

BROKEN BREAD Page 04



CHOICES
AT THE CROSSROADS



DEVOTIONAL Page 08



She did what she could



LENS IN THE LIGHT Page 10



God's will - Unravelling the Father's heart



SIGN UP NOW

Check us out ONLINE!

[HTTP://GOODNEWSILLUMINER.COM](http://GOODNEWSILLUMINER.COM)

ILLUMINER

ISSUE 15

VOLUME 02

SEPTEMBER 2021



DR. YONGGI CHO FINISHES HIS RACE

Pastor Yonggi Cho passed away at the age of 85 in the early morning hours of Tuesday in South Korea. He had been under medical treatment since last year after suffering a cerebral hemorrhage. Yonggi Cho, who was raised a Buddhist, became gravely ill when he was 17. He was healed miraculously by God, leading to his conversion to Christianity. He graduated from Seoul's Full Gospel Theological Seminary in 1958, operated by the Pentecostal Assemblies of God denomination. Subsequently, in the same year, he opened a church on a hillside outside Seoul in a slum under a tent that the U.S. military had discarded after the Korean war. In 2008 at the age of 75, Cho stepped down as a senior pastor of the church he planted with Choi Ja-shil, who later became his mother-in-law. There were only five members on the church's first day, and three of them were Ms. Choi's relatives. Another was an old woman who came into the tent to avoid the rain. As the congregation grew, the church was moved to a new sanctuary on Yoido island. Cho, who was fluent in English and Japanese, preached the Gospel, broadcasted on television and radio to different parts of the world.

The Yoido Full Gospel Church is still considered the world's largest Pentecostal Christian congregation with more than 500,000 members and is led by Pastor Young Hoon Lee. There are seven Sunday services that are translated into 16 languages. It also has 400 pastors serving the small cell groups and also has 500 missionaries around the globe. The church, which once claimed a congregation of more than 800,000 members, shrunk since Pastor Cho retired in 2008. There are hundreds of smaller churches affiliated with the Yoido Full Gospel that operate in South Korea and worldwide. Cho served as chairman of the

World Assemblies of God Fellowship from 1992 to 2000. Pastor Cho has engaged in many social activities apart from being the pastor at the church. He established the newspaper Kookmin Daily in 1988 and set up "Good People" which is an international non-government development organization for human rights, environment, and child welfare. In 2014, Pastor Cho and his son were convicted of embezzling \$12 million in church funds. The presiding judge told Cho, "We know that this case is not your problem. You just need to blame it on your son, and then you will have no responsibilities." It is said that Cho refused the request saying, "My son can be unrighteous to

me, but I cannot be unrighteous to my son."

Pastor Cho is survived by three sons. His wife, Kim Sung-hae, who once led Hansei University, which is a church-affiliated school, died in February. During his final sermon in July 2020, Pastor Cho said that "there is an end to our life, and when our life ends in this world, everyone must stand before God for judgment. So, the most important thing you can do in this world is to believe in Jesus Christ and win your salvation." His funeral will be held on Saturday at the grand hall of Yoido Full Gospel Church.

No Exit from the Will of God

God expects us to surrender to his will even in tough times. There is no way out of this before God's time however hard we try. The life of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, is a good case in this regard.

Babylonians who defeated Judah in 597 BC made him king. In fact, he was their puppet king. Though the narratives on the kings in the Bible mentions their achievements and failures, there is no mention of Zedekiah's achievements except one thing: "Now Zedekiah rebelled against

the king of Babylon" (2 Kings 24:20). Then we find a long description of how the Babylonians retaliated, how they besieged the city of Jerusalem for the second time, Zedekiah's flight for life, capture, punishment, imprisonment, the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem and the city, massacres, and deportation of more Israelites to Babylon.

Zedekiah could not do anything for his people during his ten-year reign. He could only poke the Babylonians

Continue on Page 13



ISSUE 15 VOLUME 02

SEPTEMBER 2021

Our Advisors

C.V.MATHEW
Chief Editor
Goodnews
Weekly

T.M.MATHEW
Publisher
Goodnews
Weekly

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.

The Guiding Principles :

- We value Integrity and Excellence in all our work.
- We are committed and hold ourselves responsible to our readers and the Church for any information that we deliver.
- We always strive for creative thinking and provide the best quality news.
- We do all for the glory of God.
- We are part of and guided by the principles of Goodnews Publication House.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions mentioned in the content are strictly that of the author and does not necessarily reflect the stance of Goodnews Illuminer.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS (Current edition)

Annet Sam, Dr. Binu Daniel, Cyril Philip, Divine Leonardo, Jossy Binz, TK Nandan, Dr. Shoba Thomas, Dr. Sherly Shaji, Pr. Thomas Samuel, Preethy .T Thomas, Dr. P.U. Paulson

OCTOBER- Thriving in marriage: Genesis 2:24 (Commitment), James 1:19 (Healthy Communication), Ephesians 5:22-23 (Sacrifice)

Design : www.fogdesigners.com

TRUST IN THE LORD

with all thine HEART
and LEAN not
unto thine own
understanding.
in ALL thy ways

**ACKNOWLEDGE HIM,
and He shall DIRECT
thy paths.**



FROM THE
editor

Is it my way
or the highway,
or God’s way?



“As the drive turns uphill or downhill, with twists and turns, there is the assurance that God who allowed the path is also the One in control of the terrain.”

Finding the purpose of existence and living it to its completion is every person’s challenge from birth. In a world of pluralism where the doctrine of multiplicity rules the roost, finding the purpose in life tends to be defined by what is socially acceptable and legally permissible. But that is not how the eternal God whose wisdom transcends time and place defines and determines the meaning and purpose for the individual. The meaning of life and purpose to be achieved begins in Him, who is the beginning and culminates in Him since He is the end of it all. The One who caused birth is also the One who can complete the purpose behind our being in this world.

Permitting God to direct our path is the first step in knowing His will. In giving permission comes the direction. For the directives to be helpful, obedience to the instruction is essential. As much as the destination is important, so is the road

taken to reach there, so we rely on GPS to provide faster or no-toll routes when journeying to a new place. If a wrong exit is taken, U-turn results, which show the route’s importance and our obedience to the direction. Just as we pay attention to the GPS, it is expedient to be keenly and continually attentive to God’s Word through prayer in life’s journey.

God doesn’t want the drive to be drudgery; He wants us to rejoice amidst all circumstances, whether they are pleasant or not. As the drive turns uphill or downhill, with twists and turns, there is the assurance that God who allowed the path is also the One in control of the terrain. This knowledge of the Sovereign God causes us to thank Him even when we do not know what is beyond our visage since we know from the GPS that all things will work together for good to those who love Him and have started this journey according to His purpose!



Perceiving God's Will In The Big Picture

Exploring God's will is often connected to questions of personal choice: Which university shall I join? What career shall I choose? Shall I settle abroad? Who shall I marry? and so on. Similarly, disappointments or failures in education, career, marriage, financial loss, unexpected death of a loved one are also attributed to the will of God. Certain others associate the will of God with their achievements to get wider approval. Other major religious traditions and ancient philosophies share the concept of the will of God(s) that functions in a similar vein (Aune, Prophecy, 1983). The concept of 'fate', 'fortune' or providence prevalent in Greek philosophies or the concept of 'karma' in the Indian tradition founded on divine predetermination is closely associated with god's will. For instance, consulting the Pythia of Delphi, generally known as the Delphic oracle found in Greek literature, was to seek gods' will for a particular venture. A shallow understanding of the will of God from the Bible can arrive at the same conclusion, especially when it is sought in connection with the temporal goals of individuals. It obscures the grand scheme of God's will portrayed in the whole tapestry of the Scripture and history. One of the reasons for this conclusion is the attempt to draw general conclusions from an isolated verse, events, or instances from scripture, disregarding the broader scheme of God spread out over a period of time and space. The biblical understanding of the will of God is unique from other religions and traditions.

The belief in the 'plan' or 'will' of God is equally important as the belief in the existence of God. Will of God highlights one of the significant personality traits of God. It reveals his character and attributes. However, just as humans can only understand who God is by what he has revealed about Him, it is true about His will as well. Human's independent will from their creator is a significant factor of *imago Dei*. It gave them the power to choose right and wrong. However, the first couple's misuse of this freedom in the garden of Eden, out of their greed for self-actualization, resulted in the alienation from God and his will. However, Jesus' submission to the Father's will in the Garden of Gethsemane assured the hope of restoring the lost glory of humanity. Jesus expressed his wish, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me", which could have defeated the ultimate goal of His mission, but He surrendered to the Father's will and added, "yet not my will, but yours be done." This also demonstrated a practical application of the prayer Jesus taught His disciples, "your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

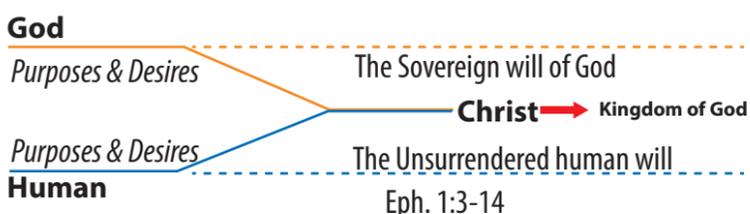
Paul elucidates it further in his epistles (Romans 7, 8; 12:1-3; Gal 2:20; Phil 1:21; Eph 1:3-14; 1 Thess 4:3; 5:18). The illustration shows that the reality of incarnation marked the climax of God's revealed will, and it opened the possibility of reconciling humans' will with God's will in Christ. The redemption of humanity lies at the core of God's will. The life purpose of every redeemed individual aligns with the perfect will of God when they are united with Christ. Consequently, every aspect of their life, education, career, marriage, etc. is Christ-centered, where they are driven by the principles and values of the kingdom of God, rather than that of the world.

"The life purpose of every redeemed individual aligns with the perfect will of God when they are united with Christ."



PR. THOMAS SAMUEL
London, UK

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 is married to Praisya and they have three children.





CHOICES AT THE CROSSROADS

“Teach me to do Your will, For You are my God; Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground” (Psalms 143:10)

The word will means “strong desire.” Understanding the will of God means that we are seeking God’s heart and passion.

God created Adam and Eve as divine image-bearers and empowered them with choice, freedom, and dominion over the earth. However, they chose to sin, initiating estrangement and mortality. God’s *will* for humanity is that no one should perish, but everyone should repent and possess eternal life (2 Peter 3:9; John 3:15). God desires to enjoy the adoration of His creation, who, when given the freedom to choose good or evil, always selects the “good.”

When Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land, Moses urged them to renew their covenant with God and set ‘life and death’ before them. He encouraged them to choose “life” (Deut. 30:15-20). However, God predicted Israel’s continued rebellion and the resulting exile from the Land (Deut. 31:16-21). Even though it was evident that God’s will for them was to love Him and obey His commandments, they chose to disobey Him and turned their heart towards other gods. The fundamental human nature is to continuously evade God and His wise commands and stray away from His will.

Therefore, the fulfillment of God’s *will* cannot depend on human ability. Instead, it depends solely on God’s faithfulness. By sending His Son as the Messiah who truly obeyed the Law and died for the penalty of our sins, God opened a Way for everyone who believes in Him to receive eternal life. The invitation to *life* is open. Nevertheless, it hangs on our decision. God reveals His heart to those who accept the invitation and become His children, through the Scripture. He desires them to be sanctified (1 Thess. 4:3), to do good works

(1 Pet. 2:15), to give Him thanks in all situations (1 Thess. 5:18), to be led in His ways (Psa. 25:9), and accomplish many more. As children of God, each of us is made unique. We are His masterpiece (Eph. 2:10) and are made for His glory (Isa. 43:7).

We must know Him, love Him, and make Him known. That is God’s will for us.

The Bible explicitly declares that when children of God refuse to be conformed to the world and instead allow themselves to be transformed by the Holy Spirit, they can comprehend the perfect will of God (Rom.12:2). Jesus is the ideal model for us who demonstrated how to seek and do God’s will. He said, “I have come down from heaven, not to do My will, but the will of Him who sent Me (Joh. 6:38). In the garden of Gethsemane, even in His most profound anguish, Jesus submitted to His Father’s *will* (Matt. 26:39).

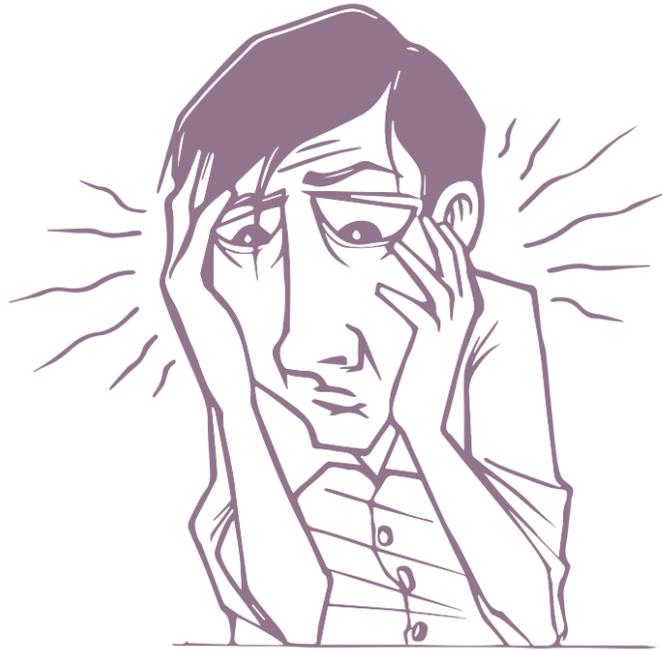
The Bible does not provide specific information about God’s will for our day-to-day personal life. But it does provide God’s general *will* for a child of God to live in this world and attain eternal life. This general will provides us with principles that help us comprehend His specific will for our individual lives. We can learn God’s specific will by spending time in His presence in prayer, meditating and studying His Word, allowing Holy Spirit to guide us, and accepting the counsel of the people of God. Scripture ensures that whoever seeks God diligently, will find Him (Pro. 8:17). The key to knowing God’s heart is having a close relationship with Him. When we walk with Him long enough, we begin to see what He desires of us. Then our desires get aligned with His “will,” and we begin to pray, “Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven” (Mathew 6:10).

**JESUS IS THE IDEAL
MODEL FOR US WHO
DEMONSTRATED
HOW TO SEEK AND DO
GOD'S WILL.**



JOSSY BINZ
Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia

Jossy Binz is a student of M.A Theology at IPC Theological Seminary. She has done her Master’s degree from Alagappa University (M.A. English Literature). As a Teacher, she has worked at St. Brittos Academy, Chennai. She is presently at Al Khobar, KSA with husband Binz Varghese and two kids.



THE INTRICACIES OF GOD'S WILL

As human beings, we tend to have a hard time accepting situations and moments that don't go according to plan. It is not uncommon for us to lament "why me?" and reach out fervently to God. We expect instant gratification and we are never quite ready to accept a no or deal with the disappointment of not having our heart's desire come to fruition.

Such is the case with Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus. When their beloved brother falls ill, they send word immediately to Jesus telling Him, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick" (John 11:3).

By sending this message, they expected two things to happen:

1. That Jesus would be on his way immediately to heal their brother.
2. That Jesus would and could immediately heal their brother.

Jesus, however, upon receipt of this message responds saying, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby" (John 11:4). This was not the answer Mary and Martha were expecting and they feel as if Jesus has failed to understand the urgency of the request. Sure enough, by the time Jesus made it to Mary and Martha's house, their brother had passed away. The distraught sisters tell Jesus that if he had been there (on time), their brother would not have died. Jesus assures them calmly that their brother will rise again. However, in their distressed state, the sisters cannot fathom the magnitude of Jesus's words and they continue to mourn their loss. They are unable to understand that it was God's will that their brother dies so that Jesus could raise him from the dead and reveal the glory of God. Mary and Martha had to witness for themselves the miracle that Jesus performed for them to discover and accept that it was not their will that needed to take prominence, but rather their heavenly Father's will.

In our daily lives, we are often Mary and Martha. We expect immediate, favorable answers that align with our will and desires. We ask God freely when we feel our request needs to be escalated ... We ask because we believe that our God who is all-knowing, all-loving, and all-powerful can make it happen. We expect this because we do not accept the alternative. Rarely do we pause and consider that perhaps for every 'no' we hear, there is an unexpected 'yes' coming; that for every closed door, there will be an open one; that for every disappointed 'why' we ask, there is a Creator behind the scenes intricately weaving His best for our tomorrow.

"For every disappointed 'why' we ask, **there is a Creator behind the scenes intricately weaving His best for our tomorrow**"



DIVINE LEONARDO
New York, USA

Divine Leonardo is an educator with the New York City Department of Education. She holds a B.A. in Communicative English, a B.A. in English, an M.S. Ed. in Adolescent Education/English and an M.S. Ed. in Educational Leadership. She resides in New York with her husband, Eapen Leonardo, and her two children.



THE WILL OF GOD HAS A HAPPY ENDING

“IF A MAN CHOOSES TO SUBMIT HIMSELF TO THE WILL OF GOD, IT WILL BE THE MOST APPROPRIATE AND WISEST DECISION BY HIM IN HIS LIFE.”

In this world, the life of a man of God is indeed a kind of sacrifice to God, for God’s will is everything for him. Conversely, many people think that a man gets a meaningful life only when he spends his time and energy on material goods because material life can be tangible with its predominant carnal desires and pleasures.

God’s will and purpose with the creation of man are to praise Him and follow His footsteps throughout one’s entire life in this world. The man’s spiritual life is precious in the eyes of God as God wants every man to be His inheritor. 2 Corinthians 4:18 says, “As we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” The journey of a spiritual man must be towards eternity, which is unseen. How is this possible? It is possible because our God is eternal and omnipresent, and Heaven is His abode. Spiritual and God-fearing life will bring a man to Heaven, the eternal home of God.

Those who live according to the whims and fancies of the world cannot fulfill God’s will. Moreover, those who live a worldly life cannot be ideally happy, can never be truly optimistic, and cannot be fully satisfied as there is hardly anything, which brings real peace of mind and solace. Ideally speaking, we can’t find a man who is completely satisfied with worldly life. Every man wants to amass more and more wealth to feel safe by being wealthy, but still, he fails to derive a feeling of security and happiness because he still finds inadequacy and tries to aspire to reach more heights by being reckless. Thus, he loses real peace of mind.

At the same time, if a man chooses to submit himself to the will of God, it will be the most appropriate and wisest decision by him in his life. But in a world full of greed and unhealthy competition

to mint money by hook or by crook, it could be a challenging decision. But the Bible says in 1 Thessalonians- 5:16-18 - “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

It is we who must take the initiative to know the will of God in our life. The will of God in our life is nothing but to follow Him wholeheartedly and unconditionally. The will of God for you and me is not that we are to become the richest among the rich, but rather, we are to become like Him ultimately. An erudite finding fault with God and a great scientist despising God’s words are not worthy to be called the children of God, but an ordinary believer, who is firm in his faith and has surrendered his life to God, leads a life pleasing to God. Such men of God are the real salt of the earth.



DR. BINU DANIEL
Dusseldorf, Germany

Dr. Binu Daniel is a management consultant, teacher, author, and educationist. 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.

Our holiness is His will



“Sanctification by the Spirit has a positional nature at our conversion, **and a progressive nature where he works on a constant basis within us.**”

“**H**ey, I am really messed up. I don’t have a clue as to what to do next. Is there any way I can know the will of God for my life?” We have all asked this question to ourselves or have heard it from our friends or someone in our family at some point in life. At times we indeed wrestle to know the will of God even after being a child of God. It is a lifelong pursuit to stay at the center of his will and to trust in God completely. So, what is the will of God for our lives? It is our Holiness.

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification” (1 Thess 4:3a). Our holiness is the ultimate will of God. The Greek word for sanctification in the original translation is *hagiasmos* which refers to the process of making or becoming holy. God created man to have fellowship with him but due to the fall, the entire human race got eternally separated from God. Still according to his sovereign plan, God did not forsake us but sent his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ into this world to die for us so that we could be reconciled back to God and reestablish the broken relationship with him. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have been redeemed from the slavery of sin.

The moment our conversion or rebirth happens, we are declared righteous and justified in the sight of God. In other words, we are positionally sanctified by God through Christ. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified

(Heb 10:14). God removed the condemnation, guilt, and penalty of sin and made us righteous through the sacrifice of Christ. The righteousness of Christ was credited onto us based on our faith in Christ Jesus. That is just the beginning and sanctification doesn’t stop there. Right from the moment of rebirth, Holy Spirit works in a believer and causes our sanctification to be an upward curve till our glorification. So, sanctification by the Spirit has a positional nature at our conversion and a progressive nature where he works constantly within us to become like Jesus Christ.

Progressive Sanctification is the second phase which refers to the effect of active obedience to God’s word in our life. During this phase, we are being saved daily from the power of sin. We tend to grow spiritually and become mature in Christ. But we are not alone in this journey of holiness. We can rejoice in the fact that God who began the good work of redemption will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6). For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose (Philippians 2:13). But at the same time, there is a responsibility on our part to actively work out our salvation. As true believers, our desire should be to imitate Christ but then the momentary temptations may make us value the pleasures of the world more than the things of God. But we need abundant grace to fight against sin. We cannot expect our flesh to provide that grace or put our hope in ourselves to fight the

battle. Unless we submit to God completely and rely on his grace, we will fail in our war against sin.

God has separated us from sin to holiness. And he knows our weaknesses in the flesh and how we are unable to stay holy on a regular basis on our own. But he has not left as orphans rather sent his Spirit for our help. Galatians 5:16 says – “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” By the power of the Spirit, we can overcome our bodily weaknesses and walk with God consistently. The ultimate purpose of God for us is to be Christ-like. “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:28-29). The Holy Spirit is at work transforming us through every step of our life so that we would perfectly become like Christ.

The final phase of our holiness is called Perfect Sanctification where we shall be saved from the presence of sin forever. That takes place when we become fully Christ-like at our glorification. Right now, though we are spiritually resurrected, we still live in a sinful world and our bodies are fragile to sin. But a day is coming where there will be no more sorrows or suffering. Paul says in Romans 8:30 that all those who have been justified by God will be glorified. He wrote this in past tense which means it has already happened in

the sight of our God. That assures our destiny. But since we are bound to time, we will get to experience it only in future at the day of Jesus Christ.

The eternal glory is the consummation of all those who have placed their trust in Jesus Christ. When Christ comes again, we all will be taken up in glory to be part of his family in the fullest sense. As we see in 1 Cor 15:52, the trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised and we all will be changed. There won’t be any more death or mourning or crying or pain as we will be free from sin and its effects completely. So, let us rely on the Holy Spirit who works in accordance with the will of God and accomplishes his purposes for the glory of God.



CYRIL PHILIP
Tulsa, USA

Cyril Philip is an IT professional, and writes gospel content for online Christian publications. He lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma with his wife Reeba and two sons. He serves God in the worship department at Bethel India Christian Assembly, Tulsa.



She did what she could

“I HAVE ONLY ONE LIFE, IT WILL SOON BE PAST; **ONLY WHAT’S DONE FOR CHRIST WILL LAST.**”

A Christian businessperson was traveling in Korea. In a field by the side of the road was a young man pulling an old plow while an old man held the handles. The businessperson was amused and took a snapshot of the scene. “I suppose these people are extremely poor that they can’t even buy an ox,” he said to the missionary who was interpreter and guide to the party. “Yes, when their church was being built, they were eager to give something

towards it, but they had no money. So, they decided to sell their one and only ox and give the proceeds to the church. Now they have no ox to pull the plow, so they are pulling the plow themselves”. The businessperson was silent for some moments. Then he said, “That must have been a real sacrifice.” The guide said, “They did not call it that; they thought themselves fortunate that they had an ox to sell to do something for God”!

Mark 14:3-9 speaks about the two sisters Mary and Martha. To

put this passage in perspective, shortly before Jesus was crucified, he came to the home of Simon, the leper. They were celebrating because of his miraculous healing. Among the guests were some cherished friends of Jesus: Martha, Lazarus, and Mary. While they were talking and enjoying the event, an astounding thing took place. Mary, who loved to sit at the feet of Jesus, knelt unexpectedly beside him, shattered the neck of a flask of expensive perfume, and poured it on Jesus’ head and

feet. She then wiped the rapidly evaporating perfume from his feet and dried them with her hair. It was absolutely a spellbinding moment. This act of devotion is one of the most incredible stories of devotion in all the Bible. It speaks of the love, humility, and sacrifice in Mary’s heart—a heart that strongly resembles a heart of a loved one.

In our text, we also see a sacrifice. The Lord is on His way

Continue on Page 13

GLOBAL
TRAVEL EXPERTS

(833) 8 GLOBAL | (215) 464 8253
info@gtetravels.com



**Air Tickets | Vacation | OCI
Visa and Passport Services
Pancard | Passport Photo
Green Card Filing/Renewal**

DISCOVERING THE WILL OF GOD



“To recognize and discover HIS will, your faith in God should take precedence and not your fear.”

Walking through a road Dark and narrow, Fear spoke to me in volume low that disaster was soon to follow. I harkened not to what it said, but went on my knees and fell prostrate, To THE LORD I worship in Heaven above. I felt HIM, MY Christ, gently lifting me up from the ground I lay To say, “My Child, do not fear, Keep walking- I AM with you all the way”

To be joyful with words of prayer spoken in faith is not an easy feat when troubles surround you like the sea. How would you stand when people look you in the eye to say, ‘I am sorry, there’s not a place here for you’, or when the prognosis of disease was given a deadline of less than a month or three?

To recognize and discover HIS will, your FAITH should take precedence and not your fear. Joseph NEVER said unto THE LORD, ‘Woe is me! For misfortune keep following me!’. Instead, he kept his faith within the dry well he was pushed into and let not his garments be

darkened by sin despite the temptations of Potiphar’s wife. Though he had to wait behind the prison door, he failed not in his certitude to THE LORD above. A prisoner no more he was a few years from then. For out of the prison gates to a position of honor and power God made him be! Second only to the Pharaoh of Egypt.

Trusting HIM means to see things in the chaos with the vision HE makes you see in FAITH of something that has not yet come to be. Remain joyful always. Continue praying in FAITH, HOPE, and TRUST that HE will show you the right path and point out the road that you are to go. He will lead you in truth and teach you, for HE is THE GOD who saves you. Remember in thankfulness of all that HE has done for you. Life’s tribulations are not to break you but to develop the endurance and strength of character, which strengthens your confident hope of SALVATION.

The real secret in discovering HIS will is in your learning to WAIT on

HIM through the process HE takes you through. Like clay in a potter’s hand, yield yourself into HIS blessed Hands. Let HIM mold you through the kneading to become the vessel that stores HIS finest wine for all to see. Be patient with HIS timing - for good things always await those who put their trust in Christ Jesus.



DR. SHOBA THOMAS
Abu Dhabi, UAE

Shoba Thomas is a doctor by profession. She started writing Christian articles while doing her internship in Nepal. She uses her skills to write devotionals that are shared through Social Media to bless others.



BUILD YOUR CHILD’S **CONFIDENCE**

WE HELP PARENTS TO PROMOTE KIDS LOVE OF LEARNING & HELP BUILD CONFIDENCE.



+1 (908) 900-4906

www.slicesanddices.com

email : contact@slicesanddices.com

**GRADES 6-12, SAT
COLLEGE MATH**

ONLINE MATH TUITION CLASSES



God's will – Unravelling the Father's heart



“Just like parents are left at retirement homes, **modern Christianity has left Jesus at the Church altar.**”

As a child, have you ever sat with your father and struck a conversation with him about his plans and what he wants you to do with your life? Have you understood the wisdom in his words and the love in his eyes as he shares the greater desires of his heart? Likewise, the will of God is the revealing of a Father's heart. His love for his child, and the dreams he wants his child to achieve. Today nobody has time to sit with the father or to hear his voice. Everyone is busy in their world of “networks.” They only come to listen to the future but never sit near him to feel the warmth of a fathers' loving embrace.

Just like parents are left at retirement homes, modern Christianity has left Jesus at the Church altar. Nobody is ready to take him home! In a believer's life, one of the significant decisive days was when he decides to follow Christ. The promise he makes is to be faithful until his death towards the love of the Cross and to be a living witness of the divine salvation. But somewhere with time, this promise seems to be forgotten, and people are more inclined to listen to a podcast of a famous person than listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The world of the Lord has just become a forward message or a good morning status. Lukewarm churches and whitewashed teachings are the new trends and are considered the blessed congregation. Nobody wants to know

“God's will.” During the era of Judges when the entire Israelites were disobeying the word of God. God raised a Samuel for himself. This generation, on one side, is going through spiritual numbness and moral degradation, but God's eyes are looking for the little Samuels whose hearts are longing to hear his voice.

God's will, unlike the blessing, has a call for suffering in it. Many are lured towards the profiting self-fulfilling promises, but none truly want to walk the narrow road of submission and forbearance. If your eye is on worldly rewards like name, fame, and money, you might miss the chance to gain eternal spiritual rewards. Set your hope, not on the things of this world; but on the things above. Be not desperate to be happy in this world, but be of a joyous spirit, always rejoicing no matter the situation.

The famous song goes:

“If You can use anything Lord You can use me,

Take my hands, Lord and my feet

Touch my heart, Lord and speak through me”

This indeed is the heart lord desires from us. A heart of submission.

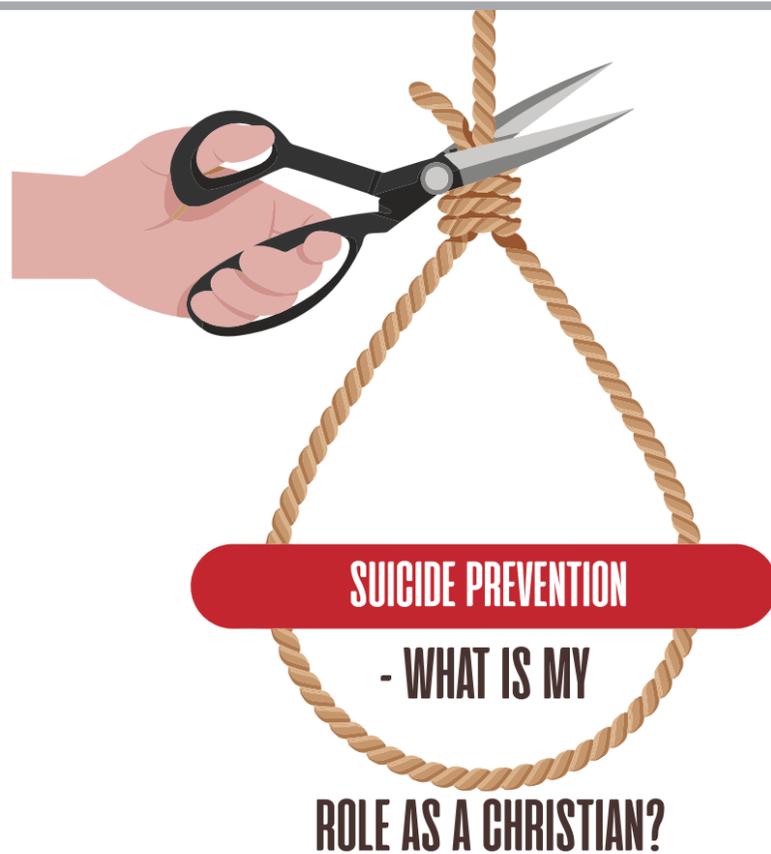
Because beyond the earthly accolades, people are trying to collect lies the devil's lie that often

snatches them away from the purpose set for them. Though Noah got a second chance to spread the gospel, the journey was gruesome. Not everyone will get this chance. So now, before it is too late in submitting, and before the door of salvation closes, do stretch forth your hand to grab the arms of the Father. The heart of the Father yearns to share his will with you!



ANNET SAM
Hyderabad, India

Annet is a missionary couple's elder daughter and is currently enjoying the WFH boon as an IT professional. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Humanities and a Master's in Human Resources. She adores anything Arts, and random things inspire her Instagram poems and photographs.



WHAT CAN WE DO AS A CHURCH OR AS A CHRISTIAN TO PREVENT SUICIDE?

Identifying and supporting individuals at risk is a crucial part of a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention. The hard truth is that the mental health crisis and suicide epidemic are highly prevalent in Christian churches too. But sadly, they continue to have stigma and discrimination in our Christian communities and even condemn suicide as the worst sin. While emphasizing the Biblical values and sacredness of life, churches should be willing to accept them as they are and be equipped to provide a safe and supportive environment. Instead of misinterpreting them as 'Spiritual warfare alone', we should affirm their faith and instill hope in the midst of their suffering. Some considerable steps include,

- Get familiarized with resources to help support yourself and others who struggle with mental health issues or suicidal ideations.
- Keep a list and have easy access to important information such as a list of trained mental health personnel, services, National Suicide Prevention Hotline number, and guidelines or procedures to follow when a staff member learns someone is at risk.
- Identify people who may be at risk for suicide and recognize the warning signs.
- Stay connected and have a conversation, ask /offer help, and be available.
- Form a small group ministry or lay-counseling, have a trained counselor for church if possible.
- Support for the grieving-Suicide can create feelings of stigma, shame, and unwarranted guilt for those close to the deceased person.
- Regularly speak about mental health issues to remove any stigma, which would help reduce prejudice and discrimination toward those affected by mental illnesses.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. While suicide prevention is important to address year-round, it is the time dedicated to supporting and connecting with those who've been impacted by a death by suicide or have suicidal thoughts and creating greater awareness about suicide prevention. Suicide is defined as the act of killing oneself, most often due to a mental illness such as unbearable or uncontrolled depression or anxiety. The sad truth is that the suicide rate has been increasing globally.

KNOW THE FACTS

- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10–34 and the 10th leading cause of death overall in the U.S.
- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)).
- The overall suicide rate in the U.S. has increased by 35% since 1999, which could be worse with the current pandemic.
- 46% of people who die by suicide had a diagnosed mental health condition.
- Although more women than men attempt suicide, men are nearly 4x more likely to die by suicide, 78% of all people who die by suicide are male.
- Each year over 8 million adults think seriously about taking their life, and over 1 million make an attempt (NSDUH, 2011).
- Suicide takes the lives of about 47,511 Americans each year, one death by suicide every 12 minutes (CDC, 2018) and 804,000 people in the world, that's one person every 40 seconds (WHO2012)
- After a suicide attempt, the risk for suicide is greatest initially, with most suicides occurring in the first year after the attempt

WARNING SIGNS

Some exhibit warning signs that may help you determine if a loved one is at risk for suicide. Be especially mindful if the behavior is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Talking about death more frequently (even through puns and jokes)
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increased alcohol or substance use
- Isolation from family and friends
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Starting to give away belongings
- Writing farewell notes
- Buying tools needed to carry out a suicide plan (buying rope, a gun, etc.)

COMMUNITY CRISIS RESOURCES

1. If you or someone you know is in an emergency, call 911 immediately.
2. If you are in crisis or are experiencing difficult or suicidal thoughts, call the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273 TALK (8255)
3. If you're uncomfortable talking on the phone, you can also text NAMI to 741-741 to be connected to a free, trained crisis counselor on the Crisis Text Line.



PREETHY T THOMAS
Oklahoma City
USA

Preethy T. Thomas is a dual certified APRN (Family Nurse Practitioner and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner) currently employed in Oklahoma, as a PMHNP providing psychiatric treatment and medication management for children and adults. She obtained her BSN from CMC, Vellore; MSN in Family Nurse Practitioner from Georgetown University, D.C, and Post Masters in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner from Stony Brook University, New York. Her favorite part of working in Psychiatry is 'being able to help those who can't help themselves.'

FROM THE HISTORY

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S FAST

Historians have argued whether or not Abraham Lincoln, one of America's best-known presidents, ever became a committed Christian. As a youth, Lincoln mocked the scriptures. After the death of his favorite son, Willie, he groped for some hope which could give him solace. His wife, Mary, and he attended séances but eventually renounced them as fraudulent. The cares and trials of the war drove Lincoln increasingly to his Bible.

His lifelong friend, Joshua Speed, remembered, "As I entered the room near night, [Lincoln] was sitting near a window reading his Bible. Approaching him, I said, 'I am glad to see you profitably engaged.' 'Yes,' said he, 'I am profitably engaged.' 'Well,' said I, 'if you have recovered from your skepticism I am sorry to say that I have not!' Looking me earnestly in the face, and placing his hand upon my shoulder, he said: 'You are wrong Speed; take all of this book upon reason that you can, and the balance on faith and you will live and die a happier and better man.'"

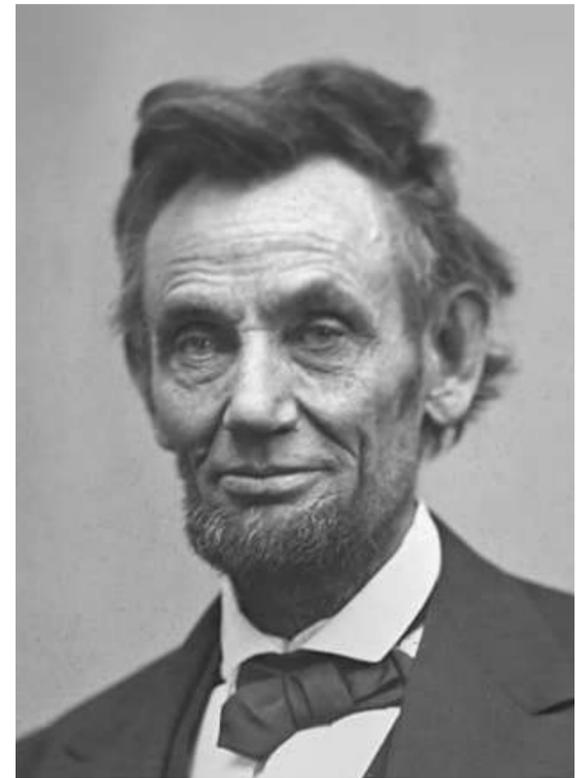
Many of Lincoln's communications allude to God. In his personal correspondence to Mrs. Gurney, a Quakeress, he wrote, "We hoped for a happy termination of this terrible war before this, but God knows best and has ruled otherwise." Increasingly he saw himself as an instrument of

the Lord's will, inscrutable though that might be.

He wrestled to understand why the North continued to lose although its cause, the abolition of slavery and preservation of the union, seemed the more justifiable side. In the end, in a note not written for public consumption, Lincoln concluded that "the will of God prevails. . . . Both [sides] may be wrong. . . . in the present civil war it is quite possible God's purpose is something quite different from the purpose of either party."

There was as much sin to evoke God's wrath upon the Union as on the slave-owning Confederacy. On August 12, 1861, he issued a proclamation in the Northern States for a day of public humiliation, prayer and fasting "to be observed by the people of the United States with religious solemnities. . . . It is peculiarly fit for us to recognize the hand of God in this terrible visitation, and in sorrowful remembrance of our own faults and crimes as a nation and as individuals to humble ourselves before Him, and to pray for His mercy. . . ."

The fast was observed on this day, September 26, 1861, the last Thursday of the month. As anyone knows who is familiar with the history of the war, the fighting ground along for another three years, chewing up the lives and limbs of



men in prodigious numbers. In the end, Lincoln himself was assassinated. He left a legacy of profound words.

Source: www.christianity.com

MANUFACTURING TOO MANY ANDROID SMART PHONES IN A YEAR MUST BE DISCOURAGED

One of the outstanding and the most useful inventions the world has ever made is the invention of the 'smartphone'. It is true that even in the case of a laborer a minute cannot be spared without having the company of a smartphone, which is truly a life companion in every sense. Also, it is so indispensable that it has become like a pacemaker to a heart patient. Life becomes lifeless when this is taken away. Knowing this importance, smartphone manufacturing companies vie with each other to come out with new smartphones incorporating the latest technologies to pamper the users, who flaunt them. At this point in time, it may be good for us to think about the Apple smartphone, which is an undisputed favorite for gadget support as apple smartphones receive software updates for at

least five years let alone remaining relevant for a long time. But in the Android camp, everything is not so rosy and most android phones get support only for two years.

Moreover, for those who want to use their android smartphone for a longer period (five, six, seven years, or even beyond), software support to the android smartphones for such long years is not provided currently. But the German government is not ready to put up with this approach of manufacturers and wants to legislate them to support gadgets for seven years. The federal government is in talks with the European Commission to oblige manufacturers to provide security updates and replacement parts for smartphones and tablets within seven years. With such an initiative, the German government's plan is

to pursue two goals - increasing reliability and maintainability of devices. The government believes that such extended support will increase the life cycle of devices and thereby improve the environmental situation as the production of smartphones will decline. Once the android smartphone manufacturers decide to offer security updates and replacement parts for smartphones within seven years, users will not resort to changing their devices at the usual frequency and therefore the users' devices will last for a long time. As a matter of fact, millions of smartphone users, especially youths are enticed and coaxed into buying new models of smartphones within a year of their purchase, and the budget of many curious buyers is reported to have gone topsy-turvy because of the reckless buying of new models after new models.



TK NANDANAN
Freelance writer

TK Nandan, a freelance writer, is presently employed with an Indian Government Organization. Married to Jayasree, who is a nurse by profession, he lives in Kochi with their children. He is a regular contributor of articles to several English dailies in India.

Continued from Page 01

No Exit from the Will of God

to attack them again and destroy the Temple which they had left untouched in their first attack.

What was Zedekiah's mistake? His mistake was to rebel against the will of God.

Prophets of his day, particularly Jeremiah, had prophesied God's punishment upon his people. God has sent the Babylonians to attack them and deport them to Babylonia. After conquering Judah and the capital Jerusalem in 597 BC they made Zedekiah king over the Judah as a tribute paying ruler. The Babylonians were happy if Zedekiah paid the tribute that they demanded. The prophets who

prophesied God's will had also prophesied that God will bring back those who were taken to Babylon after 70 years. Zedekiah was supposed surrender to God's will and lead his people. He did not. He rebelled with the help of Egyptians, Babylon's enemies, inspired by the loyalist party. If he had not rebelled, the Babylonians would have let them live and his sons who were murdered before him before they scooped his eyes out. In fact, Zedekiah and his people were rebelling against the will of God.

However, I should add that God's will is not fatalism. Fatalists

believe that they are passive victims of something pre-determined from which they cannot escape. However, God's will is "good, acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). He never intends his children any harm. We should be assured that God never condemns his children but only disciplines them. God disciplines us only after repeated warnings and calling us to repent and return to him. It is not mechanical fate that controls us, but the active will of a living God. Before he leads us to tough circumstances for a while, he also has ordained the end of it. However, we should live surrendered to the will of God during this time, patiently and prayerfully.



DR. P.U. PAULSON
Director, iCore
Pune, India

P.U. Paulson is the senior pastor of the Community of the Redeemed, Pune (coreindia.org) and blogs regularly at www.paulsonp.net

Continued from Page 08

She did what she could

to Calvary. As He goes, a woman shows her love and devotion to Him by a costly sacrifice. Others misunderstood this sacrifice, but the Lord commended it. He tells those around Him that "She has done all that she could" and that her sacrifice will be remembered forever. The fact that I am writing on this account today is the fulfillment of the word of our Savior.

Why did Jesus say that she has done all that she could?

1. WAITING TO SERVE JESUS

Mary was like a sister to Jesus. She, her sister Martha, and her brother, Lazarus, were (you might say) the adopted family of Jesus. She had been around Jesus long enough to know that his heart was heavy. He was living within sight of the valley of the shadow of death, and Mary knew something was deeply troubling him. Mary knew what Jesus needed because she spent time with Him. While everyone else was attending to their own needs, Mary was waiting on the needs of Jesus.

Like Mary, we should be eager to spend time with Jesus and do whatever we can for Him. Whether attending church, singing in the choir, serving others, and telling them about God's goodness, whatever we should be waiting for an opportunity to do. To put it

simply, like Mary, we should make ourselves available to Jesus. Mary had understood that God did not want her ability. He wanted her availability. This text in the bible shows us that **you are usable by God if you are available to God.**

2. WILLING TO SERVE JESUS

Mary was aware of the upcoming death of her savior. She couldn't do many things for the Lord, but in anointing Him with the ointment, she was giving Him all she had and doing what she could. When the opportunity presented itself, Mary took advantage of it and experienced a once-in-a-lifetime blessing. So, it is with us when the Spirit of God prompts us to step up and serve. Too often, we miss out on those special moments of service to Jesus when we ignore the impulses and leadership of the Holy Spirit. The mark of a person who understands the beauty and the joy that comes from serving Jesus is a person who gives no thought to what it may cost in terms of time, talent, or treasure but wants to give what they can to Christ as Mary did.

3. WANTING TO SERVE JESUS

In Mark 14:4-5 "And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more

than three hundred pence and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her".

Mary was thinking only of Jesus when she broke that vase and poured that perfume all over his body. But, before that last drop had hit the floor, she had to withstand a withering blast of critical fire from a hypocritical furnace. Let me say, if you serve Jesus Christ, people are going to murmur, people are going to complain, and people are going to criticize. The truth is that when you are ever going to do anything in your life that is going to make a difference for someone else, you are going to be criticized. This world thinks anything you do for Jesus is a waste. But all that matters is what Jesus thinks about your act. "And Jesus said, let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me".

4. WORKING TO SERVE JESUS

Once when my sister took a large bottle of Victoria's secret perfume in her carry-on and during the security check in the airport, they took it and threw it away as it was more than the allowed ounce. My sister was so sad to lose her valuable perfume, which cost only ten dollars. Mary takes some costly perfume that she had saved years to purchase and pours it on the head and feet of Jesus. Now, this was the finest perfume money could

buy that day. This perfume would have cost over a year's salary for an average worker. Today, it was worth about \$30,000. This spikenard was produced from a rare plant that grew in India. It was costly, and many people saved for years to provide this for their funeral preparations.

Here we see that Mary breaks the alabaster box that has cost her many years' wage and pours it onto the body of Jesus. Do you know what she was doing? She was giving the best she had to Jesus. Here Mary gave all that she had to the Lord. I wonder if we have broken the alabaster box of our life and poured out ourselves for Him. Considering the circumstances before us, here is something we should all think about "I have only one life, it will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last."



DR. SHERLY SHAJI
Dallas, USA



U.N. WARNS OF A MILLION DEATH IN AFGHANISTAN

The U.N. warns that a million Afghan children could die from starvation with the arrival of winter if their immediate needs are not met. Since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, it is reported that the nation's poverty rate has soared and basic public services is near collapse. Hundreds of thousands of people have been made homeless in the past one year, and many are fleeing the fighting. The U.N. officials said that more

than \$1 billion in aid pledges had been made already for the relief work in Afghanistan. Weeks after Taliban seized power, most cross-border trade and local businesses is yet to reopen, and this have led to many without income and soaring food prices. Many have started to eat less since they are uncertain how they will pay for their next meal, resulting in widespread malnutrition. The hospitals are facing potential collapse since the administrators are unable to pay salaries or procure medicines with banks still closed.

World News



Apple launches new Watch Series

Apple announced on Tuesday of the new Apple Watch Series 7, which has significantly more screen area and thinner borders, which makes it the largest and most advanced display ever. This watch offers tools for health and wellness such as an electrical heart sensor and ECG app, and a Blood Oxygen sensor and app. It is also the most durable Apple Watch to date, with a stronger and more crack-resistant and redesigned front crystal. This new watch provides all-day 18-hour battery life on a single charge. It also features enhanced fall detection, which recognizes if a user is immobile for approximately one minute if a hard fall is detected and initiates a call to emergency services right from the wrist.

World seeing twice as many hot days

The number of extremely hot days when the temperature reached 122F (50 C) has doubled since the 1980s. This is happening in more areas of the world that ever before. Between 1980 and 2009, temperatures passed 122F for about 14 days a year; whereas the number rose to 26 days a year between 2010 and 2019. In the same period, temperatures of 113F and above occurred on average an extra two weeks a year. Dr. Friederike Otto, associate director of the Environment Change Institute at the University of Oxford said that this increase can be wholly attributed to the burning of fossil fuels. The high heat is dangerous for humans and nature, and may cause serious problems to building, roads, and power systems. People are facing numerous difficulties as the landscape around them changes, especially with droughts and wildfires more likely; and this have resulted in many moving to "greener" pastures looking for a living.

Australia to get US nuclear submarine technology

Australia decided to invest in US nuclear-powered submarines, and notified France that it would end its contract with state majority-owned DCNS to build 12 of the world's largest conventional submarines. U.S. President Joe Biden declared on Wednesday that the United States is forming a new Indo-Pacific security alliance with Britain and Australia. Due to this new partnership, which will allow for greater sharing of defense capabilities, the deal struck with DCNS in 2016 for \$43 billion to build 12 submarines was to be ended. Australia has spent \$1.8 billion already on the project. Meanwhile, top French officials made clear that they are unhappy with the deal.



COVID-19 cases more than double in southeast China

New COVID-19 infections more than doubled in China's southeastern province of Fujian in the country's latest outbreak of the coronavirus. Fujian's outbreak began in Putian, a city of 3.2 million, and has since spread to the scenic coastal city of Xiamen. Like Putian, Xiamen has locked down some areas of higher virus risk, and told residents not to leave the city for non-essential reasons. As of September 13, mainland China had recorded 95,340 confirmed cases, with the cumulative death toll unchanged at 4,636.

North Korea reports long-range cruise missile test



North Korea said on Monday it has successfully tested long-range cruise missiles, which is its first missile test in six months. This is a new indication of an uptick in the arms race between North and South Korea. The tests conducted on Saturday and Sunday is reported to have hit targets over 900 miles away after flying more than two hours. North's official Korean Central News Agency said that the missiles changed their trajectories and made circles before hitting their targets. The resolutions from the U.N. Security Council banned North Korea from developing or testing ballistic missile, but not cruise missiles. The latest tests declares that North Korea continues to improve its arsenal of missiles.

Google fined by South Korean antitrust agency

South Korea's antitrust regulator fined Google \$176 million saying the technology giant abused its dominant market position to restrict competition in the mobile operating system market. The Korea Fair Trade Commission investigated Google for blocking local smartphone makers from using other operating systems. This fine is the latest setback for Google in South Korea. Only a few days earlier was a bill passed in parliament to ban major app store operators such as Google from forcing software developers to use their payment systems and thereby stopping developers from charging commission on in-app purchases.