



WESLY MATHEW
Dallas, USA

Publisher
Goodnews Illuminer

Felicitation

I am honored to offer my warmest greetings and congratulations as you release the first copy of our online English publication, "Goodnews Illuminer", after months of hard work and planning. I am grateful for the opportunity to recognize the exemplary work of our young team, its management, editorial team, writers, designers, and everyone who has contributed to this effort in one way or the other.

Founded by a team of like-minded friends, Goodnews Weekly also began as a humble movement. I am sure the older members of our Malayalee Pentecostal community can recall how Goodnews has grown up from a small handful to its present strength. God did not despise the day of humble beginnings and has brought us thus far; I give all praises and glory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Goodnews Illuminer is another golden feather on the cap of



CV MATHEW
Chief Editor
Goodnews Weekly

Goodnew Foundation. Apart from Goodnews Malayalam weekly, we have different teams to take care of our Charity and Missions, online Goodnew, and now this English

edition; and each team is accomplishing their call at a larger level.

Again, congratulations and thank you for your dedication and hard work. I also look forward to congratulating you on future anniversaries and momentous occasions. May the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ be upon everyone who are devoting

their time, energy, and thinking, to serve the community of believers wherever you are placed!

"FOUNDED BY A TEAM OF LIKE-MINDED FRIENDS, GOODNEWS WEEKLY ALSO BEGAN AS A HUMBLE MOVEMENT"

Welcome

God has honored the day of humble beginnings! Travelling back to the 'Land of letters' – Kottayam in Kerala State, India; in the last week of December 1978, during the IPC Kottayam District Convention, the four 'Mathews' friends, namely, V.M Mathew, C.V Mathew, T.M Mathew, and Mathew Thomas got together at the far back of the Convention ground (Thirunakkara Maidan, Kottayam) to finalize their discussion which had been going on for a month. They got together at the aforementioned ground as usual for the regular chat, but with a great vision to begin a new weekly publication for the Pentecostals in Kerala. Their ultimate aim was to bring all the various Pentecostal denominations together, and through that a spiritual renewal in India. Later, Bro. Thomas Vadakkekut also joined this team. All of them agreed to the idea and Goodnews was born 42 years ago. After two weeks the first copy was released at the Kumbanad Convention by Pastor C.K Daniel and Pastor P.L Paramjyothi.

God is faithful indeed; He helped our fathers to take the publication forward through all these years without any stain or blemish. Times changed and challenges of newer generations surfaced; and GOODNEWS as always welcomed the challenges as it moved forward without compromising its core values and principles. In 2018 'onlinegoodnews.com' was born, and 'Goodnews Live' followed, both of them now holding an unchallenging space in the new generation media wave.

Now it is time to take the next step forward with an English edition. The Board of Directors decided to give the charge of this new venture to the younger generation, and to involve the ones who

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TM MATHEW
Publisher
Goodnews Weekly
(Malayalam)

Gratitude

A church or any organization that has a strong sense of its history will have a better sense of identity to build on for the future. Each organization should take a look back to rediscover how they came into being and how it has grown and changed over the years. It is the right time for Goodnews Illuminer to evaluate themselves as they are going to takeoff soon under the umbrella of Goodnews Foundation.

Goodnews began in 1978 as a weekly publication in Malayalam with a great vision about the Church in

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Welcome

walked with Goodnews from their younger days through Goodnews Balalokam, and are now placed globally and excel in different walks of life.

We, the leaders of English edition, 'Goodnews Illuminer' is committed to uphold the same principles of Goodnews Malayalam weekly, to give opportunity to young writers and explore the skills within them, and to give representation to every country where our youths are present. As a humble beginning, we plan to publish as a monthly, but to follow suit of our mother publication to become a weekly. The Goodnews English edition 'Goodnews Illuminer' will be published in PDF format and will be sent to everyone for FREE. We aim to raise revenue for operations through advertisements, and I request everyone's support in this matter. I, as the printer & publisher of 'Goodnews Illuminer', along with all the office-bearers request your sincere prayers and support for this venture.

With prayers,

Wesly Mathew, Dallas, USA
Publisher, Goodnews Illuminer

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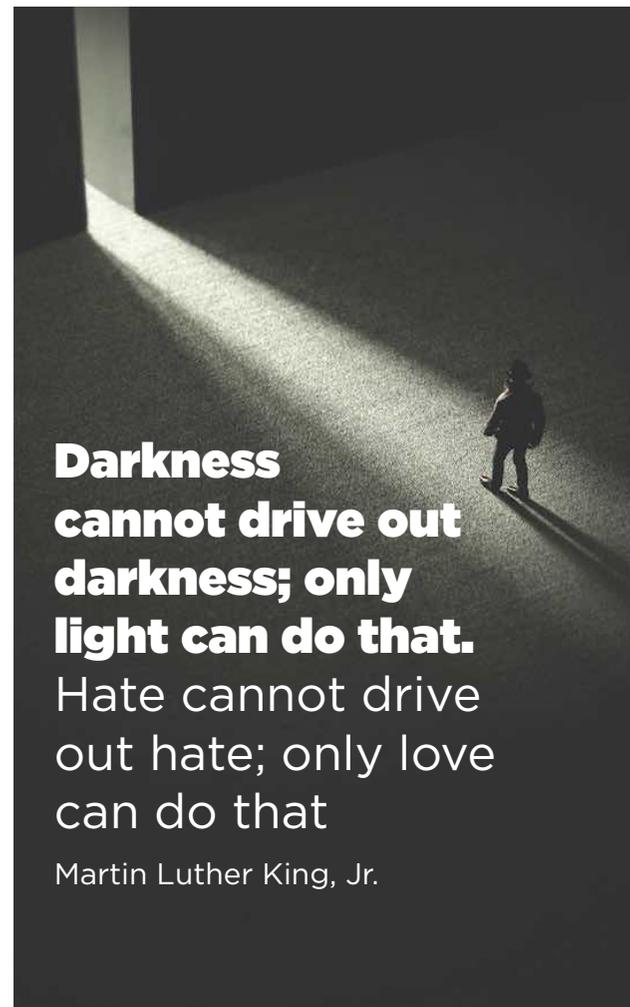
Gratitude

Kerala. It has spread its wings to various spiritual and charitable activities along with its main purpose which is Christian journalism. Over the years, as we look back, we realize that God's fingerprints are all over us. And at the same time, we also look to the future, remembering that we have been called to follow the 'Kingdom Call'.

Task ahead of us is huge and we must be prepared for it. We have a responsibility to our young people, to prepare them for what they will face in their lives. We have responsibility to our old people, to help meet their needs in a challenging world. Let the stories of faith, commitment, and service that are recited and recreated in words through this publication strengthen our community all over the world.

May God bless this great endeavor!

TM Mathew
Publisher, Goodnews Weekly
(Malayalam)



Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Goodnews milestones



- Goodnews **Weekly** - JANUARY, 1978
- Goodnews **Balalokam**- MARCH, 1986
- Goodnews **Charity** - JUNE, 1986
- Goodnews **Online** - APRIL, 2018
- Goodnews **Live** - JANUARY, 2019
- Goodnews **Illuminer** - JULY, 2020

“ This is the message we have heard and announce to you
GOD IS LIGHT and in Him there is no darkness at all ”



Check us out ONLINE!

ISRAEL HAVE AS MUCH OIL AS SAUDI ARABIA

Dallas: Professor Eugene Kendall, the former head of National Economic Council in the Prime Minister's Office told the Knesset that there are about 250 billion barrels of shale oil in Israel, which is similar to the amount of oil of Saudi Arabia.

Oil shale is similar to petroleum, and it need to be refined to generate diesel, gasoline, and LPG. Israel has widespread oil shale covering 15% of its land. According to the Geological Survey of Israel, there are large deposits in the northern Negev. At the same time, the oil shale development has caused many protests among environmental agencies.




Let our articles reflect on how the physical and mental problems can be handled with a positive attitude, and be healed with His Grace and unfailing love. *"A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones"* (Proverbs 17:22).



IF A HOUSE IS DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF, THAT HOUSE CANNOT STAND

"SADLY, OUR WORLD IS DIVIDED, AND SO WE ARE ON THE BRINK OF DEFEAT AGAINST THE UNIFIED FORCE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC"



Parable of
prodigal son

WELCOME



Bonny George
Sydney, Australia
Managing Editor

to the first edition of GOODNEWS Illuminer! We invite each and every one of you to be a part of this exciting journey. It has been a long-cherished desire and vision of the GOODNEWS Publications to publish an English edition on a regular basis in line with its Malayalam weekly. We believe that this is a will of God for the new generation of readers! We trust in God that a publication of this kind will surely impact the minds of its sincere readers for eternity. We received the stimulus to bring out an English edition from the avid readers of GOODNEWS Malayalam Weekly; and the tremendous encouragement given by Malayali community worldwide irrespective of denominational demarcations is much appreciated. We have been getting innumerable inquiries and support from the people around the world to publish an English edition of GOODNEWS weekly. We wholeheartedly express our gratitude to all who have worked behind this new endeavor to make it a reality.

***Vision: To illuminate God's Holy Word through Spirit-filled insightful pen. ***

We have prayerfully come upon the Vision and Mission for GOODNEWS Illuminer; and we wholeheartedly believe that this periodical will shed God's Light on those who are in Darkness. Moreover, we are committed to raise our voice against the vices of society, and to promote virtues to bring harmony among people of diverse cultures.

***Mission: Provide the reader with guidance for life and godliness through inspired authors. ***

Every edition of GOODNEWS Illuminer will bring to you - true stories about issues affecting the people worldwide, features on contemporary issues, profiles of good and faithful God-fearing people, medical advice, Devotionals & Bible Studies, and a Youth & Kids section. We pray and hope that this first edition of GOODNEWS Illuminer would indeed fill your palate with delectable musings. It is also hoped that the captivating page layout would be a delight for the eyes for comfortable reading.

With prayers, we dedicate this magazine for the glory of our Lord.

**"WE HAVE BEEN GETTING
INNUMERABLE INQUIRIES AND
SUPPORT FROM THE PEOPLE
AROUND THE WORLD TO
PUBLISH AN ENGLISH EDITION
OF GOODNEWS WEEKLY"**

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ABOUT US

The Vision

To illuminate God's Holy Word through Spirit-filled insightful pen.

The Mission

Provide the reader with guidance for life and godliness through inspired authors.

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Light shines in Darkness

THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS, AND THE DARKNESS HAS NOT OVERCOME IT. (JOHN 1:5)



Light is one among many reasons of our existence. Had there been only darkness, then life would have ceased to exist. Because of light, life exists; and due to life in us, we get to see what the light reveals. The excellence of the power of light is that, it cannot be overcome by darkness; instead, darkness dies in the light! Light is mentioned as a personification of God in the Gospel of John. Jesus said *I am the light of the world* (John 8:12). Jesus came to this world to give Light to every man (John 1:9). The biggest malady of our times is not the absence of Light, but the love for darkness (John 3:19). Jesus came, but not all received Him; for in acceptance of Light comes rejection of darkness and its deeds (Ephesians 5:8). Those who rejected Light continued to live in the dark, driving their lives into a slow but sure eternal cessation. As in ignorance of any matter, the rejection of Light is due to obliviousness of the capability of Light.

Saul of Tarsus was one such who rejected Light in ignorant unbelief (1 Tim 1:13). He heard the preaching of Stephen, but did not believe what was declared, for his heart was not opened then by the Lord (Acts 16:14). In proclamation of Gospel, the Light indeed came to Saul, but the darkness of unbelief within rejected the entry of Light. The intent of the journey of Saul to Damascus was to persecute those of the Way. But the one who went to tie up the disciples with dark cords of destruction, instead got bound by cords of Light! Though Light was denied entry once, Light cannot be kept out for long; for Light wins nonetheless! Light came in search of the one in the dark way; whereas the one in dark was searching for those in the Light (right) Way. The dark ignorance of his conduct was dictated in his response to the Light which spoke to

him. The voice from the Light declared *I AM Jesus* – for from the great Light comes the great revelation of the great I AM! Though his eyes were open, he couldn't see – a picture of the world living in ignorant unbelief (Acts 9:8). The revelation of God in the burning bush declared to Moses the God who comes for His children in the midst of their scorching slavery. The revelation of God as the Commander in the land of Canaan professed to Joshua the God who will lead the army of Israelites into the fulfillment of His promise. The revelation of God as Light told Paul of the God who cannot be denied nor overcome with darkness!

The Light of Jesus Christ has dispelled the darkness which once captivated us; and it is our responsibility to not only live in the Light, but also to spread the Gospel so that the Light will do its work in the hearts of those who still love the captivity of darkness (Acts 26:18). Let **Goodnews Illuminer** spread the Light, by the Spirit, for all to see Jesus Christ.

Highlight: The revelation of God as Light told Paul of the One who cannot be denied nor overcome with darkness!

“Those who rejected Light continued to live in the dark, driving their lives into a slow but sure eternal cessation. As in ignorance of any matter, **the rejection of Light is due to obliviousness of the capability of Light**”



DARKNESS TO LIGHT AND A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Two paramount statements of Jesus to his disciples explicitly express the model of discipleship he desired. First, at the launch of his mission on earth, he chose his disciples by commanding them, “come and follow me.” All of them obeyed his call unhesitatingly. They followed him closely and enjoyed every bit of his miraculous life. Second, towards the end of Jesus’ ministry, he gave them another command, “go and make disciples.” Before his ascension into heaven, he gathered all his disciples around him and entrusted them with this Great Commission. He wanted all his *coming* (following) disciples to become *going* disciples. True discipleship inevitably includes these two phases— “coming” and “going.” The first command invites one to be a devoted disciple and the second command enables one to be a disciple-maker.

Similarly, 1 Peter 2:9 talks about a people who are called into the marvelous light of God. In their former state they were dejected, miserable, and condemned, but now they are called out of that gross darkness into God’s marvelous light. The darkness denotes the slavery of sin and the servitude of Satan they once were in. The state of being brought into the marvelous light depicts the privileges and the dignities of true Christians. They are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God’s special possession. However, in the same text, Peter shows the other side of the coin. He observes that all those who are called out

of darkness are now bestowed with a mission to proclaim the excellencies of God to the world that is still in darkness. In other words, all these prerogatives are given to the people of God with one purpose - that they may show forth the excellencies of God through their attitudes and actions. The excellencies of God mean what God is and what He does. Peter affirms that those who belong to God and have the privilege of knowing Him must make Him and His works of salvation known to the whole world. That is the very purpose of God in electing people and calling them out of darkness. Ironically, the sense of being called out of darkness often lead people to a spiritual complacency and they eventually become remiss of their charges.

In sum, Jesus’ discipleship model or Peter’s exhortation explicitly portray the purpose of the followers of Christ or the people who are called out of darkness. They ought to go out and proclaim the good news and shine forth as lights by

demonstrating the excellencies of God through their words and conduct. When one’s state of coming reaches the state of going, and the state of being in the light reaches the state of becoming a light, then God calls one— “you faithful servant.”

Highlight: Disciples ought to go out and proclaim the good news and shine forth as lights through their words and conduct.

“THE EXCELLENCIES OF GOD MEAN WHAT GOD IS AND WHAT HE DOES”



Pastor Jackson Kurian is an ordained Pastor and Bible Teacher. He also serves as the Mission Director at Fellowship Ashram Church of India. He holds B.Th (FBC, India), M.Th (Laidlaw College, New Zealand), and M.A in Sociology (Karnataka University, India). He lives in Auckland, New Zealand with his wife Reny and two children; and teaches at Ebenezer Pentecostal church.



CHOOSING THE LIGHT

THE LIGHT HAS COME INTO THE WORLD, AND MEN LOVED DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT (JOHN 3:19).



Rev. Thomas Samuel is Minister at Word of Hope Christian Fellowship Luton (affiliated to AOG, U.K.), and Chaplain at NHS Bedfordshire Hospitals U.K.; online Discipleship Coach with Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. He has an M.Phil (New Testament) from Middlesex University, London; M.A in Sociology from H N Bahuguna University, UP, India; and M.Th from SAICS, Bangalore. He is former Lecturer at IPC Theological Seminary, Kottayam, Kerala. He is married to Praisya and they have three children

The world awaits new dawn after the devastating pandemic that claimed thousands of lives. The present generation just witnessed another dark age of history when hope turned to despair in every spectrum of life. The hope of resuming a normal life, free from fears and anxiety still remains a distant reality. Health and safety have become the utmost priority in the world. All scientific inventions, including space research, aims at making human life more comfortable and easier. However, several other vices, more dangerous than COVID-19 are lurking in human societies in different names and forms. Just as the virus is invisible, the destructive factors that thwart the meaning and purpose of humanity that the creator intended are submerged in the chaos of life. Postmodernity blurred the margin between good and evil. Consequently, truth is relative, and right and wrong is arbitrary. Therefore, moving from darkness to light is a matter of choice rather than a natural response. Jesus' statement "loved darkness rather than light" resonates people's choice of darkness over light during Jesus' time. This spiritual paradox is the new normal of the present generation as well.

The theme of light and darkness is the most powerful dualism John used as a pedagogical tool in the Johannine corpus in order to get his message across to the Hellenistic audience. The dualism in the Gospel is predominantly in the vertical dimension indicating a Christology from 'above' essential for transforming an evil world 'below'. John introduced the profound impact of light over darkness at the very outset of the Gospel as a programmatic statement in 1:4-13 where he presents Jesus as the "true light" that enlightens every human. However, he adds that neither the world nor his own people received this true light (John 1:10,11). John warns his audience that the true light is not too obvious to the world. Though Judaism was the visible means through which God dealt with the people, Jesus' entry into the world set a new way to relate to God. Thus, choosing the light is

about following Jesus. The chief purpose of John's Gospel was to make this transition from pleasing God (through practicing religion) to becoming a follower of Jesus who eventually become like him.

While Jesus's own rejected the light (John 1:10,11), others choose the light. Especially three characters portrayed in the Gospel received the true light outside the boundaries of the established religion: Nicodemus (3:1ff), the Samaritan women (4:1ff) and the blind man (9:1ff). They had their own needs - intellectual, cultural and physical while they were embedded in their own religious system. Yet they received the light outside the frontiers of religion. In a world where religion itself becomes

a means of division, hatred, and bigotry; Jesus the true Light is the real hope. The gospel shows embracing Light is not practicing a tradition or a religious system but it is an influence that brings radical cleansing (John 13:10; 15:3; 17:17). May you choose this Light!

Highlight: In a world of division, Jesus the true Light is the real hope.



NORMAL MAN VS REFORMED MAN



“A NORMAL MAN SEES GOD THROUGH THE EYES OF THE WORLD. A REFORMED (BORN AGAIN) MAN SEES THE WORLD THROUGH THE EYES OF GOD.”

or offers up something that is dear to him, then God would be pleased. This is how we normally please a person and we consider God to be another

being like us who has needs to be fulfilled. The Holy Bible says, the earth and its fullness belong to the Lord (paraphrased Ps 24:1 NKJV). If everything belongs to the Lord, then what are we going to bring to Him in exchange?

He also believes that he can please God by being good to his fellow human beings. The notion is that his works and acts of righteousness would please God in the grand scheme of things to conjure the Lord. Whereas God says that *“all our righteousness are like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6 NKJV)”*. In essence, man cannot bribe God with anything. The only thing that you can offer to God

is your heart. As we see in Rev 3:20 (NKJV), *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.”*

He wants to reign in our hearts in order to do the work which he has thought for us, to give us a future and a hope (paraphrased Jeremiah 29:11 NKJV) and this is unique to each and every child of God who are called *“according to his purpose.”*

A Reformed man, on the other hand, sees the need of humankind; he sees his fellow beings as God sees them. He recognizes how lost they are from God just as he once was. His heart beats after the heart of God. He recognizes his emptiness and lack; knows well that he cannot satisfy the hunger of the world; and so, he goes to his best friend (God) for 3 loaves of bread even at midnight. He runs where no paths have been trodden. He does not satisfy the status quo because he knows that his Savior’s message needs to reach places where none other had gone. He prefers to step into the unknown rather than to be at home on common ground. His life was transformed because he saw who God Was, who God Is and who God Will be. He has also seen what the world has offered, what the world is offering and what the world could or would offer. He recognizes the frailty of man and his attempts to cover it up with fig leaves which dries up when the Sun of Righteousness rises up. He recognizes the need of a Savior Who has already paid the price of his sins, and has purchased him by the pure precious blood of Jesus Christ. He runs after the heart of God, and experiences God when he does His will.

Where do we Christians stack up? Are we reformed or normal? Do we see God through the world or the world through God? Is our heart set on things above or on earthly things? As it says in Mathew 6:22,23 (NKJV), *“The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”*. Let the “Light of Life” shine in and through our lives into the darkness of our hearts and of those around us.

Highlight: A reformed man runs after the heart of God.

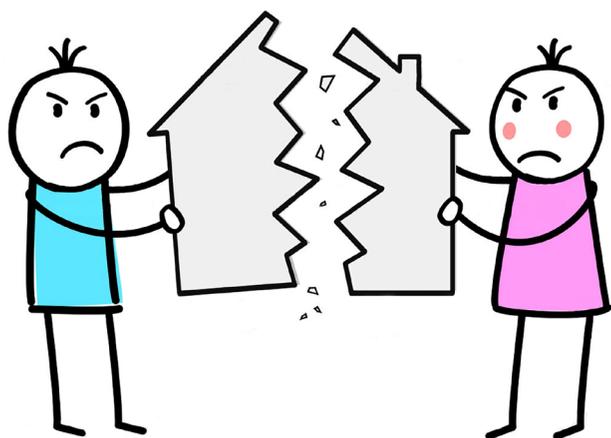
“THE LAMP OF THE BODY IS THE EYE. IF THEREFORE YOUR EYE IS GOOD, YOUR WHOLE BODY WILL BE FULL OF LIGHT. BUT IF YOUR EYE IS BAD, YOUR WHOLE BODY WILL BE FULL OF DARKNESS”

Ajith Philip is a born-again Christian. He currently works as an IT professional and resides in Perth, Australia with his family. He is closely associated with the church and involved in youth ministry since his college days.

“**N**ormal man sees God through the eyes of the world. A reformed (born again) man sees the world through the eyes of God.”

The Normal man sees God through the world. He bargains with God using the things available to him. If the man is poor he might offer \$10 to God and if he’s rich he would offer \$1000. Although he is “offering” it to God, he sees it as a transaction to get God to do what he wants. He thinks that if he offers God money, or give to the poor, or climb mountains as piety,

IF A HOUSE IS DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF, THAT HOUSE CANNOT STAND



THE

biblical verse 'If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand' holds true even in the case of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has been raging through almost all countries in the world. According to the World Health Organization's Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, our world is divided against the dominion of Covid-19 pandemic. Here the two worlds - our world and the world of Coronavirus are engaged in a fierce battle. Sadly, our world is divided, and so we are on the brink of defeat against the unified force of Covid-19 pandemic.

Why are we so desperate and are running around like a headless chicken in panic? Because, fear of Coronavirus has eaten into our heart. Fear is further compounded in us when we get to know that there is no vaccine for it. Now everyone irrespective of Americans or Europeans, Asians or Africans is in the grip of fear. If vaccine had been available, nobody would have been gripped with fear. So, our enemy, the coronavirus pandemic is so virulent and vicious juggernaut killing hundreds of thousands without mercy. Admittedly, it cannot be prevented unless humanity is united with one accord.

How did we divide among us? As it is well known, the coronavirus outbreak was first identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019. When the virus was first discovered, doctors equated it to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed many in 2003. Highly contagious and appearing with little or no symptoms in some cases, Covid-19 rapidly eclipsed all recent outbreaks in scale and size. When thousands of people fell dead in Wuhan following the coronavirus outbreak, China literally was on a frantic mode to contain it. They



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knew that the new coronavirus pandemic would devastate their country and their country's bright future would be in peril if the news of the impact of the epidemic on them spread to the outside world. So, they wanted to suppress this information from spreading to the outside world. As a matter of fact, this had proved to be costly and kicked up controversy later.

The United States of America has received mass fatalities due to Covid-19 attack, stood at the top with a loss of 124,472 precious lives as of June 25th, 2020. It was true that the Covid-19 had caught U.S. unawares and the people never expected such a virulent and debilitating epidemic would hold them to ransom. At this juncture, the U.S. accused China of deliberately suppressing the vital information. But the U.S. further alleges that China could collect primary information on the pandemic's clinical characteristics of the affected patients since December 2019 when it emerged in Wuhan city and rapidly spread throughout China. Later, when the Coronavirus infected patient was diagnosed in the U.S., little did Americans know that it would rapidly snowball into a major pandemic unprecedented in history.

If China had shared the coronavirus pandemic data collected over the period through

their study on the disease's behavior, characteristics and impact on the affected patients to the outside world, surely the world would have been a little more fortunate than today as the remaining countries could have taken precautions; for prevention is better than cure especially in the case of Covid-19. Sadly, China was unwilling to part with the vital data on the Covid-19 for reasons known to them, which really caused to divide the world. So, it is evident from this that the world of ours is divided like a house divided against itself. Our world

**“SADLY, OUR WORLD IS
DIVIDED, AND SO WE ARE ON
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PANDEMIC”**

comprising of all the countries, big or small, must learn to cooperate, and also, they must learn that mutual dependence is the key for peace and progress of each nation. Anyway, enough is enough. There is no point crying over spilled milk. Let us learn from the past and try to become a more united world by being broad-minded and high-minded. Let us also stop worrying and panicking as what cannot be cured must be endured.

Highlight: Let us learn from the past and try to become a more united world. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

fireflies

in the Night



light bulb in this world giving off part of your vitality to light up and the remaining part for the pleasures of this world? Or are you like the firefly utilizing all your liveliness to let your light shine in this dark world, which is God's purpose for you. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Mathew 5: 16).

A firefly controls the light emission by adding oxygen to the chemical reaction, i.e., oxygen combines with calcium, adenosine triphosphate (ATP), and the chemical luciferin in the presence of luciferase enzyme. When oxygen is inspired by them, they get lit up and when it is expired, the light goes out. In the similar vein, our light will not shine without Christ abiding in us who is the main source of light to shine through us.

Noah's ark was for rescuing the ones who believed the Word of God, and the people who didn't believe had to endure God's judgment. Likewise, Jesus Christ is our Ark and He is the One through whom we may be spared from the judgment to come. "There is no condemnation for those who are in Him" (Romans 8:1). Now it's our choice, whether to face the condemnation, or to enter the Light who is Jesus Christ, **from dark to Ark** (world to LIGHT). Look out for The Light in this darkness; and light our lives by receiving The Light. Remember that we are being *called to bear and bare our light*.

Highlight: It is our choice, whether to face condemnation, or to enter the Light who is Jesus Christ

"THE PEOPLE IN THE DARK TRYING TO PERCEIVE THE LIGHT; OR THE PEOPLE WHO ARE THEMSELVES THE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS?"



Grace George Kathettu is an Assistant Professor of Agricultural Entomology at Apollo Institute of Agriculture Technology and Research in Hyderabad, India. She holds degree from Annamalai University (BSc., Agriculture) and Pondicherry University (MSc., Agricultural Entomology). She is the daughter of Pastor K.V George (ministering in IPC Kumbanad Centre) and the Late Mary George; and sister of Gifty George.



Which group do you belong? Will it be the people in the dark who are well pleased with darkness; or the people in the dark trying to perceive the light; or the people who are themselves the light in the darkness?

"Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles--- the people living in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned" (Mathew 4: 15, 16).

Fireflies or glowworms, as the name suggests, is the nature's glowing wonder. Fireflies' glow is a chemical reaction inside their bodies which makes them bioluminescent. They are the most efficient light in the world as they use one-hundred percent of its energy to emit light which is 'cold light'. In comparison, an incandescent light bulb gives off 90% of its energy as heat and only 10% as light. If the fireflies produce heat when glowing, they would incinerate themselves.

A light bulb's primary role is to light up the whole area where it is placed, but it wastes its energy by generating heat. Are you like the

A Candle in the **DARK**

THE PEOPLE WHO WALK IN DARKNESS WILL SEE A GREAT LIGHT; THOSE WHO LIVE IN A DARK LAND, THE LIGHT WILL SHINE ON THEM. (ISAIAH 9:2)

Light is to darkness what love is to fear; in the presence of one the other disappears. Precisely, when light steps in, darkness disappears. Further, darkness cannot exist on its own like the light. When light is blocked or when one moves away deliberately from light, he lands in darkness or darkness covers him. Spiritually speaking, the term, 'light' has deeper meaning as well. The light represents the truth; when one finds the truth, he no more walks in darkness, because God is truth. But the agonizing fact is that many are still living in darkness.

Darkness has long been a metaphor for ignorance or evil. The phrase used by Henry Stanley to call Africa as "The Dark Continent" in his travelogue, published in the year 1878, was to depict the continent as mysteriously attractive or fascinating place. However, it had been widely and erroneously used to paint Africa as a wild, savage, barbarian land. Since then, the missionaries and colonizers (Europeans) wanted to uplift them and bring them to the main stream and save the wicked and unenlightened people. It was done so, just to bring 'light' in darkness. Ironically, the Europeans who



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once carried the 'light' to Africa to enlighten the people in darkness, now face the similar darkness back home. Paradox is that they need 'light' from Africa now.

In an interesting story: 'Darkness' after being annoyed and exhausted fell at the feet of God and complained, "Oh, God, You promised me a slot in Your universe. But I am in danger now. Wherever I go, the sun follows me. Barely do I get some rest at night, and in the morning, the sun destroys my existence." Hearing the complaint from Darkness, God summoned the sun and sought an explanation. Then the sun replied, "I have never seen Darkness; then how can I threaten its existence? God accepted the argument of the sun and declared that the source of light can never be a companion of darkness.

It is true that we cannot shine like the sun. Nonetheless, we can shine like a candle to dispel

darkness from the places we visit. Even though a candle may be small in size, weak and helpless, yet it is intrinsically powerful to light many candles at a time to dissipate darkness forever. So, let us be like a lit candle to give light to those who are in darkness.

Highlight: When one finds the truth, he no more walks in darkness



Dr. Binu Daniel is a management consultant, teacher, author, and educationist. He has penned many books, and have worked as editor in academic publications. He was the chief editor of the Golden Jubilee publications of Christ Ambassadors of AG in Kerala. He holds Ph.D. in Economics from Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala; and qualified JRF-UGC in India. He has written numerous articles in well-established English dailies on Economics and Management issues. He lives in Germany with his wife Reena and two daughters, Sharon and Naomi.



Binny Zachariah Mathew is a finance professional in the Logistics industry. He lives in Singapore with his wife and 2 children. Binny was born and raised in UAE as a Pentecostal Pastor's son at Sharjah Pentecostal Assembly. He is serving God at Ebenezer Malayalam Fellowship church, Singapore.

Parable of prodigal son

We have all heard the story of the Prodigal son. We have 3 protagonists in this story – the father and his two sons. Each character comes to the story with their respective characteristic – which could resemble us in one way or another.

If you examine the story of the younger son, he decides to take the inheritance in advance from the father. Once he gets the inheritance from his father, we can see in Luke 15:13 that he gathers all he has and sets off to a distant land. We can understand from this scripture that the son wants to get away from his family as farther as possible. He has taken his share of the assets which his father had made over his lifetime, and decides to enjoy life in wild living as the Bible says. But as with all wild ways, this also comes to its end very soon and the son is penniless. Now he has to work with a pig-farmer yearning to eat something but the farmer does not give him any. After a while, he realizes that his father's house has plenty and decides to go back to the father and ask for mercy and repents from his erroneous ways. Just imagine his behavior when he left the house versus the behavior when he returned.

The next is the elder brother, who notices his younger brother's return and the subsequent celebration; but refuses to come into the house. After all, he did all that his father expected from him like a good elder son – he followed the rules and didn't squander his money; but he cannot accept his younger brother who abandoned the

family once and now wants to be part of the household again.

Then we see the father – he did not decline when his son asked for his share of property; and even though the son abandoned the family the father always kept looking at the horizon eagerly waiting for his long-lost son to come back, and when he did return he ran and hugged him unlike how a normal father would have behaved. Even when the elder son created a fuss outside the home, he cajoled and taught him love and forgiveness. How many of us are like this father in our character? Do we forgive others who disappoint us just as Christ forgave us of all our sins? Or are we like the elder son – the holiest believers who cannot accept a sinner or backsliding member into our church or families. We were once in darkness but Christ brought us out into light, forgave our sins and brought us into a life of rejoicing and happiness with an eternal hope that we are forever accepted as his sons and daughters. Just as the father demonstrated, let us show mercy to the disobedient and bring them into His marvelous Light!

Highlight: Do we forgive others who disappoint us just as Christ forgave us of all our sins?

“Do we forgive others who disappoint us just as Christ forgave us of all our sins? Or are we like the elder son – **the holiest believers who cannot accept a sinner or backsliding member into our church or families**”



Health Corner



BUT I WILL RESTORE YOU TO HEALTH AND HEAL YOUR WOUNDS (JEREMIAH 30:17)

Welcome to the very first “Health Corner” feature of “GOODNEWS Illuminer”. A generalized awareness about the common health conditions is much significant these days for the public. *“Since God created us, He owns us and holds us responsible for taking excellent care of our bodies and minds”* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). This verse explains how physical health and spiritual health are connected to each other. The Bible says a lot about wellness & illness, healing/coping with stress & suffering. Lack of health can cause stress and intensify our emotions that may lead to discouragement, fear, loneliness, anger, or depression. Along with providing medical service aiming at the physical wellbeing; motivating and

uplifting someone who is suffering from an illness or injury is an extremely valuable service.

This publication is an excellent platform for our Christian healthcare writers to showcase their ability to pen down in a short and precise format of 500 words or less, on any health-related topic of their expertise. Include the citations to support the credibility of the content that they intend to bring awareness of to the community. The outbreak of COVID-19 has transformed the ways how we perceive the world in our daily lives. It has made a deep impact on how we mingle or interact

with people at home, work places, stores, schools, colleges, and everywhere we go. Social distancing can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness regardless of the age group and may increase the likelihood of depression, obesity, hypertension, strokes, and even deaths.

Let our articles reflect on how the physical and mental problems can be handled with a positive attitude, and be healed with His Grace and unfailing love. *“A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones”* (Proverbs 17:22). Herewith, the editorial board is inviting evidence-based articles on health conditions and the selected articles will be published. May God the Healer bring health where it is lacking. Stay safe!



Priya Mathew is a Family Nurse Practitioner (MS from UT, Tyler) and working in the Department of Endocrinology at a US Government Hospital in Dallas. She also completed a 2nd Masters (Nursing Education, University of Phoenix) and did her BSc from India (Nursing, CMC Ludhiana). She has served as Editor-in-charge of Monthly Publications and the Chief Editor of the Biennial Souvenir of IANANT (Indian American Nurses Association of North Texas). She also has written Malayalam Christian devotional songs. She is married to Wesley Mathew and resides in Dallas with their two children.

POWERSION USA PRESENTS

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

ARADHANA

HOUR OF PRAISE

STARTING ON 08.08.2020

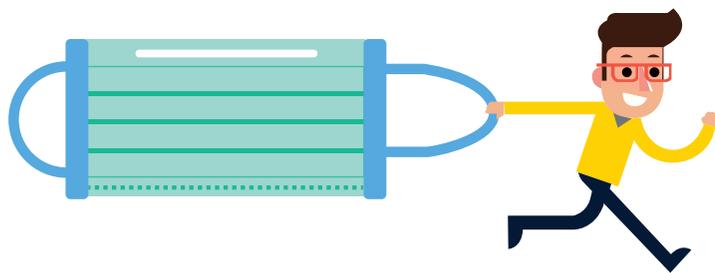
Every Saturday 5:00 pm- 6:00 pm
[CENTRAL TIME]

Powered by: Patmos International Ministries USA.

Stay Tuned for more details



NURTURING YOUR CHILD AMIDST THE CURRENT EVENTS



“Put on the oxygen mask for yourself first and then your child” as heard on an airplane is a loud and profound statement while you fasten the seatbelt to nurture your child in this changing world. Parenting is your journey with kids together hence it is vitally important that you stay on the Sunny side to put the little sunshine in their pockets! Many times, parents struggle to give their children an understanding of time and events. Some of you may tend to notice that they are on the hyper side of their emotions as they talk louder, easily get distracted, indulge in arguments and fight for no valid reasons. And you might feel like your children are pushing you away at the moment while they try to process the anxiety and confusion. In such situations, here are some specific ways to approach it.

Discern the time: The Apostle Paul writes of the terrible and difficult days upon the world. Pay close attention to the current events that might directly affect your child’s emotional well-being. Dark clouds of fear and agony are quickly formed in their inquisitive minds as they receive the information only in bits and pieces. Only the proper discernment of the time steadies and strengthens a parent with the absolute truth that will drive the darkness away from the child’s mind!

Effective conversation: Children have a core nature to learn by asking questions and not by answering them! It’s important to listen and never belittle what they say. Try to address their concerns about the current issues without dismissing them. Let them know how much they’re loved, cared and safe in Christ just as it applies to you!

Good example: Your kids will look to the way you respond during the difficult times to determine their own approach. If you stay calm and positive, they will too. Let the kids hear you pray for them and speak the words of faith. Remember, they are very watchful!

Be available: Children at all ages look up for support and availability in their anxious times. Most of you run on busy schedules and may tend to overlook this crucial aspect. Show that you are never busy for them. Spend quality time with your kids and keep the sweet incense of family prayer burning!

So, in this darkening world, may the Holy Spirit enlighten us in His wisdom and truth as we continue to nurture our children to blossom into who they were meant to be by God since that is the greatest privilege we have as parents.

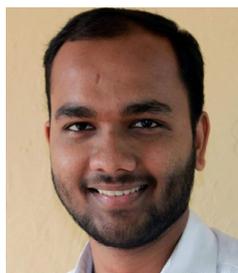


Elizabeth Mathew is a born-again, Spirit filled Christian. As a former Vice Principal, she had close association with educators, parents, and children. She enjoys the nature and personality of kids and the attributes they carry. Her passion is to spiritually nurture the Body of Christ through her Articles and Poetry. She has been involved in Sunday School ministry as well as leading secular schools in UAE for over two decades. Elizabeth currently resides in Muscat, Oman with her husband Mr. Abraham Mathew and two children Abel and Lovina.

FESTIVAL OF THE LIGHT

Once upon a time, there was a young missionary who lived in one of the northern states of India. He was so passionate about sharing the good news of the Gospel to the villagers around him. On one fine day he met Sanjay, his wife Usha, and their two kids Gourav and Mohit. As a result of his prayers and evangelism, Sanjay and his family accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Through the Bible studies of the young missionary, Sanjay and his family developed a strong relationship with Jesus Christ. It led to the water baptism of the family. The villagers noticed a drastic change in the life of Sanjay. He is not drinking alcohol anymore; he is not beating his wife; he is regularly going to work. They even began to hear family prayers from Sanjay's home. The villagers observed all these changes in his lifestyle and kept it in their minds.

Weeks and months passed by. The day of the festival of lights has arrived in the village. The whole village was eagerly waiting for this festival. They bought various types of lights and ornamented the trees, streets, and houses of the village. Amid all these decorations, the home of Sanjay stood unique from others. Villagers were astonished by seeing not even a single sign of the festival in his home. While all the villagers were celebrating the festival, Sanjay



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switched off their home's lights at the regular time and went to bed.

A few months later, on a chilling winter night, the villagers noticed that Sanjay is decorating his house as they did in the festival of lights. He also brought a huge star and put it on the tree in front of his house. This is quite new to the villagers and it was high time for them to break their silence. So, they came to Sanjay and asked, "Why are you celebrating late the festival of lights in this winter?" He said, "It is not the festival of lights, rather I am celebrating the birthday of The Light of the World. I was just like anyone else in this village. During those so-called festivals of lights, there were lights outside my home. But deep inside I was stuck in the darkness of addiction, alcohol, family abuse, poverty, and so on. But after I met Jesus, there is light in my life. I am not struggling in darkness. I don't know whether my Savior was born on this exact date and time; but I do know that He indeed was born, and He lived, died, and resurrected for me. He is also living inside me and directing me on every step. I wish you too realize that the light of Jesus Christ will bring meaning and direction for your life"

Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the World; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life" (John 8:12)

Highlight: Jesus is also living inside me and directing me on every step

World News



“Grow up” says Dr. Ben Carson to Americans

New York: Dr. Ben Carson, the HUD Secretary, insisted that the Americans need to grow up instead of getting offended by everything. He mentioned that the U.S. can be destroyed only if Americans “destroy ourselves”.

Carson, the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development said “we have reached a point in our society where we dissect everything and try to ascribe some nefarious notion to it. We really need to move away from that. We need to move away from being offended by everything, of going through history and looking at everything, of renaming everything. I mean, think about the fact that some of our universities, some of our prestigious universities, have a relationship with the slave trade. Should we go and rename those universities?”

CORONA VIRUS AND CHRIST

A poem by John Piper

My God, my King, my Emperor,
My all-designing Engineer,
My Rider through the skies, with roar
And speed and help, my Charioteer,

My Judge, my Advocate, Release,
My Doom Averted and my Ransom Met,
My Execution and my Peace,
My Friend, my willing Surrogate,

My wind-borne Life, my Health, my
Death,

My Door to Paradise, my Gain,
My everlasting Lungs, my Breath,
My final Thorn, my End of pain,

What must you give or take, my God,
That we might live and never die,
When we have died? What kiss or rod,
My King, must your fierce love apply?

A thousand days and nights pain free?

A hundred years with solvent banks?

Touch down without a casualty—

Again! How many giving thanks?
Or must it be catastrophe?
A crash? A million rich made poor?
A helpless child swept out to sea?
A grief? A virus without cure?

Whatever, O my God, my King,
Whatever you must give or take,
Waste not, my Lord, this suffering,
But come and shake this world
awake.

And then, this sleep of death behind,
Slay every dream that once enticed
With emptiness. Light every mind
To see, alive, the worth of Christ:

Our Life. Our Everlasting Health.
Our endless Waterfall
Of grace. Our faith’s Reward. Our
Wealth.

Our Pleasure Infinite. Our All.

©John Piper’s most recent book is Coronavirus and Christ

Theologian becomes President of Malawi

Charlotte: Lazarus Chakwera, the former Pastor and Superintendent of Assemblies of God, have been elected as the new President of Sub-Saharan African nation of Malawi. Prior to entering public service, he was leading for 24 years the Assemblies of God denomination, which is one of Malawi’s largest religious groups. Chakwera won the presidential

race, defeating President Peter Mutharika with 58.57% of the vote.

Chakwera served as an instructor at the Assemblies of God School of Theology for 17 years since 1983, and became the Principal of the School in 1996. Chakwera was named Lazarus by his father after the biblical character whom Jesus raised from the dead, convinced that he would live after his two older brothers died while they were infants.

Evangelist Franklin Graham congratulated the new president, and reminisced his chairing a Billy Graham Evangelistic Association outreach in



2010 called My Hope Malawi. Graham have requested the Christian community to join him in praying to God to bless, direct, and protect President Chakwera as he leads his country.