

*"Father,
change our hearts to understand that
we can achieve nothing through
violence,
but everything through love....
Stop us from dividing groups,
but teach us to see the beauty of
Diversity..."*

Says Karthik of the University of Peradeniya as he reflected on the time spent together with students from the different campuses in May 2010. The National Camp was undoubtedly the highlight of the quarter just past and the middle pages of this issue of SCOPE have been dedicated to reporting on that time of meeting together.

Another student Namali, challenges us in her article Taking God Everywhere "to stop separating the classroom text from the Bible and the Bible from the rest of our lives." As we as a Nation celebrate the first year anniversary of the end of a 25 - 30 year civil war during the month of June, we have taken up Namali's challenge and have two graduates contributing in this issue of SCOPE as to how we may need to think anew with regard to this civil conflict and the way we celebrate its end in light of God's word and His notion of Justice. I would encourage you to read and re-read the reflection on 2 Samuel 1 and Prof Jude Fernando's introductory writing on this issue and take seriously Namali's challenge that we craft our thinking, being and doing on everything - simple or complex; sensitive in terms of the

personal or political on the basis of what matters to the one we worship!

This issue of SCOPE begins the serialization of Dr Noel Somasundaram's writing on the relationship between Work and Worship - something that is central to the FOCUS ministry and which needs to be thought about and applied right through our lives. He poses to us two questions in his introduction that we would all do well to bear in mind as we make decisions on what we do with our lives. Kolitha, our staff worker in Peradeniya and who oversees the fledgling work at Rajarata and Uva-Wellassa reflects on the key elements that make up a part of our Sunday worship as a community of believers. Please pray for Kolitha as he develops Sunday worship at the Peradeniya chaplaincy.

Page 13 has the GCF committee inviting us to "waste time with God" together in the month of October. Given our busy lifestyles, we should consider taking this invitation seriously and intentionally set apart time for rest and reflection.

We say goodbye to both Anushke and Achini. Anushke has been with us for 1 year and 8 months and has overseen the work at Moratuwa University in addition to developing the focus web site and helping out wherever he was needed. He will be missed not only for his work with the students but for his ready smile, willingness to help out whenever and wherever, great love for food and wise

counsel (do the two go together I wonder) and deep care and concern for the students he interacted with. Achini who has spent the last 6 months as staff has enthused us with her enthusiasm and commitment to prayer. She was the staff worker who visited Sri J'pura regularly and she will be missed there as they find their feet as a fellowship without her. We send them with a commitment to pray for them as Anushke pursues his post graduate studies and Achini begins a new phase of her life with her (new!) husband in Abu Dhabi.

We have to thank God for a team of students and graduates who have agreed to become the editorial board for SCOPE from its next issue. We would like to see more of SCOPE being written in Sinhala and Tamil and we would welcome contributions in all three languages. We also have a real and urgent need for translators and typesetters, and we would gratefully accept offers of help in this area of need!

SCOPE as we know it will not be SCOPE without Diyan who comes alive when he has to put it all together and create the final product! Thanking not only Diyan, but all the contributors to this issue of SCOPE and with prayer that it will become a publication that will nurture and challenge both our student and graduate body... and one that we will all look forward to receiving...

Savithri Sumanthiran



For circulation
among Graduates
and Students of
FOCUS
Only

THE SCOPE
Quarterly newsletter published by FOCUS

July 2010

Taking God Everywhere

What's inside....

- 2 Taking God Everywhere
- 3 තම ඇතුළත් පුද්ගලික දේවිඋන් කැමැදීම
- 4 New Books in FOCUS Library
- 5 ජාතික කැඳවුරු
- 6 Movie review
- 6 The revealing Statue
- 7 Reflection on 2Samuel 1
- 8 National Camp 2010
- 10 Reflections on camp from Jaffna
- 11 Work & Worship
- 12 GCF news
- 14 Fellowship news

By the time most of us get to university, we've been completely brainwashed. First our parents, then our teachers and to some extent our friends play such a huge role in determining what we believe that by the time we're undergraduates we don't know how to differentiate our own thoughts from those of others around us. So university, they say, is going to undo all this "teaching" and train us how to "think". Once we leave with a rolled up piece of paper that gives us yet another label (that of "educated degree-holder"), we're supposed to be the sole owners of our own minds. Sounds good so far. But what really happens? As a student of the humanities, all I can say is that what you see is *not* what you get. Typically, or ideally, a university will teach you the accepted norms, and then teach you to question it. So we learn about racism and political anarchy, language and hegemony, sexism and contradictory ideologies; we also learn about the body and the mind, truth and falsehood, God and man. Then we are told: there is no right and wrong, you make your own 'Soup a la Life' and try to impress us. So we undergraduates who were so comfortable being brainwashed are suddenly forced to make choices we don't know whether we even want to make. The freedom is ours, but the whole thing is really a trap. Now I see you raising your eyebrows. University is a period of freedom where the mind-shackles are removed, where you become adults, and you let your soul become what *you* want it to be. But think about this:

1. How many of us feel comfortable holding on to the traditional belief that there are fundamental differences between men and women?
2. How many of us feel comfortable saying that "I believe my mother knows best for me"?
3. How many of us feel comfortable saying that the universe was created by an all-powerful God, and then

admitting that we don't really know *how exactly*?

4. How many of us are comfortable saying that at the end of the day there *are* fundamental truths, and there is one ultimate Truth?

I don't think there are many of us in these groups. Even if there are, there are even *less* of us that are comfortable holding and *asserting* these opinions in the classroom where the mantra is feminism, post-modernism, post-structuralism, agnosticism, sexual liberalism, relativism and every other "ism" anybody ever came up with. True we have the freedom to choose what we want; but we are also subtly told what we *should* want.

Colossians 1:19-20 tells us that "*it pleaseth the Father...by him to reconcile all things to himself*"; does this not mean that these issues we face in the classroom *can* be reconciled to God? Then if through Christ all things *are* reconciled to God, do we see the truth of this statement in our classrooms at university? If we don't, then what are we doing about it? What are we doing to gain the necessary knowledge and Biblical understanding that allows us to *reconcile* these apparently irreconcilable issues of "modern education"? Do we even *care*?

As Christian Students struggling to hold our ground on a firm faith in God and Christian precepts, in a world that is constantly changing, life is full of contradictions. But we need to start facing these contradictions and figuring them out for ourselves, just like we do with everything else that we come across in our studies. We need to stop separating the classroom text from the Bible and the Bible from the rest of our lives. We need to start incorporating Christian values into what we discuss in classrooms, what we write in our essays and what we say in our exam answers. We need to start being Christians *every* where we are.

Namali Premawardhana
University of Peradeniya

“ As Christian Students struggling to hold our ground on a firm faith in God and Christian precepts, in a world that is constantly changing, life is full of contradictions. ”

තම ඇතුළත්ත පුද්ගලයෙහි දෙවිඋන් නැමදීම.

අප කෙතරම් කාර්යක්ෂම උපකරණ භාවිතා කල ද ආදී මිනිසාට වඩා අප අද දින බොහෝ සේ කාර්ය බහුලය. දිනක් මාගේ මිතුරකු පැවසුයේ ඔහු කෙතරම් කාර්ය බහුලද යත්, තම මරණයට හැර පිවිසියේ අන් සියළු කාරණා වලට කාල සීමාවන් (ඩෙඩ් ලයිනස්) පැන වි ඇති බවය.

මේ කාර්ය බහුලත්වය හේතුවෙන්, අපේ පිවිසි තුල වූ සන්සුන්භාවය අප හැර ගොස් ඇත. සන්සුන් හදවතක් නැති අපට අද මුහුණ දීමට සිදු වී ඇති ප්‍රධාන ගැටළුව නම්, සමීඋන් සොයා යාමට ඇති බාධාවයි. මෙම ස්වභාවය පහත සඳහන් ගිහිකාවෙන් මනාව පැහැදිලි වේ.

. නිසංසල ලොවේ දෙවිඋ මුණ ගැසේ එකා මෙකා කඩිමුඩියේ දුවන ලොව තුල්ලේ මහ හඬ නකා වෙඩි අවුලා සටන් වැදී ලොවේ - දෙවිඋ හමු නොවේ "

. හමුවිය හැකි බැවින් සමීඋන් සොයා යන්න." යෙසායා 55 : 6 හි යෙසායා දවැසිවරයා පවසා ඇතත්, අප පිවිසි වෙළා ගෙන ඇති මෙම කාර්ය බහුලත්වය තුළ සමීඋන් සොයා යාම අද මිරිඟුවක් බවට පත්ව ඇත. මෙම කාර්ය බහුලත්වයට හේතුව අපගේ පිවිසි අරක් ගත් නිවැරදි නොවන ප්‍රමුඛතාවයන් විය හැක. උදෙසක් ම අවදි වී, දෙවියන්වහන්සේ සමඟ කාලය ගත කිරීමට වේලාවක් අප වෙන් නොකළේ නම්, මුළු දිනය පුරාවට ඒ සඳහා කාලයක් සොයා වෙතෙසීම නිර්වික ක්‍රියාවකි. දුරකථන ඇමතුම් හා එස්.එම්.එස්. පණිවුඩ ද එයට බාධාවක් වනු ඇත. රාත්‍රී නින්දට පෙර දිනය පුරාවට සිදු වූ සිදුවීම්, කළ කටා බහ, හමුවන පුද්ගලයින් ගැන සිහිකර, සියල්ල දෙවිඋන් හමුවට භාරකර, උන්වහන්සේ ට තුනි දෙන හදවතකින් නින්දට පිවිසීමට අපට අද ඉස්පාසුවක් නැත. දවස පුරා රාජකාරි කටයුතු නිමවා, හැඳිවලං, පිගන් සෝදා, දරුවන්ගේ කටයුතු අහවර කර, ඇඳට ගොඩවෙද්දී දැස් පියවී හමාරය. විටෙක ගිණයන් ද තමාට ඇති පැවරුම් හමාර කොට නින්දට යන්නේ පාන්දර පහේ කෝපිවියන් ගිය පසුය. බොහෝ විට කාරණා එලෙස වුවද, නිවැරදි ප්‍රමුඛතාවයකින් තොරව, අන්තර් ජාලය තුළ රස්තියාදුවීම, ෆේස් බුක් තුළ හිරවීම, රූපවාහිනිය ඉදිරියේ අතරමං වීමද මෙයට හේතු විය හැක. අපේ සන්සුන්භාවයට මේ කිනම් ආකාරයකින් බාධා ඇති වුවද, දේව දරුවන් ලෙස උන්වහන්සේ අභිමුඛ

යාමට අප හදවත් තුළ ඇති ආශාව තවම අපෙන් බැහැර නොකිරීමට තරම් දෙවියන්වහන්සේ ආකාරණික වී නැත. උන්වහන්සේ අභිමුඛට යාමට අප කෙතරම් ආශා වුවද, අප හදවත උන්වහන්සේ නැමදීම සඳහා පුද්ගලයන් බවට පත් කිරීමට තරම් නිසංසල බවක් අප සතුව නොතිබේ. අපගේ වංචලභාවයෙන් මිදී ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේ හා අපේ සමීඛන්ධතා ගැඹුරත්වයක් කරා ගෙන ඒමට යම් කාලයක් ගත කිරීම හා දිනය පුරාවට අපගේ පිවිසි උන්වහන්සේ හා සහභාගිත්වයක් ඇතුළු සිටීම යන කාරණා දෙකම ඉතා වැදගත් සත්‍යයන් දෙකකි.

අපගේ කාර්යය බහුල පිවිසි රටාව හා වංචල හදවත් ඇතුළු මෙවැන්නක් කාක්ෂන් කරගත හැක්කේ කෙසේද? අපගේ කාර්යබහුල පිවිසි රටාවෙන් මිදී, වංචලභාවයෙන් මිදුනු හදවත් ඇතිව, එවැනි කාලයක් ගත කිරීමට හැකිවේ නම් එය කෙතරම් කඳුමද? නිසල පරිසරයක දෙවිඋන්ගේ මැවිල්ල හා දුරස් නොවෙමින්, ගත කළ හැකි කාලයක් වේ නම් එය කෙතරම් මිනිට්ටුද? බොහෝ විට නිහඬ කාලය හෝ පොද්ගලික භාවනාව යනුවෙන් අප විසින් හඳුන්වනු ලබන මෙම කාලය යමෙකු තම පිවිසියේ නොකඩවා පවත්වාගෙන යාම ඔහුගේ ඇතුළත්තයේ ඉදි කරනු ලැබූ ප්‍රජාසනයකට කඳිම උදාහරණයකි. සලොමෝන් රජතුමාට දේව මාලිගාව ඉදිකිරීමට වසර හතක කාලයක් ගත විය. අපගේ ඇතුළත්තයේ ප්‍රජාසනය ගොඩ නැංවීමට ද යම් කාලයක් ගත කිරීමට සිදු වේ. අපට බොහෝ බාධා වලට මුහුණ දීමට සිදුවිය හැක. අපගේ ඇතුළත්තයේ ඇත්තා වූ භෞෂාකාරී වංචල බව ම බාධාකයක් විය හැක. අභ්‍යන්තරයේ වංචලභාවයක් ඇති විට, දෙවිඋන් ඉදිරියේ නියවල වීමට අපට නොහැකි වේ. ඉක්මනින් දේව වචනය කියවීමටත්, යාවිඤ්චා ඉක්මනින් අවසන් කිරීමටත් මේ නිසා අපි පෙළෙඹෙන්නෙමු. අපගේ ඇතුළත්ත ප්‍රජාසනය අභියස ඉහුඩු නැමදුම් කාලයක් ගත කිරීම. ඇතුළත්ත ප්‍රජාසනය සාදා ගැනීමේ ක්‍රමයක් ලෙස මෙය හැඳින්විය හැක. මෙවැනි ක්‍රමයක් ඕනෑම මොනොතක, ඕනෑම වේලාවක, දිනකට ඕනෑම වාර ගණනක් දෙවිඋන් නමස්කාර කිරීමට ඔබට උපකාර වනු ඇත. පසුගිය වසර කිහිපය මුළුල්ලේ මේ ක්‍රමය මට බොහෝ සේ උපකාරී විය. ස්වභාවික අයුරින්

කෙරෙන මෙවැනි නමස්කාර ක්‍රමයක් ගොඩ නගා ගැනීමට මාස කිහිපයක් ඔබට වැය විය හැක. මෙවැනි නමස්කාර ක්‍රමයක ඇතුළත් විය යුතු කාරණා මෙලෙස පෙළ ගස්වනු කැමැත්තෙහි.

1. නමස්කාරයට කැඳවීම: ස්වාමීන්වහන්සේ වෙත ඔබේ හදවත නැඹුරු වන දේව වචනයේ වදනක් ඔබට මෙහිදී කියවිය හැක. උදාහරණයක් ලෙස, 'මාගේ සිතට සහනය ඇත්තේ දෙවිඋන් තුළ පමණි. මට ගැළවීම ලැබෙන්නේ එතුමන්ගෙන් පමණි' (ගිතාවලිය 62 : 5) වැනි කෙටි වදනක් තෝරා ගන්න.
2. දේව වචනය: පරණ ගිවිසුමෙන් එක් වදනක් හා අළුත් ගිවිසුමෙන් එක් වදනක් ඔබට මෙහිදී කියවිය හැක. එම වදන් ස්වාමීන් වහන්සේ වෙතට සමීප වීමට ඔබට උපකාරී වනු ඇත.
3. ගිහිකාවක් : ගිහිකාවක එක් පදයක් හෝ කෙටි ගිහිකාවක් ඔබට මෙහිදී ගායනය කළ හැක.
4. යාවිඤ්චා : දේව වචනයේ එක යාවිඤ්චාවක්, ප්‍රසිද්ධ යාවිඤ්චාවක් හෝ ඔබ විසින් ම සකස් කළ යාවිඤ්චාවක් මෙහිදී භාවිතා කළ හැකිය.
5. දිරිමත් වදනක් : මෑතක දී ඔබ කිය වූ පොතකින් උපුටා ගත් වදනක් හෝ ප්‍රසිද්ධ කිතුනු නායකයකුගේ කියමනක් මෙහි දී ඔබට භාවිතා කළ හැකිය. මෙය ඔබට සමීඋන් අති මු වට පැමිණි ම ටත්', උන්වහන්සේගේ අභිමුඛ රැඳීමටත් උපකාරී වේ.
6. නිමාව: මෙය උන්වහන්සේගේ අභිමුඛ රැඳී සිටීමට උපකාරී වන්නක් විය යුතුය. ගිතාවලිය 16: 8, ගිතාවලිය 139: 7 වැනි කෙටි වගන්ති මේ සඳහා සුදුසුය.

මෙහිදී ඔබ විසින් තෝරා ගන්නා දේ ඔබට අර්ථවත් විය යුතුය. මෙවැනි නමස්කාර කාලයක් සමීපුර්ණ කිරීමට විනාඩි තුනක

පමණ කාලයක් ගත වේ. එය විනාඩි පහකට වඩා වැඩි නොවීමට සැලකිලිමත් වන්න. මෙවැනි සකස් කිරීමේ දී ඔබේ ඇඳහිල්ලේ ගමනේ දී ඔබට වඩාත් උපකාරී වූ දෙව් වදන්, ගිහිකා හා පත පොත කෙරෙහි අවධානය යොමු කරන්න. ඒ අතරින් අද ඔබේ ඇඳහිල්ලට වඩාත් ගැලපෙන දේ තෝරා ගන්න. ඔබ මුලින්ම සැකසූ නමස්කාර සටහන කිහිප විටක් ඔබට ගැලපෙන ලෙස සකස් කරලීමට මැළි නොවන්න.

සුදුසු වෙනස් කිරීම් වලින් පසු ඔබ සකස් කළ නමස්කාර සටහන මාස හයක් පමණ භාවිතා කරන්න. වික කලකට පසු සියල්ල ඔබට කට පාඩම් වනු ඇත.

මාස හයකින් පසු, ඔබට අවශ්‍ය යැයි හැඟෙන පරිදි නමස්කාර සටහන නැවත සුදුසු ලෙස වෙනස් කළ හැක. මෙවැනි කුඩා නමස්කාර ක්‍රමයක් භාවිතා කිරීමට මම ද පුරුදු වී සිටිමි. විශේෂ අවස්ථාවන් වලට මුහුණ දීමට ප්‍රථම, ඔබ්බල් අධ්‍යයනයක් මෙහෙයවීමට ප්‍රථම, එක් වැඩක් නිමකර තවත් වැඩක් ඇරඹීමට ප්‍රථම මෙවැනි නමස්කාර කාලයක් මම ගත කරමි. ඔස්ට්‍රියෙන්, දුම්රියෙන් ගමන්

කරන විට ද, මාගේ මෙම පුද්ගලික නමස්කාර කාලය භාවිතයට ගනිමි.

සියල්ලෙහි ආරම්භය නියවලතාවයයි.

නියවලතාවය ගැන කතා කිරීමේදී, ගිතාවලය 46 : 10 පදය මාගේ මතකයට නැගේ.

. නියවලවන්න, මා දෙවිදුන් බව සිතට ගන්න." එම පදය ගැන කතා කිරීමට ප්‍රථම ගිහිකාකරු 3 වන පදයේ දී මෙසේ සඳහන් කර ඇත.

. සත්සමුදර ගුරුා කැළඹෙතත්, එයින් නැගෙන රළ වේගයෙන් කළ වැටි සැලෙතත් අපට කිසිවිට බියක් නැත."

6 වන පදයේ දී ගිහිකාකරු මෙසේ පවසයි.

. ජාතිනු කෝළභාල කළහ. රාජධානි බිඳ වැටිණි. දෙව්දානෝ ගිගිරුමේ දුන්සේක. මහ පොළොව දිය වීණි.

10 වන පදයෙන් අපට උගන්වන්නේ අපගේ ජීවිතයේ සියළු අවස්ථාවන් වලදී දෙවියන්වහන්සේගේ සර්වබලධාරීත්වයට සිත් යොමු කළ යුතු බවය. අපේ ගත්තිය මත රැඳෙමින්, වංචලවීම අප නොකළ

යුතු දෙයකි. අපගේ දැස් යොමු විය යුත්තේ අපේ උතුම් දෙවිදුන් ගේ ශුද්ධ මණ්ඩපය වෙතය. මෙවැනි පුද්ගලික නමස්කාර කාලයක් පවත්වාගෙන යෑමේ අරමුණ වනුයේ අප හඳු පත්ලෙන් ම දෙවියන්වහන්සේ, දෙවියන්වහන්සේ ම බව පිළිගැනීමය. සියල්ලෙහි ආරම්භය උන්වහන්සේ ගේ අභිමුඛ නියවල වීමයි.

මීට වසර කිහිපයකට පෙර ජපානයේ ගිණන සනෝදරත්වයේ ප්‍රධාන ලේකම් ව සිටි, කොච් ඔටාවා මහතා විසින් මෙහෙය වන ලද වැඩ මුළුමනින් ඇසුරෙන් මා උගත් දෑ හා මගේම පුද්ගලික අත්දැකීම් මත මෙම ලිපිය සකස් කළෙමි.

ඉග්‍රායෙල් හි සුවිශුද්ධ මනෝත්තම දෙව් ස්වාමීන් සිය සෙනෙටට කතා කොට,

. ආපසු හැරී අවුත්, සන්සුන්ව මා කෙරෙහි අදහාගන්න. එවිට නුඹලා ගැළවී, සුරක්ෂිතව සිටින්නෙහුය "

යෙසායා 30 : 15

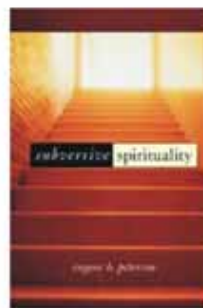
කෝලින දිසානායක.

New Books in FOCUS Library



Porn University

In this short book Michael Leahy recounts his own experience of using pornography, his marriage, affair and divorce, his realization that he was addicted to pornography, and his recovery through a variety of different groups.



Subversive spirituality

In Subversive Spirituality Peterson has gathered together a host of writings penned over the past twenty-five years that reflect on the overlooked facets of the spiritual life. Comprising occasional pieces, short biblical studies, poetry, pastoral readings, and interviews, this work captures the epiphanies of life with the pleasing pastoral style and inspiring depth of insight for which Peterson is well known



Spirituality of Narnia

Many people love the Narnia stories. However, not all readers know the deep spirituality that underlies them. In some ways, the stories mirror Lewis' own wrestling with his spiritual longings, and seek to help others on the same journey. He wants us to feel, as he himself came to feel, that what

we long for at the deepest level of our being is to be part of a great story, indeed The Great Story, in which the stories of Narnia and the story of our world and the story of our lives find their true meaning.



Becoming Human

In this work, originally broadcast on the CBC Radio series Ideas, Jean Vanier shares his profoundly human vision for creating a common good that radically changes our communities, our relationships and ourselves.. "Our society shuns weakness and glorifies strength. By embracing weakness, however, we learn new ways of

living and discover greater compassion, trust and understanding. This spirit of inclusion has extraordinary implications for the way we live our lives and build our communities.

“සමාදානය කරනු ලැබීම” යන්න තේමා පාඨය කොට ගනිමින්, දින 4 ක් පුරා පැවති ජාතික කඳවුර.

මෙම කඳවුර, මනා කලමනාකාරිත්වයකින් යුතුව සංවිධානය කර තිබීම නිසා එහි අරමුණු සියල්ලම පාහේ සාක්ෂාත් කර ගැනීමට ඉඩ ලැබීම, සංවිධායක කමිටුව ලැබූ මහත් ජයග්‍රහණයකි. සහභාගි වූ සියල්ලන්ගෙන් ද එයට ලැබුණේ මහත් පිටිවහලකි”

සෑම දිනකම උදෑසන නමස්කාර මෙහෙයෙන් අනතුරුව ‘නීතඬ කාලය’ ගත කිරීම සඳහා කාලයක් වෙන් කර තිබිණි. සෑම සොයුරු සොයුරියෙක් ම මහත් උනන්දුවකින් එම කාලය ගත කරනු දක්නට ලැබීම සතුට ගෙන දුන් කාරණයකි”

පළමු දිනයේ කාලය බොහෝ නිදහසේ ගත වූ අතර, එකිනෙකා දැන හැඳින ගැනීමේ මූලික අරමුණට එය හේතු සාධකයක් විය. කඳවුරේ තේමාවට, ප්‍රායෝගිකත්වයක් ආරෝපණය කිරීමට එය රුකුලක් වීණි. සවස් කාලයේදී අපි ඇතුගල තරණය කළෙමු. එයද එකිනෙකා හඳුනා ගැනීමටත්, අධ්‍යාපන කටයුතු වලින් විඩාබරව සිටි අපේ විඩාව නිවීමටත් හේතු විය”

එදින රාත්‍රියේ දී අපි විග්‍රහයක් නැරඹුවෙමු. වෛද්‍ය සිසුවෙකු වටා ගෙනුණු එම කතාව තුළ ඉගෙනීමට ඔහුට ඇත්තා වූ කැපවීමත්, වෛද්‍ය වෘත්තිය කෙරෙහි ඔහුට තිබුණා වූ දර්ශණයත් අපට අභියෝගයක් වීණි. කළකිරීම් හා අධෝවර්ධය වලට මුහුණ දෙමින්, සමාජය තුළ ඇති උස්පහන්කම් උඩුයටිකරු කරමින් දිගහැරුණු එම සත්‍ය කතාව බොහෝ දේ කෙරෙහි වෙනස් අයුරින් සිතීමට අපව යොමු කරවීය. විග්‍රහයට අවසානයේ අප එකිනෙකාට අදහස්

දැක්වීමට ලැබුණු අවස්ථාව, වඩාත් පුළුල් අයුරින් විග්‍රහයට අපට අවබෝධ කර ගැනීමට රුකුලක් වීම සතුටකි”

දෙවන දිනයේ දී වෛද්‍ය අරුල් ඇන්කිට්ටේ අපෙන් විමසා සිටි පැනය මට කිසිදින අමතක නොවේ. එනම්, ‘දෙවියන්වහන්සේ අපට දන්නා වූ මිදීම ගැන ස්ථිරත්වයක් ඔබට තිබේද?’ යන්නයි. ඊට නිවැරදි ඡායු පිළිතුරක් දීමට මම අපොහොසත් වීමී, නමුත්, ඔහුගේ දේශණය අවසානයේ දී එවැනි ස්ථිරත්වයක් මෙතෙක් මා තුළ නොතිබීම ගැන මා සිත තුළ දැඩි කම්පනයක් ඇති කළේය. මෙහි දී මා සිත් ගත් වදන් කිහිපයක් මෙසේ සඳහන් කරනු කැමැත්තෙමි”

‘එම සහතිකය වූ කල අපගේ පියාණනගෙන් අපට ලැබුණු ත්‍යාගයකි. ත්‍යාගයකට ඔබ මිළක් ගෙවීම අවශ්‍ය නැත.”

එදින පැවැත් වූ අතින් සැසි වාරයේ දී, ‘සම්බන්ධතා පවත්වාගෙන යෑමේ වැදගත්කම” පිළිබඳව ගෞරව්‍ය දේවගැතිතුමා පැහැදිලි කළේය. ක්‍රියාත්මකත්වයේ ගැන අන් අය හා සාක්ෂි දැරීමට එවැනි සම්බන්ධතා ඉතා අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ”

තෙවන දිනයේ දී, ‘අර්බුද සමඟයට පත් කිරීම” ගැන කතා කළේ සහෝදර සුමන්දිරම් ය. මෙම දේශණයට සහභාගි වීම ම මට අර්බුදයක් වී තිබිණි. මක්නිසාද එය මනසට ආතතියක් ඇති කිරීමට හේතුවන මාතෘකාවක් යැයි මා පුළුවන නිගමනයකට බැස සිටි නිසාවෙනි. ඔහුගේ අදහස් වලට සවන් දෙන කළ,

එය සැබෑ ප්‍රායෝගික මාතෘකාවක් බව මට පසක් විය. රටේ ප්‍රශ්න, සමාජයේ ප්‍රශ්න මට අදාල නැතැයි සිතූ මාගේ මතය බැහැර කරලීමට මෙම කතාවාරය හේතු සාධකයක් විය. අනෙක් සොයුරු සොයුරියන්ගේ උද්නේගය ද අදහගත නොහැකි තරම් වුවකි. අධ්‍යයන කටයුතු වලට පරිබාහිරව අතින් දේ කෙරෙහි කරදර නොවී සිටීමට මෙතෙක් වගබලා ගත් මම, ඉදිරියේ දී එම තත්වයෙන් මිදී ඒ දේවල් කෙරෙහි ගැඹුරින් සිතා බැලීමට තීරණය කළෙමි.

මෙතෙක් අපි කතා කළ දෑ පිළිබඳව සාචිත්‍ර සොහොයුරිය, ‘විකිත් සමාලෝචනයක් ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමෙන් අනතුරුව වත්මන් සමාජය තුළ පවතින අර්බුද කෙරෙහි සමාජ අවධානය යොමු කිරීම පිණිස” නිර්මාණාත්මක අයුරින් විවිධ මාධ්‍යයන් භාවිතා කිරීමේම ප්‍රායෝගික සැසිවාරය අපට බොහෝ සේ ප්‍රයෝජනවත් විය”

අවසාන දිනයේ දී දේව වචනය අධ්‍යයන කිරීම” පිළිබඳව සහෝදර යොනාත් විසින් කරන ලද සැසිවාරය ද අපගේ ආත්මික පිවිතයේ වර්ධනයට බෙහෙවින් ඉවහල් වුවකි”

අප මෙන්ම කාර්යය බහුල ගිණප පිවිතයක් ගත කරමින්, මෙවැනි කඳවුරක් සංවිධානය කිරීමට කැපවීමෙන් වෙනස වූ කඳවුරු කමිටුවේ සොයුරු සොයුරියන් ව මා හඳු පත්ලෙන්ම නැගෙන අවංක ස්තූතිය පුද කිරීමට මෙය අවස්ථාවක් කොට ගනිමි.

සුපීචා අමරාංගනි,
පේරාදෙණිය විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය.

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In *The International*, Interpol Agent Louis Salinger and Manhattan Assistant District Attorney Eleanor Whitman are determined to bring to justice one of the world's most powerful banks. Uncovering illegal activities including money laundering, arms trading, and the destabilization of governments, Salinger and Whitman's investigation takes them from Berlin to Milan to New York and to Istanbul. Finding themselves in a high-stakes chase across the globe, their relentless tenacity puts their own lives at risk as the bank will stop at nothing - even murder - to continue financing terror and war - www.imdb.com

When the enforcers of Justice are unjust, when everyone else are quite okay with what's going on, to whom does one turn to? "They

control your money. They control your government. They control your life. And everybody pays", its the tag line from IMDB. Somehow or the other it sounds all too familiar. Louis Salinger had to make a choice. He would never be able to defeat this evil power by staying within the system because the system itself was evil. In Sri Lanka this approach is shown in films like 'One Shot' and 'Leader' and presented as the best way to deal with Corruption. But is it? Aren't we fighting the evil with evil itself? Does the end justify the means in the progression to a better world ? We don't have the answers but something which we can think about after watching this.

Sachindra



The Revealing Statue



THIS COMMEMORATIVE WORKERS MONUMENT HAS BEEN ERRECTED IN HONOUR AND RECOGNITION OF THE WORKERS OF THE WORLD. UNVEILED ON 31ST DAY OF MAY 2004 BY HON. D.C. ABYEWARDENE. PRESIDENT SRI LAKSHMIPATI FOUNDATION, FOUNDER FRIENDLY MAY DAY RALLY, FORMER COUNCILLOR COLOMBO MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, HAVING LAID THE FOUNDATION STONE ON 31ST MAY 2003 IN APPRECIATION OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

Walking along the Galle road in Mt. Lavinia the other day I came upon the following statue. It was erected in 2004 in "appreciation of the working class". On closer inspection we see that the name of the person unveiling the statue is written in larger font than the persons to whom the statue has been dedicated to. How is it that the statue called a 'workers monument' has relegated the working class to second class status? Is this an innocent typo or does it reveal something deeper

about the society that we live in? Does society have an inherent bias towards the rich and the powerful?

Doesn't it appear that if you want to send your children to the more popular schools you need to have a sizable 'donation' readily available? Isn't it easier to get a bank loan if you can show that you have enough assets at your disposal? How hard it is to get a job these days if you do not have some 'connections' in addition to your educational qualifications to back you up. Yes, society is biased towards the 'haves' isn't it? But are religions any different? If you look at most major religions in the world, divine power is always associated with a successful military leader, priest or king who 'happens' to be a male. Doesn't this show a bias towards those who hold power in those societies?

The God of the Bible, however, is infinitely different. Right from the beginning he takes his stand with those

most vulnerable in society i.e. the orphan, widow and stranger. He purposely works with the 'nobodies' in society in order to debunk the theories of the powerful and 'wise'. He enters into the world as a vulnerable baby and identifies himself with all those who were marginalized in his society. However his influence doesn't stop there. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross reveals how God tackles the root cause of suffering and injustice in the world by taking upon himself the problem of sin. Secular philosophers like Karl Marx, who advocated the revolutionary empowerment of the workers against those holding power, fails inspite of their noble intentions precisely because their solutions don't deal with this root cause. The resurrection of Jesus also stands as evidence that the hope for justice and peace in the world is not wishful thinking but something that will come to pass when Christ returns to bring about God's rule.

In the light of this don't we need to ask ourselves who we take our stand with? Does our friends list show a 'bias' towards those who are weak and vulnerable? Does our work involve empowering the poor and marginalized or does it sustain or promote the status quo? Does our lifestyle and attitudes embody the message of identification with those less fortunate? Are we able to discern the biases of the ideologies in our generation? To believe in the God of the Bible and to not have a radical counter cultural lifestyle is a contradiction in terms. It reveals the worship of an idol far removed from who God really is. The statue was very illuminating wasn't it?

<http://blogs.focus.lk/rumblingsrambles/2009/11/09/the-revealing-statue/>

A reflection on 2 Samuel 1 – Priyan Dias



I write this on the evening of the victory celebrations on 18 June 2010. While relief that the war is over is something almost all of us feel, I argue here that celebration is the last thing that is called for especially in the context of building a unitary state in the future. I bolster my argument with a reflection on the description of a post war event recorded in the scriptures. I raise three questions in this process. I am sure that the scriptures of other religions also express similar sentiments.

The story recorded is set in the aftermath of the death of Saul the king of Israel at the hands of their Philistine enemies around 1000 BC. The context is quite different from today's post war Sri Lanka – yet there are sufficient similarities for lessons to be learnt. Although Saul was the king of Israel, he had proved himself to be an unworthy one. Among other things, instead of defending the country against foreign invaders, he was more intent on trying to capture and kill David, a former high ranking army officer of his and indeed his son in law, out of jealousy. David was a man of war but honourable to a fault (although perhaps on occasion limited by the customs of his times). For example, in the skirmishes between them, although David twice had opportunity to kill Saul, he refuses because he believes that Saul is “the Lord's anointed [king]”. Now however Saul is dead, at the hands of the Philistines.

The story opens with an Amalekite (another enemy of the Israelites) bringing the dead king's crown and armband to David and falling at his feet to pay obeisance to him (vs 2, 10) – people still do this in the 21st

century too! In fact, the man claims to have killed Saul at his request, to put the injured king out of his misery (vs 6-10) – although this is questionable when looking at other parts of the historical record (1 Sam 31:4-5). The Amalekite clearly expects a reward from David in exchange for his homage.

Responses by David:

1. David however is outraged that this alien has killed “the Lord's anointed” (despite the fact that Saul himself was trying to kill David), and has the Amalekite summarily executed (vs 14-16) – rough justice as was the practice in those days. The question I raise is this: **“Who do we reward and punish at the end of a war?”** Rewarding those who kowtow to the victorious leader was not David's style. Punishing those who violate sacred principles was.

2. Saul has made himself David's enemy and had tried to kill him many times. But, David refers to the dead king as “the Lord's anointed”. No wonder he is described elsewhere in the Bible as “a man after God's own heart” (1 Sam 13:14). The second question that arises then is this: **“By what name do we call our enemies?”** We have many names by which to call our enemies – terrorists, traitors, tyrants. Sometimes the names we give our enemies are a reflection of our own character traits (as in the old analogy of 3 fingers pointing at ourselves when we point a finger at others). The point is that no human being is simple enough to be described

by a single label. We are multi-dimensional beings. There is much evil in the best of us; and considerable good in the worst of us. Derogatory name calling becomes a habit and is terribly divisive. During our war almost all Tamils were viewed with suspicion as being “terrorists”. This was supposed to be calling a spade a spade. It appears that we are digging our own grave of disunity with that spade. After the war, even Sinhalese who are not “with us” are called “traitors”. Where will this end?

3. Finally David declares a day of mourning a fasting for the slain king, his son Jonathan (David's closest friend as it happened) and also for the army (vs 12) – even though Saul would probably have been pursuing David with that same army. He also writes a lament to be recorded and taught to his people (vs 17-18). So the third question is this: **“At the end of a war do we rejoice or lament?”** David's example is the one I prefer and would commend to all my countrypersons too. A few chapters (actually a few years) later in 2 Samuel the entire nation of Israel, including those loyal to Saul, approach David and ask him to be king over all Israel. He was their best loved king and reigned for 40 years.



From the Camp chair...

I first thank and praise God for the opportunity he gave me to expose myself to other fellowships and was really blessed with a wonderful committee which had a mixture of everything in it. The mixture of languages, fellowships, faculties and experience all count at the end of the day. I thank and praise God again for his guidance through the staff workers namely Yohan, Alan, Achini, Diyan and aunty Savithri for their time and for being with us no matter what. I personally felt an upliftment of the Spirit after the prayer we had on Friday (28th), and the dorm talk we had with the guys really pointed out that the spirit of the camp improved immensely after that. Finally I would like to thank the secret committee who we couldn't see on camp, but who did their work in time so that we could have this camp namely Tiyani, Yashinthini, Shamanthi and Seshadri. It was a pleasure being camp chair, signing off for now.

Chrisantha

Dear God,

Thank you for giving me the place I haven't chosen...
 Where I feel the gentle breeze...
 Where I can see the mountains and rivers...
 Where I believe still the natural lives...
 Where I have started to live with my friends...
 Where I have tried to speak in Sinhala and English...
 Where I could work together with people who are not familiar to me...
 Where I have learnt people who speak in different languages too are my brothers and sisters...
 Where I have found real friendships...
 Where I have experienced love...
 Where I had found fun and happiness...
 Where I am not only learning engineering...
 O Father, change our heart to understand that we can achieve nothing through the violence, But anything through love...
 Stop us from dividing groups, But teach us to see the beauty of diversity...

Amen

V.U. Karthik
(Pera DC)

“RECONCILE 2010”

Reconnect – Resolve – Reunite

Sin enslaves us in many different ways. The wrongs (thoughts, words and deeds) that we do as well as the things that we should have done but didn't, leaves us with a sense of guilt, alienation and shame. Sins that are committed against us also leave us bitter and resentful. Giving up the right to fight back and be revengeful is a struggle for many of us. On the other extreme we tend to retreat to a place of helplessness and hopelessness. “Reconcile 2010” sought to help each participant to try and understand themselves as they truly are and to recognize and acknowledge the 'fault lines' that are within each one of us. The centrality of the cross, the hope of the Kingdom and the continuing counsel and power of the Holy Spirit were acknowledged as supremely sufficient to begin and continue the process of healing unto wholeness in our lives. We were also encouraged to re-think the importance of community in the whole process of creating an awareness of our sin as well as receiving healing and wholeness.

As we experience this healing in our own lives we also came to realize that God entrusts us with the message of

reconciliation in a divided world. We came to recognize some of the root causes of the ethnic and urban/rural divides in our country. We saw how these 'fault lines' manifest themselves in our conversations, in what we learn in our textbooks, in social and political structures and in other day to day experiences. We also came to recognize the part that we play in creating and perpetuating conflicts. As we share the good news of Jesus in this context we need to also expose the hypocrisies of our age, to stand in the gap, to be a voice to the voiceless, to love the unloved and the unlovable and to become counter cultural communities wherever God has placed us. We identified some of the internal and external barriers that we faced in being true witnesses of Christ and His Kingdom. The creative session also helped us to understand the abilities that God has given each one of us and to envision how we can use these talents to bring about reconciliation in all areas of life.

The university environment provides us with an ideal sphere in which to model to the rest of the country what true reconciliation looks like. May Christ find us faithful when He returns in glory.

From the NSE chair...



First of all I thank and Praise God for giving us “Reconcile” FOCUS National Camp 2010 and blessing it with his wonderful blessings. From the word “GO”, God was guiding us and leading us through different paths in the organizing matters of the camp. Personally it was a very good learning experience for me. It helped me to learn that we have to depend on God for everything patiently, and God will provide everything at the correct time if we trust in him and pray. I thank God for that learning experience God provided.

The theme “Reconcile” challenged me as well. It helped me to learn some new things in the camp like the importance of the reconciliation with God and man under the sub topics Reconnect, Resolve and Reunite.

Around 35 students participated in this National camp from University of Colombo, University of Moratuwa, University of Peradeniya, University of Jaffna, Eastern University and University of Uva Wellassa. The number of students participated in the camp was way below than our expectation we had when we started planning the camp. Also in the first few days students didn't mix with other students from different fellowships. Both factors made us worry. But later in the camp all made friendships with each other and all those who participated learnt a lot. Texts, emails and phone calls I got after the camp encouraged me because God has worked in the camp and created passion for some to do his ministry in their respective Universities. I thank God for this experience and new friendships I got through this camp.

I thank GS of FOCUS, all the staff of FOCUS and the camp committee for making this National Camp 2010 a success by giving all their full support.

P.S. Romesh



Reflections on camp from Jaffna...

யாழ் பல்கலைக்கழக கிறிஸ்தவ மாணவ ஐக்கியத்தினூடாக focus National camp 2010 பங்கு பற்ற தேவன் கொடுத்த கிருபைக்காக முதலாவது தேவனுக்கு நன்றி கூறுகிறேன். இந்த ஆண்டுக்கான **camp theme** பொருத்தமானதாக இருந்தது. பல்கலைக்கழக கிறிஸ்தவ மாணவர்களாகிய எங்களுக்கிடையில் reconciliation ஏற்படவேண்டியதன் முக்கியத்துவத்தை உணர்த்துவதாக இது அமைந்திருந்தது. எனினும் அனேக சிங்கள மாணவர்கள் அந்த இடத்தில் இல்லாதது சற்று கவலைக்குரிய விடயம் தான். எனினும் தமிழ் மாணவர்களின் நலன் கருதி செய்யப்பட்ட மொழி பெயர்ப்பு ஒரளவு திருப்திப்படக்கூடியதாய் இருந்தது. தங்குமிடம் உணவு பற்றி குறை சொல்வதற்கில்லை. பேச்சாளர்கள் ஒவ்வொருவருடைய அனுகுமுறையும் வேறுபட்டதாய் இருந்தது. புதிய நண்பர்கள் நண்பிகளை பெற்றுக்கொள்ளவும் இது வாய்ப்பாக அமைந்தது. இருப்பினும் ஞாயிறு camp முடிவடையும் வரை நிற்க முடியாது போனது வருத்தம்தான்

நேர அட்டவணை

திருப்திப்படக்கூடியதாய் இருந்தது. இருப்பினும் முதல்நாள் அமைவிடம் Cathedral கண்டுபிடிப்பது சற்றுக்கடினமாய் இருந்தது. இதற்காக ஒரு map / guide ஒருவர் இருந்திருந்தால் சிறப்பாக இருந்திருக்கும். ஒவ்வொரு நாளுக்கும் முரிய Quit time பயனள்ளதாய் இருந்தது. எனினும் சில மாணவர்கள் அதனை அதிக முக்கியத்துவப்படுத்தாததையும் காணமுடிந்தது.

முதலாம் நாள் chilling மலையேறியது புதிய அனுபவம். பயஅறள எல்லாம் குழ்ச்செயற்பாட்டின் முக்கியத்துவத்தை உணர வைத்தது. முதலாம் நாள் movie "patch Adams" மூலம் எனது வாழ்கைக்கான பல காரியங்களை கற்றுக்கொள்ள முடிந்தது. குறிப்பாக நாம் வாழ்கின்ற எந்தவொரு சூழ்நிலையிலும் மற்றவர்களை புரிந்துகொள்ள வேண்டும். எமது சந்தோசத்தைக் காட்டிலும் மற்றவர்களுடைய சந்தோசத்திற்காக எமது வாழ்வை அர்ப்பணிக்க வேண்டும். எந்தப்பிரச்சினை நேரத்திலும் அப்பிரச்சினையை நோக்காது அதற்கு

அப்பால் நோக்க வேண்டும். எந்தவொரு நபருடனும் அன்பாகப் பேசுவதன் மூலம் அவருடைய வாழ்க்கையில் ஒரு மாற்றத்தை ஏற்படுத்த முடியும் என்பனவற்றை அறிந்துகொள்ள முடிந்தது.

Staffல் Yohan aiyya தவிர மற்றவர்கள் students உடன் கதைத்தது சற்று குறைவாக காணப்பட்டது. மொழிப்பிரச்சினை ஒரு காரணமாயினும் students பற்றித் தெரிந்து கொண்ட அளவுக்கு Staff பற்றித் தெரிந்து கொள்ள முடியவில்லை. Savithiry anty தனிப்பட்ட முறையில் சில ஆலோசனைகளை வழங்கியது பயனுள்ளதாக அமைந்தது. camp fairல் சிரிக்கும் வகையிலான நிகழ்சிகளை ஒழுங்கு செய்திருக்கலாம். மற்றப்படி எல்லாம் மகிழ்சியாக இருந்தது. அத்துடன் Jaffna students எல்லோருக்கும் இது first national camp ஆக அமைந்தது. விசேடமாக எய்வைவாசைல யவெலஇ சுமுஅறளாஇ யுடட ஞுவயககரு உயலி உழுஅவைவநந எல்லாருக்கும் தனிப்பட்ட முறையிலும் துருளுஊகுள் சார்பிலும் எமக்கு உயலி ல் கலந்துகொள்ள அழைத்ததற்காகவும் தனிப்பட்ட முறையில் கவனமெடுத்து விசாரித்தமைக்காகவும் நன்றி கூறுகிறேன்.

Kajanthan - JUSCF

26-05-2010 தொடக்கம் 30-05-2010 வரை நடைபெற்ற தேசிய பாசறை (National Camp) நிகழ்வுகளில் நான் பெற்ற அனுபவங்களையும் கிறிஸ்தவ வாழ்வில் இன்னமும் உறுதியுடனும் விகவாசத்துடனும் ஐக்கியத்துடனும் இலக்கை நோக்கிய எனது பயணத்தை தொடர்வதற்கு அப்பாசறை உதவிய தன்மைகளையும் இங்கு சாட்சியாக சொல்வதிலே மகிழ்வடைகிறேன்.

குருநாகல் மாவட்டத்தின் நகரமையம் பெயரில் மட்டுமே கேள்விப்பட்டதை தவிர முன்னொரு போதும் நான் அங்கு செல்வதற்கு வழியெதும் இருக்கவில்லை வாய்ப்புக்களும் கிடைக்கவில்லை. யாழ்ப்பல்கலைக்கழகத்தில் இருந்து வந்த அனைவருக்குமே இதே நிலைதான் இருந்திருக்க முடியும்.

எப்படி போகப்போகிறோம்? எங்கே போய் இறங்க வேண்டும்? மொழிப்பிரச்சினையை எவ்வாறு சமாளிக்கப் போகிறோம் இப்படி பல கேள்விகள் இருந்த போதும் கிறிஸ்து பாதைகளை செவ்வை பண்ணுவார் என்ற விகவாசத்துடன் புறப்பட்டோம். எங்கள் விகவாசம் வீண் போகவில்லை வழிகாட்டுவதற்கு பஸ்சில் இருந்து நகரம் வரைக்கும் ஆட்களை ஒழுங்குபடுத்தியிருந்தார் தேவன். இறங்கி பாதைகளில் சிறிது தடுமாறிய போதும் குறிப்பிட்ட இடத்திற்கு முதலில் வந்தது நாமாகத்தான் இருந்தோம். இது பலருக்கு

சிறிய விடயமாயினும் இதில் எமக்கு கர்த்தரின் கிருபை வெளிப்பட்டதை யாராலும் மறக்க முடியாது.

அடுத்து முகாமில் நான் கற்றுக் கொண்ட புதிய விடயங்களாக ஒப்புரவாகுதல், கிறிஸ்தவ ஐக்கியம் போன்ற விடயங்களும் அந்த பகுதிகளை விளக்கிய ஒவ்வொருவரின் விளக்கங்களும் தமிழ், சிங்கள சகோதரத்துவத்திற்காக கொடுக்கப்பட்ட விளக்கங்களும் அதை கிறிஸ்தவ ஜீவியத்தில் பயன்படுத்துவதை அறிந்து கொண்டமை புதிய விடயங்களாய் இருந்தது. தமிழ், சிங்களம், மக்களின் இனத்துவ ஒருமைப்பாட்டையும் வன்முறை அற்ற சமூகத்தின் தேவைப்பாட்டையும் நான் உணர்ந்து கொண்டேன். அதனால் தனிப்பட்ட ரீதியில் ஒவ்வொருவருக்கும் கர்த்தரின் நாம் மகிமைப்படும்படியாக கிடைக்கும் நன்மைகளையும் நான் அங்கு தெளிவாக புரிந்து அதன் படியாக நடப்பதற்கு நான் எடுத்துக் கொண்ட தீர்மானங்களையும் இங்கு குறிப்பிடும் படியாக பெலப்படுத்தி என்னை ஆசீர்வதித்ததையும் இங்கு சாட்சியாக குறிப்பிடுகிறேன்.

அத்துடன் அங்கு பல்வேறுபட்ட இடங்களில் இருந்து வருகைபெற்ற பல பல்கலைக்கழகத்தை சார்ந்த மாணவ மாணவிகளோடு பழகி அவர்களுடன் சிறந்த ஒரு கிறிஸ்தவ ஐக்கியத்தை ஏற்படுத்தி கொடுத்த கிருபைக்காகவும் தேவனை ஸ்தோத்தரிக்கிறேன்.

பாசறை நிகழ்வு, கிறிஸ்தவ அறிவு, தியானம், ஒப்புறவு, ஐக்கியம், திறமை, விளையாட்டு போன்ற அனைத்திற்கும் வழிசமைத்தது போல குதூகலத்திற்கும் குறைவில்லாத வகையில் அமைந்துவிட்ட பாசறைத் நிகழ்வையும் இங்கு குறிப்பிடுதல் சிறப்பானது.

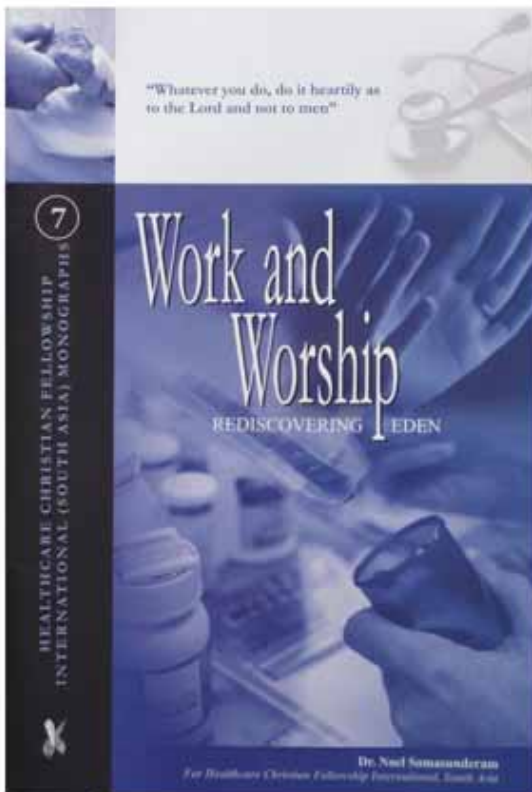
நாங்கள் வருவது போல பாசறை முடித்து திரும்பி போவதற்கும் சில இடையூறுகள் காணப்பட்டது. அதாவது யாழ்ப்புற நேரடி பஸ் இல்லாமை எமக்கு ஒரு பெரும் பிரச்சினையாக இருந்தது. எனினும் நம்பிக்கையுடன் குருநாகலில் இருந்து அனுராதபுரம் வந்து அங்கிருந்து வவுனியா ஊடாக யாழ் செல்வது வரைக்கும் எந்தவித பிரச்சினையும் இன்றி பாதுகாப்பாக குறித்த நேரத்திற்கு வருகை தரவும் தேவன் கிருபை செய்துள்ளார்.

இவ்வாறு ஐக்கியத்தையும், ஒப்புரவையும் விளக்கி நின்ற தேசிய பாசறை (National Camp) நிகழ்வு நாம் ஐக்கியத்துடன் கிறிஸ்துவுக்கு சாட்சியாக நல்லாழ்கை வாழ வழிகாட்டியிருப்பது உண்மையே எனவே இதனை ஒழுங்குபடுத்துவதற்கும் என்னையும் அங்கு செல்வதற்கு வாய்ப்பளித்த இயேசு கிறிஸ்துவுக்கு ஸ்தோத்திரம் பல்லாயிரம் நன்றிகள் கூறி எனது சாட்சியினை நிறைவு செய்கிறேன்.

நன்றி.

Kumarasingam - JUSCF

Work & Worship



Adapted from
Dr Noel Somasundaram's
booklet on a
Christian world view
on stewardship
at workplaces

meaningless labor that is a necessary evil. This creates two worlds for the Christian: The secular (taken from the Latin word *saecularis* which mean worldly) and the sacred. So engaging in work that creates or increases wealth; that creates art or nurtures others becomes

“secular” and praying; witnessing and worshipping is “sacred” and thereby God honoring.

The paradox for us Christians is that we spend a large measure of our time, talent and energy in activities that we categorize as activities in which God has no interest in As we listen to the prayers prayed and the sermons preached in our local churches, can we say that the Church fully understands “work” as a response and responsibility of a Christian? Does your church pray for and train you to be disciples & witnesses in what makes up a major part of your life as teachers, nurses, doctors, factory workers, bankers, home makers, politicians and laborers? - The answer seems to be a resounding “No!”

In “Work & Worship” Noel asks of us some questions and seeks to

answer them, inviting FOCUS students and graduates (and anyone else who may be reading it!) to explore afresh God's perspective on work.

How relevant is Christianity if it has no concern with 90% of my life?

Which part of my life will have the biggest impact in the Kingdom of God?

In the next few issues of SCOPE, we will summarize this booklet for you so that we can begin taking the first steps in understanding “work” in the light of our “faith”. We will look at God as Creator and His intended role for humanity, the effect of sin on 'our intended role' and the hope we have through the cross, death & resurrection of Jesus and in the light of “a new heaven and a new earth” And as Noel concludes in his introduction “Just like the saints of the past we will take our questions prayerfully into the presence of God and seek answers from His revealed word”

And it is our prayer that the answers that you will find will give your discipleship and life an enthusiasm and zeal for all that you will seek to be and do in the years to come!

The notion that some people devote their lives to do sacred work for God while others do secular work is an ancient one. From Indian Philosophers in 1000 BC to Confucius and Greek philosophers in the 6th century BC the thinking that religion and faith have no role in day to day living has been ever popular. Monasteries and churches were the places where work pleasing to God was done. Tending the garden, cooking and being a trader were considered secular! In today's context, we have part-time or volunteer workers as opposed to “full-time” workers in the Church thereby promoting the idea that work that pleases God is “religious” work.

Many Christians today would subscribe to the above idea. Work is seen as worldly and God's punishment on humanity. Hence, work is experience as drudgery –



Here is a short write up on what we have been trying to do

1. The G20:

Some of the young graduates in Colombo try to meet twice a month to support each other through fellowship, bible study, prayer and discussion. There are around 10 graduates who participate regularly at the meeting which have been held so far at the homes of Suren & Dinesha and Yohan & Radhika. Though building support for the FOCUS Ministry is not the main purpose of the group, this will be a likely byproduct of our fellowship. There is also potential for us to engage a wider forum of younger graduates through this group. We encourage all young graduates to make effort to stay connected with each other, where ever they may be!

2. Forthcoming programs:

The GCF committee proposes to revive the GCF Symposia. These Symposia are devoted to the discussion of topical items, from a Christian world view, by members of GCF and other eminent Christian leaders. The Symposia are also open to members of churches, and is considered a means by which GCF can serve the wider church. Suggestions for topics that would be of interest for you and your churches are welcome. Some of the forthcoming topics include:

- Christian Involvement in the Political life of the Country
- Nation Building: a Christian Perspective.

3. Regional groups

Negombo:

The group has been continuing to meet once a quarter for fellowship and discussion on important topics. We met to discuss our civic responsibilities during the election times. Those in and around Wattala, meet every other week for prayer and devotion.

Batticaloa:

Ravi who was a FOCUS staff member working in Batticaloa has initiated a process to gather the GCF members for fellowship, prayer and support for the Student ministry. He made a couple of visits to

encourage the fellowship. We would appreciate if someone who has the heart for this could help in this process.

Kandy:

There is no formal regional group of GCF in Kandy, but Kandy graduates are involved in the ministry of FOCUS, through prayer, teaching Poya day programmes, and preaching monthly at the University Chaplaincy and supporting Kolitha in his joint ministry at the chaplaincy and as FOCUS staff worker. Recently, 4 graduates (including 2 younger graduates) visited the FOCUS National Camp at Kurunegala.

Jaffna:

Sahayan who has recently started working in Jaffna will work towards starting regular meetings of graduates. Please remember Noel Hoole (Vaddukodai Technical Institute) and Punitha Hoole (Engineer RDA Jaffna), Dushyanthi (Principal, Chundikuli Girls College), Ms S Nesakumar & Rajini (Vice Principals, Chundikuli Girls College), Damayanthi and Ms Hariharan (Teachers, Chundikuli Girls College), Dr Abhimin (Senior Lecturer in the department of Physics- he also is the Senior Treasurer of the Student Christian Fellowship/University of Jaffna), Dr Alfred (at Gyne and Obs Unit, TH Jaffna).

4. Professional groups

1. Teachers Group:

An initial meeting of 4 teachers (Darshini Nanayakkara, Nirmala Cooray, Nelum Perera, Gerard Peter) was held on June 24th They have planned a larger meeting with 11 other GCF teachers for the 9th of August, at the beginning of the school holidays.

The group expects to support and encourage each other, talk about the objective of teaching and hence the challenges for Christian teachers in today's context and raise (a few) issues faced by Christian teachers. They also would like to think about encouraging regional groups.

2. Medical Group:

A group of doctors has started meeting early this year to think about their own role in the

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medical profession and to discuss and work towards the establishment of the kingdom of God in the health fields. Both Health Care Christian Fellowship and GCF are working towards this goal

3. Democracy and Governance Group
Dinesha and Sinha have started working towards a group of graduates who will meet to discuss and work towards democracy and good governance.

4. Jude Fernando is keen that GCF should get involved in research on topics relating to history, culture and economy of the country from a Christian point of view: such as providing critical analysis of various versions of the national history. If you are keen he is contactable on
JFernando@clarku.edu

We encourage you to start thinking about such groups in your field or calling. If you are interested in joining any of these groups or have a dream to start a new one you could contact: Savithri, Noel, or Suhithi

5. Wanted: GCF staff Worker

We are looking for a staff worker on (full-time or part-time staffbasis) who would help with organizing GCF events, publications, keeping track of and assisting professional and regional groups, including providing teaching where necessary, liaising with churches and Christian organizations, especially to facilitate the use of expertise available, and linking with the FOCUS student ministry and facilitating graduands and young graduates to participate in GCF activities, stimulate prayer support for GCF.

If you think you are a person who could do these we recommend that you speak to Savithri, Noel or Suhithi

6. The FOCUS 25th Anniversary Volume

The compilation of a volume to celebrate 25 years of the existence of FOCUS was proposed at the end of 2007 and articles were collected throughout 2008. The editing of the volume is now complete and it will be ready within a few months time.

Fellowship News

Jaffna

There are about thirty students in our fellowship now. But only half of them attend the meetings regularly. We gather for our regular meeting thrice in a week. We gather for bible study at 4pm to 5pm on Tuesday and the other meeting takes place at 4pm to 5.30pm on Thursdays. We are studying the book of Hebrews in our bible study. Apart from both these meetings we have a separate meeting at 4.30pm to 5.30pm at fine arts (Maruthanamadam) on Mondays. We have an informal gathering & discussing scriptures in English at 4pm to 5pm on Saturdays. However, we didn't have this meeting regularly in June because of the semester exams & busy schedule of the students during the weekends.

Seven students from JUSCF participated in the FOCUS national camp in May. This camp was their first national camp. All of them were blessed by this camp. We celebrated a student's birthday party at Calvary church (the nearest church of the University) as an evangelistic program on the 1st of June. About sixty students came for this party heard the gospel too. As a social outreach one student from our fellowship has decided to give a free English class in a hostel for six months. There are some orphans & many poor children residing in this hostel.

We had planned to hold a camp in Jaffna in June (24th to 27th) but unfortunately we had to give up this plan, because the semester exams took place early. But as decided Sumanthiran Anna, Noel Anna & Gnani Acca came to Jaffna in June. We had some informal student and graduate meetings with them. We thank God for these people who came to Jaffna & encouraged us in various ways. We thank God for the opening of a new door in Fine arts. We thank God for the generosity of FOCUS. It provides monthly help to the students who came from IDSL camps.

Pray for our fellowship which should mature in God & His plan. Pray also for every student's personal needs, our staff worker, committee and to meet new students.

Jayawardenapura

Firstly we would like to thank God for giving us the opportunity to meet for bible study in the middle of the university exam rush also.

Since we will be having our exams starting from end of June we are on study leave. All the members are busy so we will be meeting after exams to continue our study. We have been meeting on Tuesdays with Achini akki and studying the book of Mark. This has been a new and interesting way of studying the bible.

We had our core meeting where we discussed about the importance of the core group and made a list of tasks to be carried out.

Prayer points

- ◆ Pray that will be able to find new contacts specially from the new batch that is going to start in August
- ◆ That we will be able to continue the bible study at least once a week in middle of all the time clashes.
- ◆ Pray for the core group and the decisions taken regarding God's ministry in our university. That God will guide each member in building and guiding the fellowship

We will also like to thank Achini akki for all the help she had given us and her commitment to our fellowship.

Uva Wellassa & Rajarata

- ◆ Thank God, for first time one student (Shan) from Uva Wellassa participated for last national camp.
- ◆ There is a group of students in Uva Wellassa. But they do not meet regularly. Pray they will meet and study the word of God as a group.
- ◆ Normally a staff worker visits them once a month in a church premise at Badulla town because outsiders are not allowed to go to the University.
- ◆ Pray for Rubavathanan, a GCFer who works in Uva Wellassa as an academic staff member.
- ◆ Till end of July students having exams. After that they will be having one month break. Pray that staff will be able to minister to them through correspondence during the break.
- ◆ In Rajarata we have 3 contacts (Shalani, Shalini, Subash). Pray for them & ask guidance for the staffer who works with them. Initially we plan to visit them once a month.

Kelaniya

Since there were clashes in the University the students were unable to meet. The two new students returned to their homes and therefore it was impossible to meet outside University. However, the new students always keep in touch with the seniors and we are thankful that they take the initiative in wanting to meet up. Since University has re-opened we will be meeting up from July.

Pera DC

- ♦ Thank God for the national camp & the group of students who able to participate from Pera DC. Pray for their growth & their personal commitments to what God has taught them from the sessions of the camp.
- ♦ New batches are coming to the University. Pray for new contacts.
- ♦ We are planning to have a camp for final years in coming month & a regional camp in September. Pray for all the planning we have to do & other needs for those two events.
- ♦ Thank God for new meetings we have started in Arts faculty during the lunch time. Pray for Namali & Shehan who conduct those meetings. Pray for our Wednesday bible study where we meet at Science faculty common room.
- ♦ Pray for the University administration as they plan to have a simultaneous time tables for all seven faculties. It will be really helpful for all our work.

Moratuwa

Due to reasons like vacations & closure of faculties, past few months for the SCFUM didn't have any major events other than the NSE national camp. Talking of the camp, although the participation for the camp was low every member helped to raise funds for the camp. It also in a way raised the awareness on the Christian fellowship and FOCUS within our friend circles in the university.

As Moratuwa University's Engineering faculty & NDT faculty was closed for 2 weeks due to clashes, we had to find ways to communicate between the members. So we started a google group with a mailing list. It's also helpful to members who are currently in their training period. It will also be used as a discussion forum

for the members to express themselves. But we will always encourage members to meet each other in personal level as we think it will help to build true 'fellowship' among members.

We had our core group meeting at the FOCUS office to make plans for the coming months. Some of the main points were - to have small groups for encouraging each other to study Bible, conduct monthly bible studies by members, have monthly praise and worship sessions.

Closure of the university also made us to think and discuss the true reasons for the clash. We had discussions with focus staff where we shared our own views as well as the majority's view, it was decided that we should get both sides of the story and further discuss. We are praying and will continue to try contacting one of our fellow student at NDT as we have lost contact with him

God has answered our prayers for the discussion program, so we could confirm the first 'Lecturer staff - Student joint discussion' to be held in July 8th Thursday. We are thankful to Prof. Priyan for taking the responsibility of conducting the first session. First session of the monthly program will be on 'Work'. We will also be discussing on how to improve these 'Joint Discussion Programs'. As the fellowship we are very thankful to all the lecturers who are willing to give their time by attending the program, even with very busy schedules they have. We also contacted a Christian staff member in the university; she was interested about the fellowship and asked to let her know if we're planning any special programs.

New batch intake of UoM will start on 29th June, so we are preparing for the introduction sessions ahead. First day we are planning to have a prayer with new Christian students. Most probably we will join with Catholic Student society for the program. We will also try to get a time slot at introduction sessions for university's societies and clubs. We are hoping to get new contacts from these.

So we would like to pray for the following:

- ♦ God's guidance for all the University students, so that they will be more understanding each other.
- ♦ Pray that we will get to know of Christian students from NDT.
- ♦ Pray for the monthly joint discussion program.

Colombo

The last quarter of the year wasn't very eventful for UCCF as the management faculty was closed for their vacation and we couldn't meet regularly, but we are happy to say, that some new members are attending the meetings especially after the National Camp which was held on the last week of May. We continue to meet on Thursdays at noon at the Science faculty. We had our core meeting on the 19th of June, and decided to make some changes, considering the attendance and commitment of the students which we will be trying out in the coming quarter of the year.

The National Camp was a very successful one for us. Though a low number only attended due to exams, everyone contributed towards the planning of camp especially with the fund raiser project. The freshers will be coming into the University very soon, so we discussed on how we

could tell them about UCCF and FOCUS and make them apart of the ministry in Universities.

We all need your prayers to have a Christ-centered, student-committed fellowship in the University of Colombo.

Batticaloa

Fellowship has been meeting on Wednesdays at 10.30 for fellowship time with the lecturers. Only prayer is done in the fellowship meeting. No bible studies are done because of the lack of interest in students for the bible studies. Please pray for this fellowship meeting time so that many students will come for this fellowship time regularly and they will have interest to study the Word.

We are planning to have a camp for Eastern University students. Please pray for the preparation of the camp.

If undelivered please return to:



Fellowship Of Christian University Students
25A, Waidya Road, Dehiwala.