani with the money he had. It was then he found that his friend was starving without food. So he dropped his desire to buy biryani and bought vegetarian meals for both of them. This is the method of helping others with what we have.

Some people, if they have the mind, can very well reduce their luxurious life a little and help others. They can draw a limit to their luxurious life and help someone who does not have even basic needs. Some people would greet others, give them words of hope and would assure them of their prayers. But they would never want to lose what they have, even a

little. If we have concern for others, we should also share with them what we have. Some people would pity others; have compassion on them and inquire of them fondly. But since what they have is sufficient only for them, they would not do anything for others. All that the widow of Zarephath had was a handful of flour with which only one bread could be made. Yet she made a small loaf of bread for Elijah because of which there was no lack of flour in her house during the famine.

Sacrificial Love

Sometimes, in certain situations money is not needed to show our concern for others. Mere words are enough! Sometimes, we need to give a little from what we have in plenty, in order to show our love. Sometimes, in

certain situations, we need to lessen our own comforts and share with others.

However, at times, to show and prove that we have concern and care for others, we need to spend a huge amount. A school student, while going to his school, saw a man starving without food. Moved with pity, he gave his lunch to that man and went without food that day. Here, a sacrifice is needed to show love. Sometimes, we can never exhibit our concern for others without undergoing any hardship or loss on our part. This is the experience of showing that a man's love is genuine. Not all situations would prove that a person's love is true. Only when a man is needed to accept a loss or difficulty to show his love, it would be known to be genuine.

When did God manifest His love, as said in the Bible? It does not point out the several good things and miracles that He did for mankind. According to the righteousness of God, a sacrifice is needed in order to redeem a sinner. Hence Jesus Christ came forward to offer Himself as the sacrifice (Romans 5:8). Here, it is not the good thing done by His power but His act of offering Himself as the sacrifice to help a sinner is the ultimate proof for the genuineness of His love. Hence, Jesus said, 'Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends' (John 15:13). Some people, though they may have love as huge as a mountain for someone, would limit their love to

mere words and greetings. Some others, though they would like to do something for love, would do it as a small drop. Some people, though they may have much concern for others, would not be prepared to undertake any difficulty or loss for that. Some people pray with faith that God should bless them with blessings in such a measure that there would not be room enough to receive it. But they would not want to give even a small benefit to others, despite knowing their hardships and loss.

We should not stop with showing love in words, without spending anything. It should not stop with a small help. It should not stop with sharing from what we have. When a situation arises when our concern could be genuinely shown only by undergoing certain loss or difficult, we need to be prepared to do that.

If we have learnt to enjoy God's love within us, the habit to act with constructive love on others would develop in us. Jesus said, "Love another as I have loved you" (John 13:34). True Christians are not those who do certain things in the name of love; but they should show their love for others just as how God loved us and worked for us. We should receive true love by the Spirit of God and enjoy it (Romans 5:5). Then we would be happily prepared to face any hardship or loss to show our concern and care for others. ■

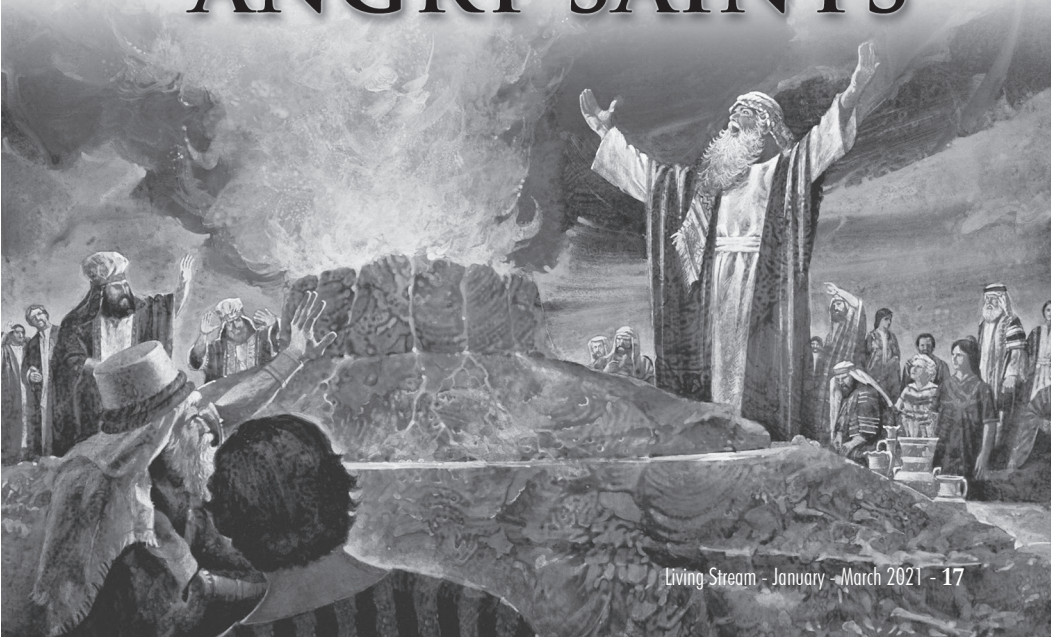
Some people are Christian devotees. They are keenly interested in commitment and a deep spiritual life. They are good; they are righteous; they have all the qualifications to be called as saints. They are disciplined; faithful; simple. They do not harm anyone. They have multifaceted good qualities such as involvement in prayer, Bible meditation, worship, ministry and in living a morally good life.

But they are angry saints. They are righteous people, who are easily provoked. They are hard hearted in such a way that nobody can melt their hardness. They could be compared to John, the Baptist, Elijah and Phinehas. They are not stained by the world. But they would roast anyone, who does not accept their holy principles and teachings. If they find someone, who

does not walk in the holy path, as they do, they would spew live coals of anger from their righteous heart, just as how Elijah brought fire from heavens.

A person may possess many predominant holy identities seen in Jesus. Yet if this person falls short of the holy standard of these 'saints', they would throw him off. They would turn into 'fire saints' if they see someone, who goes against their views and who fails to see as they see about holiness. We should be extremely careful with them. It is difficult for ordinary people to bear the brunt of their righteous anger, saint like zeal and their holy mode of clothing. Yes, they are angry saints. They are zealous righteous people, who can easily throw away anyone.

ANGRY SAINTS



Zealous Saints

Some Christians saints are experts in probing into others' faults and shortcomings and criticizing them. According to them anyone, who shares and agrees with their views, is an angel of God. To them, anyone, who criticizes others for the same reason as they do, is an angel of truth. They would call anyone, who speaks the same teachings of truth, which they speak, as John the Baptist and as Elijah. However, the moment someone disagrees with their belief and points out their mistakes, they would become a lion or tiger. A single fault in someone is enough for them to reject that person and enlist him/her as an unwanted person. They would not be happy with the 99% positive things seen in that person. The single fault seen in that person would be reason enough for them to develop hatred for that person.

Those, who hear their accusation against someone, would believe them. The reason, they are good. Since they do not live in a wrong way, others would believe that what they say is true. Jonah was a good man; but he was strict. He had the right perspective towards wrong doings. He had the mind that good people should live and the bad should be destroyed. But he did not have the good quality of forgiving others and shedding his wrong zeal (Jonah 4:1,2). All he knew was only about the righteousness of God. But he did not know the love of

God. Till his death, he was unforgiving and stood as an example for those who do not want to discard the hardness of their heart. He was as sharp as a knife in the matter related to righteousness. Those who went against righteousness would be put to shame. But he never knew how to bind the wounds of the wounded. Some people's godliness has made them as hard as a rock in the matter concerning their zeal.

They are good people. But they are not the children of God, who are led by the Spirit of God. Their discipline and good deeds are caused by their self-righteous efforts. They are the people, who have sanctified themselves; they practise God's teachings and statutes on their own efforts without having received the salvation experience by His grace.

Since they do not have the work of the Spirit of God and are not habituated to live in a relationship with God, we cannot see in them God's love, patience, forgiving attitude and the humility to shed off unwanted zeal. They can live only a Pharisaic life and not a holy life of love and humility which children of God possess.

Yes, a person may be correct, disciplined, and morally good; yet, without love, kindness and humility which are pleasing to God, there is no use in it. Love and humility born out of our relationship with God is a true, holy life. ■



ROMANCE IS...

Mostly the words ‘romance’ and ‘love’ have the same meaning. Yet practically, both are different.

There could be romance in love but there could be no love in romance. Romance is not just an emotion.

It is a factor. We may not feel the effect of the sun at times; yet this does not mean that there is no sun. Romance is an affection based on emotion and is centered on feelings.

Emotion is not a factor that stays forever. A freshly cooked food item would lose its warmth and would turn cold as time goes by. In the same way, romance too would lose its heat once the situation keeps changing and would become cold. Romance mingled with love alone would be always hot.

Being concerned about another person's welfare and acting in such a way to prove this concern is the act of showing love. On the other hand, romance is that which tries to pull the other person towards one's side out of the compulsive feeling that he/she needs that person.

Love and Romance

On seeing a beautiful portrait, a man says that he likes it very much. The same man, when seeing a plate full of hot mutton biryani, says that he likes it very much. His liking for that beautiful portrait would not change even if he sees it in the morning or evening or night or after two months. The reason, it is a factor and not an emotion. On the other hand, the liking for biryani would be great when a person has hunger pangs. However, the moment his stomach gets filled, his liking for biryani would vanish. Once he gets satiated, he would throw away the morsels remaining in the plate. The reason, his liking for biryani is based on his hunger feeling. Taste is permanent but desire based on emotion is temporary.

Many, who had been passionately in love for 5 or 7 or even 10 years are unable to sustain in their marriage for even 7 or 10 months and head towards divorce. The romance, which was active and hot for 7 years, becomes cold soon, the moment it enters the phase of marriage. The reason for this is, attraction for the opposite sex which is based on emotion, is enough for the field of romance. However, the factor of love or affection is needed for the field of family.

A boy liking a girl and a girl, liking a boy, is not born out of the concern or care for the welfare of the other person. Rather it is formed by the desire caused by the strong force called the attraction of the opposite sex. Romance contains lust, desire, attraction, emotions, urges and





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However, after a particular period of getting married, they would focus more on how their life partner should be in accordance to their expectation than on how happy they are with the fellowship of the opposite sex.

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imagination. On the other hand, 'love' is based on good mentalities such as honesty, good mind set, duty, acceptance, concern, care and respecting the relationship.

Romance is based on one's need and runs its course based on the urges caused by it. A young man could be much interested and passionate with regard to matters related to a young woman. This is not born out of his

much concern and care for her welfare. Even if he is a jealous, proud, crooked, selfish and dishonest person, he could still like a girl with much interest and intensity. This interest is caused by the desire for union with the opposite sex that pressurizes him.

His much interest, much desire and much concern for her and his sweet words, his sacrifice and his act of pursuing her relentlessly are not

because of his good heart. Rather they are the results of the pressure of his desire for the opposite sex which is uncontrollable in him. When a person says that he likes ice cream, that does not mean that he is concerned about the ice cream. His liking for ice cream is not because of his good heart but because of his selfish desire to enjoy a good taste.

Once married...

Two people can successfully fly high on the realm of romance, for several years. They can continue liking each other without disappointment, discontent and displeasure, for many years. This is because, in the matters concerning romance, a man and woman would be more focused on showing their much desire, interest and passion for each other. However, the same man and woman, who like each other till marriage, would not continue in the same atmosphere, once they get married. During their romantic times, they would be keen on making the other person know of their love and finding the signs of this love in the other person and taking efforts to attract each other. Hence, these days would be exciting and full of expectations, fantasy and emotions.

However, the atmosphere after marriage is different. The field of family life is like a mirror. Here, the goodness of the partners alone would not be exposed. Rather, the faults,

goodness, crooked mentality as well as good nature and the real self of the partners would be revealed.

Before I bought an Apple phone, I browsed through several advertisements about it. I wanted to buy it. I visited many shops and waited for the day when I would buy it. Finally, I got it. I was thrilled! I felt happy whenever I saw it. I was impressed with the way of its operation. I was really glad that I had got an Apple phone. But this lasted only for a brief period. In fact, I was disappointed with certain specific features of the phone. Nowadays I use it as a duty and not with the happiness I had in the initial days. In the beginning, I was obsessed with the idea of buying it. Now I am more concerned whether it functions according to my expectation.

The same is the case with man! Before marriage, his mind would be filled with the thought that he needs a woman as his partner. The same thought would be seen in the woman as well. When a young man and woman interact with each other, they would be happy that they have got the companionship of the opposite sex. However, after a particular period of getting married, they would focus more on how their life partner should be in accordance to their expectation than on how happy they are with the fellowship of the opposite sex.

Slowing down of the speed of the attraction of the opposite sex

When the hunger pang is severe, not much importance would be given to the standard of the food. On the other hand, when hunger pangs lessen, the taste and standard of the food would be observed more keenly. In the same way, when the speed of the romantic emotions and the heat of the attraction of the opposite sex lessen, there would be situations where the mentality, character and behaviour of

one's life partner would be observed more and criticized.

It is here, the need for love increases. During romantic period, loving a man or woman was sought predominantly. But, after marriage, under practical situations, the behaviour of the husband/wife is focused more. This is the time when the liking of the husband for his wife and vice versa, comes to light.

Family situations cannot be taken in the path of happiness with merely romantic feelings or with the force of

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For some people, the path of romance might have ended comfortably. Yet, it is a dangerous path. It cannot be said what, when and how the result would be. Misconstruing the strength of romance as the strength of love and acting accordingly, may bring harmful results.

..... ■ ■ ■



attraction of the opposite sex. It is here love becomes necessary. Love is essential to tolerate and accept disappointing things, painful characteristics and provoking mentality that are part of a family life. Love is the nature of a good heart. On the other hand, romance is a natural instinct born of the attraction towards the opposite sex.

Here, it should be understood that a good life could be enjoyed not by actions based on romance but on true love. A man does not need a woman, who likes him. Rather he needs a woman, with a heart of love and who cares for him and his welfare and who accepts him wholly. In the same way, a woman does not need a man, who likes her urged by the force of his attraction for the opposite sex. Instead, she needs a man, who considers her as an important part of his life and accepts her with all her faults and goodness and is thus strong in his love for her.

It is important that one should have this kind of a life partner. Only God can help in this. A loving life partner should be sought, by the grace of God. Many are caught up in the miry clay, not knowing what is true love, since they are carried away by the force of romantic feelings. A hunter does not chase a deer, out of love. Rather he hunts the deer to meet his own need.

For some people, the path of romance might have ended comfortably. Yet, it is a dangerous path. It cannot be said what, when and how the result would be. Misconstruing the strength of romance as the strength of love and acting accordingly, may bring harmful results. Instead of trying to form our life on the basis of our liking for something, it is important that we seek the guidance of God which is needed to raise up a family on the foundation of love. ■



A particular person is extremely good in many ways. Several good qualities could be seen in him. Yet, most people certify that he is short tempered. The reason, he would easily get angry and speak harshly in any matter. Another person is God fearing and has lot of good characteristics and nature; but he spends lavishly in certain things; he would prefer to look glamorous. Many say about him that he is a show off and ostentatious. Yet another person possesses various fine qualities such as love, loyalty, honesty, generosity, simplicity and so on. But he would not tolerate if someone hurts him even slightly. So, he was called to be haughty.

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DUSTS THAT COVER UP GOOD QUALITIES



Others may be good people with excellent qualities; but provoking them in such a way to make them lose their temper and thus making them stumble, is a sin.

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The above people, whom we saw, do have many appreciable qualities; yet they are not appreciated but derided. People fail to see the several good identities in them and instead identify them with the single wrong nature that they see in them. Yes, a single wrong character in a person is shown as his identity, no matter how many other good qualities he may have as his identities.

Provocation and Anger

Dead flies putrefy the perfumer's ointment; so does a little folly to one respected for wisdom and honour' (Ecclesiastes 10:1). A particular restaurant is popular for its tasty and high quality food items; yet these items are not prepared in a hygienic surrounding. The food may be tasty but the surrounding is unhygienic which is wrong. This single factor

repels many people from visiting it for dining.

It is not regrettable when a man, who does not have any good character or deeds is criticized for his shortcomings. But how sad it is when a good person's good qualities lose their value just because of a single wrong character in him! Hence, those who have good qualities and good works in them should be careful that they should not lose the reward for their goodness because of a single wrong character or deed in them. A speck of dirt on a pure white wall would be more visible than the 99% pure whiteness of that wall.

Moses stood aloft with excellent qualities like meekness, humility, sincerity, sacrifice, patience etc., in such a way that nobody could find fault with him. Yet, despite all those good qualities and works, he was overcome by anger for a very short time because of which he lost the chance to step into Canaan, the land of milk and honey.

Excess salt in any tasty food would make it unpalatable and the taste would be lost. A particular man had



several good spiritual qualities. He had a good respect among the church people, friends and the society. But his wife never saw him as a spiritual man. The reason, he had no patience in certain matters and would speak harshly whenever he lost his patience. So his wife felt that such a godly man should not have so much of anger. His friends told him that his wife was right and that it was wrong on his part to lose his patience and yell at her. But he would say, “However patient I am, my wife is an expert in making me lose my patience”

Sometimes, no matter how patient some people are and how meek they may be like Moses was, certain people would easily make them sin by their wrong nature or word or harsh behaviour. Out of their wicked

mentality, the people of Israel, made Moses, who was known for his meekness, to stumble (Numbers 12:3; Psalm 106:33). A person may have many good qualities but we could still cause damage to his fine qualities in some way or the other. Others may be good people with excellent qualities; but provoking them in such a way to make them lose their temper and thus making them stumble, is a sin.

Losing temper alone is not a sin. Provoking someone is also a sin. Getting irritated alone is not a sin; speaking in such a way to annoy others also is a sin. Inducing someone to exhibit his wrong nature, despite possessing several good qualities, and thus hindering him from earning a good name, is also a sin. Certain people’s words, nature and conduct

would compel even saints to lower their high standard of holy qualities. We should be careful not to do something as a stumbling block to others' lives of good qualities.

Should Fight

However, those who should be known for their good qualities, should not discard their qualities citing other people's wrong words or deeds. David, who was living with several godly experiences, had to stumble because of the reckless behaviour of Bathsheba. As a result, he had to be viewed as a wicked man (II Samuel 11:27). He did not lose any of his other good qualities. Since he failed to overcome a temptation that was born of lust, all his fine qualities were covered up.

A particular servant of God was faultless in matters related to money, materials and comforts. His godliness and matters concerning his ministry were clean. Yet, he failed to overcome a sin related to lust because of which everyone saw him as a wrong person.

Some people do have good qualities; good characteristics; they do have appreciable good deeds. Yet these are not visible to anyone's eyes. Some shortcoming or some weakness settles down on their good qualities as dusts and hides their good appearance. Once, when I went to a gift shop to buy a gift, I could not find anything that appealed to me. Nothing appeared presentable to me. But when the shop

keeper wiped away the dust on those items, I could see that they looked really good.

Sometimes, certain people's good qualities and works cannot be destroyed no matter how hard satan tries to do that. But he makes them stumble in a particular thing. He makes them lose some good quality. He makes them speak some wrong words. They are good; but a wrong nature, wrong deeds, and a wrong habit covers their good appearance, as dusts.

Balaam had integrity and loyalty (Numbers 22:18). Yet he had no principles concerning money. Hence there was no reward for his good standard. Joseph excelled in good qualities. He had to confront a temptation related to lust which entered his life as dust to cover up his good qualities. But he was careful to prevent his holy standard from getting covered up by that dust (Genesis 39:9).

Yes, we should not be lethargic over the good qualities that we have. We should be careful that anything – a wrong character, habit or uncontrollable emotion – should not cover up our good qualities. We should be vigilant in the presence of God in order that our good qualities should not be covered up by anything. ■

THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. WHEN AND HOW?

Continuation...

**In the New Testament period, the Holy Spirit
was poured down in the way foretold by His prophets,
in the Old Testament time (Joel 2:28).**

**As the Lord Jesus Christ has been continually
telling His disciples, it was the beginning
of the time when believers would receive
the Holy Spirit as promised by God.**

In the initial days, when the Holy Spirit was poured down, certain incidents happened in such a way that the people would understand about the God given Holy Spirit. Places such as Jerusalem, Samaria, the house of Cornelius, Ephesus etc., are significant for this. Believers started speaking in tongues in order to understand the truth that the gift of the Holy Spirit is given to those who believe and accept the Lord Jesus Christ.

The believers of the above places spoke in tongues as a token of having

received the Holy Spirit. Based on this, many churches have formed several teachings on speaking in tongues. As a result, it is taught that anyone who receives the anointing of the Holy Spirit would speak in tongues and that 'tongues' is the sign of having received the anointing.

At the same time, in the initial days when the Holy Spirit was poured down, the incidents of speaking in tongues and the way in which the believer was led to speak in tongues in each incident, had a purpose of

“In the early times, elievers received the Holy Spirit, the moment the Apostles placed their hands on them and prayed. However, nothing happens here, even when these servants of God, brought to the churches, conduct anointing meetings for several hours and take the gathering to an excited level, by singing many songs.”

God behind that. For example, when the day of Pentecost arrived, for the very first time, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples of Jesus, who had gathered in the upper room (Acts 2:3). It was the first incident where the Holy Spirit was poured down on earth, as promised. That time, they spoke about the wonderful works of God, in tongues. Godly Jews from different nations, were amazed to hear them speaking in their own respective languages (Acts 2:7,8).

If teachings have to be formed, based on this incident, it should be then taught that anyone who has received the Holy Spirit, should speak in another language known to others. However, today, the tongues spoken by many and by those who claim that speaking in tongues is the identity of the anointing of the Holy Spirit, is not the language known to anyone else. In Pentecostal churches, many could be seen speaking in tongues. Yet the language spoken by them is not the language spoken anywhere else.

In the same way, the Holy Spirit came upon the non- Jewish godly people, who had gathered in the house

of Cornelius, as they were listening to the preaching of Peter (Acts 10:44). Here it is not said that that time they went forward to accept Jesus as a result of hearing the gospel. They had not taken baptism then. Even as they were listening to the gospel message, they were led by the Holy Spirit and they received the godly ability to speak in tongues. How would be the teaching that is formed, based on this incident? It would be said that one can receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues, even before one can take baptism and confess that he has accepted the Lord Jesus as his Saviour.

The Apostles saw those who had accepted Jesus and who had taken baptism in Samaria had not received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15). When they kept their hands on them and prayed, they received the Holy Spirit. Here it is not written that those who received the Holy Spirit, spoke in tongues. But they would have surely spoken in tongues as a confirmation of having received the Holy Spirit. That's why Simon, who saw the things that happened there, wanted to receive the authority to give the Holy Spirit like

the Apostles did (Acts 8:18,19). The same experience happened to the 12 disciples in Ephesus.

What would happen if the teachings related to the Holy Spirit are formed on the basis of the above two incidents? Ministers of God should place their hands on anyone who has received Jesus and pray and that only then he/she would receive the Holy Spirit with tongues as the sign. However, today nothing happens no matter how many pastors and ministers of God keep their hands on people and pray for any number of times. Some pastors bring to their churches certain ministers of God, who are reputed for having anointing power. In the early times, believers received the Holy Spirit, the moment the Apostles placed their hands on them and prayed. However, nothing happens here, even when these servants of God, brought to the churches, conduct anointing meetings for several hours and take the gathering to an excited level, by singing many songs. Why is it that the things that happened in Ephesus, do not happen today, for everyone?

It is not correct for us to have these three incidents as the basic ways for receiving the Holy Spirit. What has been taught by Jesus and the Apostles

concerning the Holy Spirit should be the base and not such incidents. There are three purposes of God behind the incidents that are mentioned above.

Tongues and God's Purpose

When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples who had gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem, they received the ability to speak about the wonderful works of God in other languages. As a result, the Jews from different nations who had gathered there, got the chance to know about the truth of the pouring down of the Holy Spirit



on the earth, as promised by God. The incident of the disciples speaking in other languages through their supernatural ability, made them understand that God had done something special on earth. Till then, they had no idea about the pouring down of the Holy Spirit. Hence God did thus in order to enlighten them through a special sign.

When Peter was preaching in the house of Cornelius, the Holy Spirit

came upon all those who were there. Receiving the Holy Spirit, even while listening to messages, is not a common teaching related to the method of people receiving the Holy Spirit. God, who made such incidents happen, had certain purposes behind it.

Peter and other Jews had to know that the gifts of grace and benefits given by God are not only for the Jews but also for those who are considered to be heathens (Acts 10:15; 46,47).

The heathens had to know that the Lord Jesus Christ came as a

in other nations, had absolutely no awareness about the Holy Spirit and receiving His anointing. The believers of Ephesus did not even hear about the presence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:2). Hence, in order that they should understand, it was necessary that something had to be done. So, God made them speak in tongues and enabled them to get confirmed that they have received the Holy Spirit. Yet, the Bible does not endorse this as the way to receive the Holy Spirit.

In those days, there were not enough knowledge about the Holy Spirit or the chance to hear several testimonies regarding it and there were not any books that contained the teachings related to the Holy Spirit. Hence it was necessary in those days to make them know about the truth of receiving the Holy Spirit



Saviour not only to the Jews but also to the people of the whole world.

Yes, this incident was to make them realize that God loves everyone and accepts all. It is not to be understood that one can receive the anointing and speak in tongues even while listening to messages.

When the Apostles prayed for the believers, who had accepted Jesus in Samaria and Ephesus, they received the Holy Spirit. They, who were living

through certain special signs.

Tongues and Signs of Anointing

However, today, understanding the things related to receiving the Holy Spirit on the basis of the above three incidents and expecting to receive Him would not be correct on our part. The Lord spoke through the words of Peter. Those, who believe the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him will receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Those who hear the gospel and

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become believes will be sealed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). Hence, anyone, who believes that he has accepted Jesus should also believe that he has received the Holy Spirit and the anointing in Him. Anyone, who has received salvation should believe that he has been sealed by the Holy Spirit and His anointing.

In early days, many, who had received the Holy Spirit confirmed it by speaking in tongues, but it was never said that speaking in tongues alone is the sign of having received the Holy Spirit. If that had been the case, surely the Apostles would have importantly taught about receiving the Holy Spirit with the sign of speaking in tongues. The question raised by Paul as to whether everybody was speaking in tongues conveys the fact that there were believers, who had received the Holy Spirit without the sign of speaking in tongues (I Corinthians 12:30).

In the bygone times, certain powerful servants of God, did not have the habit of speaking in tongues. Similarly, many other powerful servants of God have had the habit of speaking in tongues.

It is wrong to say that there is no such thing as tongues, just because

famous servants of God did not speak in tongues. In the same way it is wrong to say that anyone who has received the Holy Spirit, should speak in tongues, just because many great servants of God spoke in tongues. What the Bible says about this is more important.

There is no Biblical evidence to show that the gift of speaking in tongues ended with the period of the early Apostles. Today, the spiritual standard and conduct of most of the people who speak in tongues, clearly show that the tongues they speak is not born out of the Spirit of God. Yet it cannot be said that everyone who has the experience of speaking in tongues, speak without the Holy Spirit.

It is necessary that matters related to tongues should be seen in the light of the Scriptures and understood correctly. The gift of tongues could be there in a person who is ruled and led by the Holy Spirit. At the same time, it is not healthy to have tongues as the measuring scale for the filling of the Holy Spirit and His anointing. A person speaking in ‘tongues’ and making such noises could be because of a genuine, excited state brought by the reign of the Holy Spirit. It could

also be the result of an excitement induced by artificial ways. Or, it could also be the result of training the mouth to utter such noises. Hence, under the current situation, a person cannot confirm that he has received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, for the reason that he speaks in tongues. The Bible too does not teach so. Many churches have shown speaking in tongues as the measuring scale of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. As a result of this, lot of believers have not truly received true Holy Spirit and they are ignorant of the works of the Holy Spirit. The eyes of many people are blinded to the way of receiving the Holy Spirit by faith since they have been induced to believe that speaking in tongues is the sign of receiving the Holy Spirit.

Are Tongues of Two Types?

Today, many pastors and evangelists gather a crowd of people, stir up their excitement by vigorously beating the drums and train the people to blabber something as a form of tongues and then they give the certificate that the believers have received the Holy Spirit. After this, when they speak something as tongues in a state of excitement, during the worship times, believers believe that they have been filled with the anointing. Having this experience as the measuring scale, they believe that they have received the anointing. However, that which is connected to the anointing of the Spirit with regard to one's thoughts, actions, nature and desires has not happened. Yet, they do

not measure their spiritual experiences with the scale of the standard of the life they lead; instead they measure the anointing with the scale of the sounds they raise as tongues. Hence, they remain strangers to the dominance of the Holy Spirit, all through their lives.

Today, in several churches, the pastors take efforts to create an emotional and exciting worship atmosphere. Through this they make the believers believe that they have been filled with mighty filling of the Spirit. At such atmosphere, these pastors encourage the believers to speak and praise in tongues. However, Apostle Paul, who realized the eagerness of the believers in the church of Corinth to speak in tongues, expressed a contrary idea. We see this in the Bible.

Apostle Paul said that tongues could be spoken by two or three persons and that too only if it could be interpreted (I Corinthians 14:27,28). This was because the tongues spoken in the church of Corinth was not similar to the language spoken in the early Jerusalem, which could be understood by others. The tongues spoken in the church of Corinth had the nature to bring edification only to him, who spoke it. But it was Paul's advice that while gathering as assembly, such gifts which will not be of use to others, should not be used in the church (I Corinthians 14:4).

However, the activities of today's church contradict the good counsels

given by God, through Paul. Paul advised not to use the gift of tongues which is not of use to others, in the church; but today's pastors encourage the believers to speak in tongues which is not of use to others, in the church.

Many pastors give different explanations for this. They say that 'tongues' is of two types. They say that the sign of speaking in tongues is different from the gift of tongues. They further say that the tongues spoken by the disciples in Jerusalem was a sign whereas the tongues spoken in the church of Corinth was a gift. According to them, the tongues that come under the category of gift was spoken in the Corinth church and Paul did not want this to be spoken by all, in the church. In other words, one can sing and praise in tongues which has been received as a sign; but not everyone should speak the tongues, received as a gift.

However, there is no Biblical evidence to prove this theory. It is as if they are adamant not to change this teaching formed on their own, even if God tells them to change it. Whether it was in Jerusalem or Samaria or Ephesus or in the house of Cornelius, the tongues spoken was activated by God as a sign of the work of the Holy Spirit.

At the same time, speaking in tongues is beneficial only to the

person, who speaks it. Or else, the interpretation of the spoken tongues has to be given as a clear message for the people, who have gathered (I Corinthians 14:13). But there is no incident in the New Testament that show a believer speaking in tongues and another believer interpreting it. Paul did not say that it is wrong to speak in tongues. Neither did he forbid it. Tongues may be a thing between a believer and God. By this, the believer might be encouraged spiritually and get edified. However, this is not of use to another person's godliness. Hence, it is not healthy for the church when many gather and speak in tongues. This is not fit for a spiritual and holy atmosphere.

Paul asks if everybody was speaking in tongues. If we observe his question, it could be understood that Paul did not show any difference between tongues as a sign and as a gift. Not willing to leave their traditional teaching method, today's Pentecostal churches give a different unbiblical explanation for this just as how those days' Jews despised God's laws as they were enslaved by their Jewish traditions. It is a fact that any church that encourages their congregation to praise and speak in tongues and create a different exciting atmosphere is despising the disciplined advice of the Spirit of the Lord, given through Apostle Paul. ■



CULT MOVEMENTS A WARNING

Movements that are defined by their own religious beliefs, unusual religious rituals and spiritual principles are called as cult movements. Anyone, who enters into this movement should strictly follow their methods of beliefs, practices and rules and regulations, without questioning.

Many Christian organizations that are based on Christian beliefs, teachings and tradition are also cultish in nature. The reason, they expect everyone to follow what is offered as the teachings, principles and practices of their organization, without raising any questions.

Many Christian organizations like Jehovah Witness, Bible Students, Seventh Day Adventists, The Pentecostal Churches etc., have cultish nature. Such organizations do not approve of any other churches or organizations. Those who belong to these claim that their beliefs, their teachings, their explanations and the

practices followed by them with regard to godliness, are correct. They would mostly call themselves as a small flock, the remnant people of God. They say that they alone would be taken up by God and that they alone would inherit the things prepared by God for them. They would identify all those who do not believe in their beliefs, who do not walk in the path of their teachings and who do not follow their religious practices as antichrists.

Brain washing

Since they speak Biblical matters and expound the verses from the Bible and show themselves to be acting with Christian zeal, many believe that their

deceiving teachings and preaching are correct. In recent times, many cult movements have been formed in countries like America, England, Canada and Africa. Some organizations have grown worldwide, within a very short span. Today, there are many cult churches and organizations in Chennai too.

Today, orthodox churches have become mere traditional clubs which are based only on rituals and customs. Today, Pentecostal churches develop believers only in a worship experience where emotions and a sense of power is felt. Hence, today's Christian churches have failed to make the believers gain knowledge in proper truths, principles and Biblical teachings. Since they do not have a clarity about truth, or have a proper knowledge about Biblical teachings and do not have any conviction about matters related to God, the cult movements easily hunt most of these people. Through brain washing and other mind controlling techniques, these cults ensnare many people.

Mostly, the cult movements take those who are impressed by their doctrines and teachings deeper into their own principles, formed by themselves. Teaching these principles repeatedly, they make people's mind sink deeply into it. Their teachings are not centered on the essence of Biblical truths or teachings.

To prove the teachings and doctrinal principles that they have formed on their own, they would find

proof texts from the Bible, that are advantageous to their theory. When they thus show the verses as the proof, those who hear them would surrender easily, being convinced that what they say is correct. They will not give importance to personal fellowship with God, to knowing Him, transformation of nature, growing in godliness, repentance etc., Instead they would force their own teachings into others and would be keen on convincing others to believe their explanations. Hence, those who enter into their teaching experience cannot come out of it since they would plunge deeper into it. Anyone, who is attracted by the brain washing teaching methods of these cult movements, would mostly lose the freedom of mind to think what is right and wrong. Everything would appear red to him, who wears red glasses. Those, who have been caught up in the snare of the teachings of churches that are based on this particular kind of teaching begin to think of and understand everything based on the ideas of the wrong teachings taught to them.

Teachings that separate them from Relationships

Generally, these cult churches or movements depart from Scriptural teachings that have been accepted since a long time and form specific explanations and expositions and develop various religious laws of their own. They will not understand the measure of a person's godliness on the

basis of his nature, transformation, good qualities, service regularities, love, patience, and humility. Rather, they would measure godliness on the basis of a person's knowledge on expounding the teachings. They would highlight only a few teachings as very important. They would not be concerned even if the other teachings in the Scriptures are trampled under the feet. For example, being separated for the Lord (Leviticus 20:26) and not giving priority to relationships with parents, friends and relatives (Matthew 10:37) are important Biblical teachings. At the same time, teachings such as 'Children, obey your parents. Honour your father and mother' (Ephesians 6:1) are important teachings of the Bible.

These cult movements would act as if they are prioritizing the teaching of being separate and would thus disregard the teaching of honouring the parents. Pretending to follow the teachings of giving profit to the parents, those days' Pharisees washed off their hands from their fundamental duty for their parents (Matthew 15:1-6). In the same way, under the guise of 'godliness', these cult movements separate many from their parents, families and other necessary friends' circle.

Many are thus separated by these cultish churches with the view that relationship of parents, siblings and others are not important. Some, deny their parents. Some refuse to get married. Some reject their families and

are content with Faith Homes. Some cult teachings break even the relationship between a husband and wife. When relationships with parents, family and others act as hurdles for us to live in accordance to the Lord's teachings and to have fellowship with Him and inherit the eternal life, it is indeed necessary that we should overcome that hurdle. At the same time, many disregard their parents and family unnecessarily, for the sake of the teachings and mind controlling restraints of these cultish movements and churches. Thus they become children of God's wrath.

The Signs of Cult Churches' Teachings

There are a few signs to find out whether a church or organization is cultish. Let us see the common signs or identities seen in most of the cult churches.

Thrusting Authority

Churches and organization that are cultish would enforce perfect obedience on everyone, who has joined their movement or church. The need to submit themselves to the leadership of these cults without raising any questions, would be forced upon. It is the tradition of these cult movements to use their power and authority excessively on everyone, under the guise of 'perfect obedience'

No Freedom:

The members who have joined these churches and movements would be watched beyond limit under the

pretext of 'concern'. They would be stripped off their freedom to think and act on their own. At the same time, they cannot criticize the leaders or ask any clarification from them on what is right or wrong.

Fear:

These cult movements and churches would bring those who join them into the grip of some kind of fear. Hence, out of fear, they would not leave these cultish churches or movements, even if they find that these cults are in the wrong.

Ignoring Criticism:

Those who have joined such cultish churches and movements would be criticized that their practices, conduct and teachings are against the truth and the Scriptural words; but it is difficult to thus criticize and correct them since they are taught that such criticisms should be accepted for the sake of God.

Teachings that Separate them from Parents:

Mostly, the teachings of these cultish movements have the tendency to separate their members from the justifiable domination of the parents. Those, who hear such teachings, would be encouraged to think that leaving their parents would be an act of godliness.

Remnant Generation:

Churches and movements that are cultish would be encouraged to believe

that they are a group of people who are remnant people for God. They teach that they are the only generation of remnant people. Hence, those, who do not come within the circle of their teaching would be shown as those who are rejected and forsaken by God.

Thrusting the Teachings:

Those, who join the cult churches that form their own unique laws of teaching would be brain washed to think according to the mind of their church or organizations and to view and understand things as viewed and understood by these cultish movements. Their teachings would be in such a way that the members would lose their ability and freedom to think and analyse things on their own. The nature of these movements' teachings would be in such a way to control the mind of the members.

Special Revelation:

Rejecting the common Scriptural truths, these cult movements would thrust their own teachings into the minds of the members saying that they are secret revelations given to them or that they are hidden truths or that they are special revelations given only to them.

An Exclusive Crowd:

By following a specific kind of food habit, wearing particular type of clothing and through their quirky conduct and mannerism, they want to show themselves as an exclusive crowd. ■

SAMSON PAUL'S BOOKS IN TAMIL

1. சந்தோஷத்தின் வழிகள்	ரூ. 65
2. இறை ஆசியுடன் இனிய குடும்பம்	ரூ. 100
3. வெளிச்சத்தில் வெளிப்படும் உண்மைகள்	ரூ. 60
4. வழிகாட்டும் சிந்தனைகள்	ரூ. 50
5. சிலுவையில் இயேசுவின் இதய ஓசைகள்	ரூ. 60
6. நம்பிக்கையில் சந்தோஷமாயிருங்கள்	ரூ. 25
7. பரிசுத்த வாழ்வின் பாதையில்	ரூ. 25
8. துதிமலர்கள் ஆயிரம் *	-
9. நாம் ஏன் ஜெபிக்க வேண்டும்? *	-
10. தேவன் அங்கீகரிக்கும் ஜெபம்	ரூ. 65
11. ஆராதனையும் அனுதின வாழ்க்கையும்	ரூ. 80
12. விசுவாசத்தின் பிரதிபலிப்புகள்	ரூ. 60
13. சிலுவையின் பாதையில் சில மனிதர்கள் *	-
14. துக்கம் சந்தோஷமாக மாறும்	ரூ. 25
15. ஆசீர்வாதங்கள் தடைபடுவது ஏன்?	ரூ. 25
16. கிறிஸ்தவம் பேச்சில் அல்ல... செயலில்	ரூ. 60
17. வல்லமையாக ஜெபிப்பது எப்படி? *	-
18. சிந்தையை சீராக்கும் சிந்தனைகள்	ரூ. 55
19. யார் என்னைத் தேற்ற முடியும்?	ரூ. 50
20. மனந்திரும்பியது உண்மையா?	ரூ. 60
21. சிலுவையில் அறையப்படும் சத்தியங்கள்	ரூ. 50
22. உண்மையான ஆராதனை	ரூ. 55
23. கலங்காதே மனமே கலங்காதே *	-
24. சத்திய சிந்தனை முத்துக்கள் *	-
25. ஆசீர்வாதத்தின் அடித்தளங்கள் *	-
26. தேவனுடைய மனிதர்கள் எங்கே? எங்கே? *	-
27. வாலிப வயதுகளில் நீ *	-
28. துன்பங்கள் ஏன்? ஏன்?	ரூ. 50
29. கண்ணீரின் காலங்களில்	ரூ. 50
30. விசுவாசமா? வியாபாரமா?	ரூ. 50
31. சிந்திக்கத் தூண்டும் சிந்தனைகள்	ரூ. 50
32. ஆராதனை என்றால் என்ன?	ரூ. 60
33. காதல் சரியா? தவறா?	ரூ. 60
34. சோர்ந்து போகாதே மனமே	ரூ. 60
35. தேவ உறவினால் வாழும் வாழ்க்கை	ரூ. 60
36. அக்கினி வார்த்தைகள்	ரூ. 60
37. மனநிலைகள் மாறாணுமே	ரூ. 50
38. கிறிஸ்தவன் இங்கே, கிறிஸ்தவம் எங்கே?	ரூ. 60

39. சிந்தனைத் தோட்டத்தில் சிறுமலர்கள்	ரூ. 60
40. அர்த்தமுள்ள ஆவிக்குரிய வாழ்க்கை	ரூ. 60
41. உண்மையைச் சொல்கிறேன் இது கிறிஸ்தவம் அல்ல	ரூ. 60
42. எப்படி வாழ்ணும் கிறிஸ்தவ வாழ்க்கை	ரூ. 60
43. வாலிபத்தை பாதுகாப்பது எப்படி?	ரூ. 60
44. நீங்களும் உங்கள் பிள்ளைகளும்	ரூ. 35
45. வித்தியாசமான விகிரகங்கள்	ரூ. 35
46. தேவனுக்காக வாழ்வது என்றால்	ரூ. 35
47. ஆவிக்குரிய வாழ்க்கை எதற்காக?	ரூ. 35
48. இறை உறவினால் வாழும் குடும்பம்	ரூ. 70
49. தேவனால் ஆசீர்வதிக்கப்பட வழிகள்	ரூ. 70
50. நான் ஏன் வாழ வேண்டும்?	ரூ. 60
51. இது சத்தியமா, சிந்தியுங்கள்!	ரூ. 60
52. கிறிஸ்தவ வாழ்க்கை என்றால் என்ன?	ரூ. 70
53. சத்தியத்தின் வெளிச்சத்தில்	ரூ. 60
54. திருச்சபை என்பது எதற்காக?	ரூ. 70
55. மனந்திரும்புதலும் மறுபடி பிறத்தலும்	ரூ. 80
56. பரிசுத்தமாக வாழச் செய்வது எது?	ரூ. 80
57. பரிசுத்த ஆவியின் அபிஷேகம் எப்போது? எப்படி?	ரூ. 80
58. கேட்டாலும் கேளாவிட்டாலும்	ரூ. 80
59. வலிமையான நம்பிக்கைகள்	ரூ. 70
60. உண்மை கிறிஸ்தவ அடையாளங்கள்	ரூ. 70

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