

"God is to be praised with the voice, and the heart should go therewith in holy exultation."

Charles H. Spurgeon

**BROKEN BREAD** Page 03



**DEVOTIONAL** Page 07



**KIDS AND YOUTH** Page 09



MAKE YOUR HEART SING AGAIN!



SIGN UP NOW

Check us out **ONLINE!**

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

# ILLUMINER

ISSUE 35

VOLUME 03

MAY 2023



## WORSHIP OF LORD Jesus Christ



Rev. Thomas Samuel  
Editor

THE "ATTRACTIVE" CHURCH SERVICES THAT ARE HEAVILY INFLUENCED BY COMMERCIALISATION OF 'WORSHIP' SHOULD NOT BE THE KEY DETERMINANT OF DEVOTION TO JESUS. RATHER, A PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE REALITY OF GOD ENTERING HISTORY IN THE FORM OF A HUMAN AND RESTORING THE WORLD TO HIMSELF AS AN UNDENIABLE TRUTH IS THE KEY MOTIVATION FOR WORSHIP.

**T**he question related to the divinity of Jesus and worshipping him as God is one of the crucial questions that gained significance in recent years, especially with the global rise of Islam and atheism. The question: Is Jesus God? Did he ever demand worship from his followers? are at the forefront of the debate because Christianity's identity and uniqueness heavily depend on the divinity of Christ in the arena of religious orthodoxy. Discrediting devotion to Jesus can put the existence of the Christian

faith altogether at stake. Those who deny the divinity of Christ propose that a) divinity and devotion to Jesus were ascribed only at a much later stage in history. b) No one ever worshipped Jesus as God during his earthly life. c) From the earliest gospel (Gospel according to Mark) to the latest (the Gospel according to John), there is a progressive development in the understanding of Jesus' divinity. However, many of these questions have convincing

*Continue on Page 10*

## VIOLENCE BREAKS OUT IN MANIPUR



**V**iolence has gripped the northeast Indian state of Manipur, as unrest between ethnic groups saw buildings set ablaze and charred vehicles strewn across roads, leaving at least 58 dead and tens of thousands more homeless. Officials' repeated pleas for calm have appeared futile, prompting the Indian army to deploy troops in a bid to restore law and

*Continue on Page 13*





ISSUE 35 VOLUME 03

**MAY 2023**

### 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)

Dr. Binu Daniel, Elizabeth Mathew, Jossy Binz, Rev. Dr. Joel Joseph, Pastor Jeswin James Baby, Priya Merin Mathew, Pastor Thomas Mathew

**JUNE**  
**Spiritual battle/warfare**

DESIGN : WWW.FOGGENERATION.COM



**“Worship has been misunderstood as something that arises from a feeling which "comes upon you," but it is vital that we understand that it is rooted in a conscious act of the will, to serve and obey the Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Graham Kendrick

## FROM THE editor

# The Heart of Worship



**T**he word worship invokes different images for different people depending on their backgrounds. Most images have to do with the expression of worship (verb) rather than its meaning, purpose, and significance (worship as a noun). Unless one understands the true essence of worship, it may reduce to its mere expressions. Worship concerns attention towards a profound reality that influenced them and an intense aspiration to engage with it. The human mind easily gets drawn to beauty, wonder and greatness, leading to pursuing its highest form. People always encounter admirable things around them. Certainly, they point towards a greater reality. God is the supreme being who deserves that most excellent adoration, as all that exists originated from Him. Paul summarises the core of worship, “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever!” (Ro 11:36). The ancient humans worshipped nature and its forces that appeared mightier and incomprehensible for them. However, in their self-effort, they were unfruitful in comprehending the one who caused it. The chief aim of their worship was to appease the powers of nature to mitigate its violent impact on them. Interestingly, even today, several religious traditions, especially new-age movements, venerate the forces of nature, which indicates that despite scientific advancements, humans have not grown out of their sense of awe and wonder of magnificent and authentic.

Paul's observation in Romans 1:18ff underscores this human proclivity to worship the powers of nature. However, he rightly asserts that the unguided quest for adoring the powerful and mysterious culminated in attributing the highest honour to creation than the creator. Paul adds that this kindled God's wrath because this displacement of worship was also an

***"the purpose of worship is not to make God any greater than who He is. Instead, it helps worshippers to engage with God in response to the truth they encountered and imbibe God's nature."***

act of deliberate suppression of truth (Ro 1:18, 25). It might represent God as a self-centred tyrant who demands people to worship, admire his greatness, and express gratitude towards Him. This misconception is evident in some psalms where the psalmists invoke God to help them so that God will not lose a worshipper (Ps 30:10; 88:10). C S Lewis responded to this misconception by using an example of attributing admiration for an inanimate object with no rights. He asserts that an injustice is done even when a well-deserved admiration due to an inanimate object is not given because it does not make any difference for the object. Rather, it indicates that those who failed to admire the object are “stupid, insensible and great losers.”

Therefore, the purpose of worship is not to make God any greater than who He is. Instead, it helps worshippers to engage with God in response to the truth they encountered and imbibe God's nature (Ro. 12:1-3). Bishop William Temple succinctly portrays the essence of Christian worship: “To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God.” In worship, it is not God who receives something but the worshipper.



**W**orship is a very familiar phrase for Christians, yet there is a lot of misconception around the theme of worship. For many, worship is limited to the time they spend signing or expressing their praises and gratitude to God and for others, it is reduced to an activity that happens on a Sunday or at a special event. While it is important to praise and thank God at any given opportunity, the biblical idea of worship has a much broader sense. It's more of a lifestyle than just events happening in life. As singing and praising God are meant to glorify God, so is every other aspect of our life. When Abraham said to his servants, *'We will worship, and then we will come back to you,'* it meant not just some verbal expression of worship but a willingness to surrender what he valued the most in obedience to God. Similarly, when Apostle Paul implored to *'offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship,'* it transcended mere praise and thanksgiving. In both the above excerpts, the notion is more than vocalizing our praises; it's a life surrendered in reverence and honor of God. Praises and thanksgiving from an obedient and surrendered life are undoubtedly pleasing to God. When God accepted the sacrifice of Abel, it was not only the elements he offered but also

the attitude of his heart that God looked at. Hence it says, 'the Lord looked with favour on Abel and his offering'. In other words, God pays equal attention, if not more, to 'WHO & HOW' as to 'WHAT' is being offered. God is more inclined towards the person offering worship than the paraphernalia involved in worship.

As the writer of Hebrews encourages us to 'worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, let us be more diligent in making our worship, both corporate and personal, more meaningful by:

#### **ACKNOWLEDGING THE GREATNESS OF GOD**

Worship calls for acknowledging the worthiness and greatness of God whom we worship, and songs are a wonderful vehicle to articulate them. So, it is vital that our songs are true to God's scriptural revelation and focus on God's magnificence and glory rather than man's feelings or circumstances. Many of the Psalms in the Bible serve as good examples in proclaiming the greatness of God, even in troublesome situations. Once we glimpse His true worth, no 'alabaster' is too precious for us to keep, and man's precious treasure would become a 'cracked jar' at His feet.

#### **APPRECIATING THE GOODNESS OF GOD**

Our worship needs to be centred on Jesus because God demonstrated his

limitless love and goodness through the person of Christ and what he accomplished through the cross. He did not hold back anything but gave himself for us out of his great love. As we begin to ponder the depth of his love, grace, mercy, and compassion towards us, we can't remain silent but burst out in praise and appreciation for his goodness.

#### **ADMIRING THE BEAUTY OF GOD**

Psalm 95 inspires us to worship the Lord in the 'beauty of his holiness'. When prophet Isaiah saw the perfectness of God's holiness, exalting God and surrendering himself occurred naturally. Let it be our prayer and priority to have a true revelation of God's holiness, awesomeness, and beauty when we worship Him.

God is seeking true worshippers, not performers. So, let us offer our entire life in surrender to him so that we remain true worshippers who bring glory to His name.

**"God pays equal attention, if not more, to 'WHO & HOW' as to 'WHAT' is being offered. God is more inclined towards the person offering worship than the paraphernalia involved in worship"**



**Pastor Thomas Mathew**  
Aberdeen, UK

Pastor Pilgrims Gospel Church,  
Aberdeen, Associate Pastor  
King's Church, Aberdeen.





# Worship: Incredibly Incredible!



WORSHIP DESCRIBES BOTH A WAY OF LIFE AND SPECIFIC ACTIVITY. PRAISING, ADORING, AND EXPRESSING REVERENCE FOR GOD PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY ARE PARTICULAR ACTS OF WORSHIP. IN A BROADER SENSE, WORSHIP REFERS TO AN OVERALL LIFESTYLE OF SERVING AND GLORIFYING GOD AND REFLECTING HIS GLORY TO OTHERS.

Westminster Shorter Catechism says, “The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

**T**he biblical concept of worship involves praising God and giving Him glory with our lips and our lives, words and deeds, physical bodies, and spiritual hearts. Worship describes both a way of life and specific activity. Praising, adoring, and expressing reverence for God publicly and privately are particular acts of worship. In a broader sense, worship refers to an overall lifestyle of serving and glorifying God and reflecting His glory to others.

Greek words translated as “worship” are *proskuneó*, meaning, “paying homage”, “to fall down before”, or “bow down before.” (1 Corinthians 14:25); *sebázomai*, meaning, “to render religious honour” (Romans 1:25); and *sebomai*, meaning “to revere or adore” (Acts 16:14).

Worship is giving worth to God, who is the subject of our worship. He alone is worthy of worship (1 Chronicles 16:25; Psalm 96:4-5). Worshipping God means crediting to Him the absolute worth that He alone deserves. He is our Creator (Genesis 1 and 2; Acts 17:28; James 1:17; Revelation 4:11), Redeemer (Colossians 1:12-13; 1 Peter 1:3), and Lord (Psalm 22:27).

**Worship demands to blur the space and nationalities** - In John 4:23-24, Jesus made it clear that the physical location of our worship is no longer relevant: “Yet a time is coming and has now come

when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. Believers participate in specific acts of worship whenever they celebrate God’s worthiness and greatness by giving honour and glory to His name.

**Worship should produce a change of heart, reflected in our lifestyle** - The worshiper will have an ever-greater desire to love and obey the Lord. Worship and service go hand in hand; worship of God should propel us into greater obedience. Jesus said those who love Him will keep His commandments (John 14:15). If we say we love and worship Him but do not obey Him, our worship is worthless. Worship is to be more than a temporary, experience-oriented activity on Sunday, after which we revert to “normal” life the rest of the week. True worship is constant, inner praise to the God of Scripture, expressed in prayer, song, service, giving, and living.

**Worship is a response to the mercies of God** - God’s mercies are everything He has given us that we do not deserve: eternal love, eternal grace, the Holy Spirit, everlasting peace, eternal joy, saving faith, comfort, strength, wisdom, hope, patience, kindness, honour, glory, righteousness, security, eternal life, forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, sanctification, freedom, intercession and other earthly gifts like family and

material blessings in abundance. The knowledge and understanding of these incredible gifts motivate us to pour forth praise and thanksgiving-in other words, worship!

**Worship is not Music**- Music as such has nothing to do with worship. Music cannot produce worship, although it certainly can produce emotion. Music is not the origin of worship, but it can be the expression of it. Do not rely on music to induce worship. Instead, consider music simply as an expression induced by a heart covered by God’s mercies, obedient to His commands. People get caught up in details such as where they should worship; what music they should sing, and how their worship appears to others. Focusing on these matters misses the point.

**Worship should be done in truth and Spirit** - Jesus asserts that true worshipers will worship God in Spirit and truth (John 4:24). First, we must be born again. Without the Holy Spirit residing within us, we cannot respond to God in worship because we do not know Him. “No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11b). Second, worshipping in the Spirit requires a mind centred on God and renewed by Truth. Paul exhorts us to “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship ...” (Romans 12:1b, 2b).

Distractions of many kinds can flood our minds as we try to praise and glorify God, hindering our true worship.

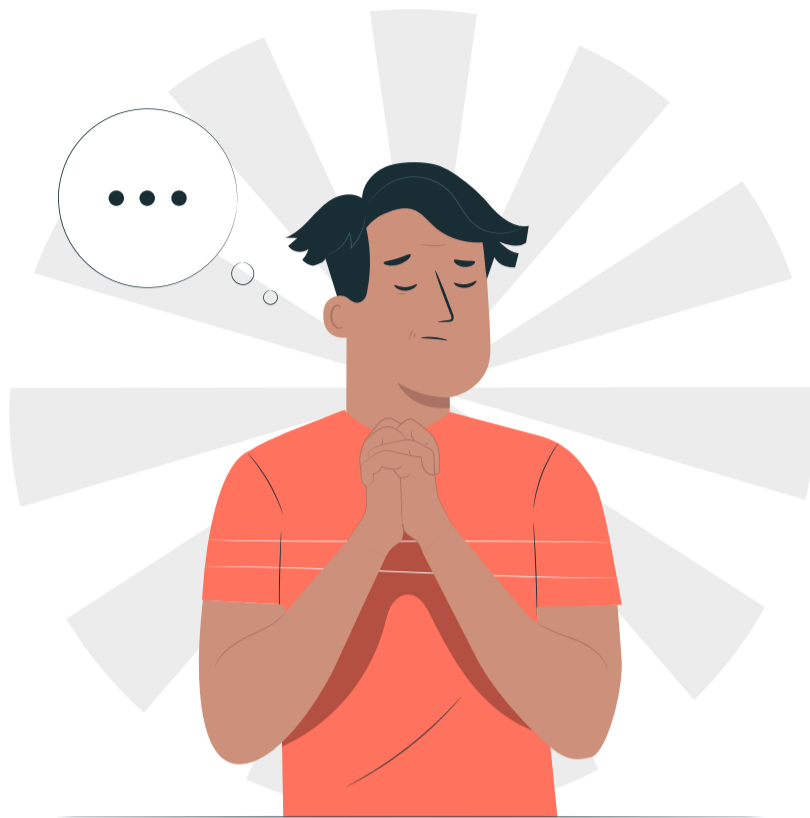
To truly worship God, we must understand who He is and what He has done. The only place He has fully revealed Himself is in the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible. Worship is an expression of praise from the depths of our hearts toward a God understood through His Word. If we do not have the truth of the Bible, we do not know this incredible God, and we cannot give incredible worship to the one and only God.



Rev. Dr. Joel Joseph  
Dehradun, India

Rev. Dr. Joel Joseph is teaching in the department of Old Testament and serves as the Dean of Students at New Theological College, Dehradun, India. He is involved in ministry for past twenty-two years. He is married to Ruby. They have two children, Jennifer and Joshua. He has authored two books and few articles in different academic journals.





## WORSHIP: OUR ULTIMATE PURPOSE

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty and majesty of His holiness [as the creator and source of holiness] (Psalms 29:2, AMP).

**W**orship' is honor and adoration directed towards God. It is a way of our hearts, minds, and souls responding to who God is, what He has said, and what He has done. Worshipping God is the ultimate purpose of a Christian's life. In the Old Testament, worship was central to the lives of God's people. The Tabernacle was designed only for worship. It was where God met His people and was the focal point of their everyday life. They were a people called and set apart for holiness. But their sin should have been resolved before worshipping a holy God. For this reason, they were given instructions for sacrifices and offerings (Lev. 1-7). God showed His people that the way into His presence, the path into worship, was opened through sacrifices and offerings.

The sacrifices and offerings were means of atonement or symbols of repentance from sin and obedience to God. According to the Scripture, sin required a corresponding sacrifice for atonement, and the sacrificial offerings had to be perfect, spotless, and without defects. These offerings foreshadowed Jesus Christ, who gave His life as the perfect sacrifice for our sins so that we would not have to die in sin. True worship begins with accepting Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross for our sins and responding with gratitude for His salvific works and God's unfailing love toward us. Worship is all about getting closer to God, surrendering entirely to Him, and letting Him

take charge of all spheres of our lives.

In the Old Covenant, people worshipped God in the Tabernacle or temple. But the New Covenant believers are the 'temple' in whom the triune God indwells. Paul says that as Christians, we have received the mercies of God through Christ's work. So, we must be thankful and present something much more precious to God, i.e., our very selves. He urges believers to present their bodies (dedicating our whole selves) as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, which he calls the true and proper act of worship (Rom. 12:1).

Heb. 13:15 talks about another spiritual sacrifice that is pleasing to God. It is praising and thanking God for His mighty deeds. "Through Him (Christ), therefore, let us at all times offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of lips that thankfully acknowledge and confess and glorify His name." The author of Hebrews continues to say that doing good to others and sharing with those in need are also considered sacrifices pleasing to God (13:16). So, for a Christian, worship is both vertically and horizontally oriented, involving our relationship with God and how we relate with other people.

Though worship is intensely personal, if believers are to maintain a consistent lifestyle of continuous worship, they need the encouragement and fellowship of other believers in Christ. Hebrew 10:24-25 says believers are to

assemble to stimulate one another to love and do charitable deeds. Thus, Individual and corporate worship feed each other and have a symbiotic relationship.

Therefore, let us worship God by offering ourselves as a living sacrifice and utilizing every moment of our lives to devote ourselves to doing good to all, sharing our blessings with others, and praising God, who is the source of all the goodness and blessings in our lives.



**Jossy Binz**  
Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia

Jossy Binz is currently pursuing M.Div. from IPCTSK. She is a teacher and holds a Master's in English Literature.



## THE NECESSITY FOR A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP

**C**ain and Abel worshipped God by offering sacrifices of some of the fruits of the soil and the best portions of the firstborn lambs from the flock, respectively. God favored Abel's offering over Cain's. Apart from the poor quality of Cain's offering, his heart's self-centered and sinful state contributed to his failure to please God, as evidenced by his murderous actions post-sacrifice. The simple lesson from this narrative in Genesis 4 is this: not everything called 'worship' is worship. This lesson is as important today as it was right from the beginning.

Modern worship is often characterized by performance-orientated, atmospheric, feeling-inducing, self-centered emotionalism limited to a few hours on a Sunday. On the other hand, Biblical worship is a way of life defined by simplicity, sincerity, spirituality and scriptural authority. As we read in Heb. 12:28b, "...so worship God *acceptably* with reverence and awe,"

But how do believers know whether their worship is authentic and acceptable to God? The answer is to introduce an understanding of worship that is based on the Bible. In other words, a Biblical theology of worship. For instance, like having theology to understand the doctrine of salvation (soteriology) or the doctrine of the end times (eschatology), our churches need a well-explained doctrine of worship so believers can follow the example of Abel instead of Cain.

A biblical theology of worship primarily reveals the following about true worship:

**1. It is focused on God:** Worship is a reverent and awe-inspiring reaction to not just divine providence but the divine himself (Heb. 12:28). God and his unique attributes should be the focus of worship. Modern worship often blurs that focus because it is limited to music-inspired emotionalism. That is why when the music fades, all that remains is meaningless posture

and emptiness. As Jesus said (quoting Isaiah), "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me" (Mt. 17:8). Our worship is not authentic unless our lifestyle brings glory to God alone (1 Cor. 10:31)

**2. It is rooted in Scripture:** The holy Scriptures are our ultimate source of revelation about God, His nature, and His attributes. We are called to worship the true God of the Bible, not the false god of worldly imagination. Christ emphasized the need for worship to be firmly based on truth (John 4:24). Therefore, Scripture is essential for true worship.

**3. It is powered by the Holy Spirit:** If worship is rooted in Scripture, then it is the Holy Spirit who gives it life and authenticity. A true understanding of the Bible is impossible and dangerous without the Holy Spirit. A Spirit-led understanding of the Bible leads to Spirit-led worship. (John 4:24, 14:26 16:13, 2 Tim. 3:16)

**4. It is motivated by love:** Biblical worship is a divine commandment motivated by our sincere love for God. Jesus said, "If you love me, you will obey my commandments" (John 14:15). Without love, we cannot obey, and our worship is worthless. Hence, obedience is the hallmark of a true worshiper motivated by pure love.

It is clear, therefore, that authentic Biblical worship depends on the existence of a proper biblical theology of worship. In this context, God will be the focus of our worship, resulting in it being holy and pleasing to Him (Ro. 12:1). Spiritual gifts will flourish and not be misused. Worship will extend to daily life and not be limited by time. It will be empowered by the Holy Spirit and not be defined by emotions.

To conclude, true worship is not derived from the charisma of a worship leader or the sound of music but from a Spirit-inspired understanding of Scripture. Hence, it is the obligation of the church today to emphasize the need for a biblical theology of worship.

**"Authentic Biblical worship depends on the existence of a proper biblical theology of worship. In this context, God will be the focus of our worship, resulting in it being holy and pleasing to Him. Spiritual gifts will flourish and not be misused. Worship will extend to daily life and not be limited by time. It will be empowered by the Holy Spirit and not be defined by emotions."**



**Pastor Jeswin James Baby**  
Bristol, UK

Pastor Jeswin is the associate pastor of Mount Church Bristol. He also leads a non-profit organisation called Christian Action for India (CAFI) He has earned BA and MA in Theology. He is married to Fiby Thomas and lives in Weston-Super-Mare.





## TRUE WORSHIPPERS

**S**incerity is a crucial aspect of our worship, as it involves being genuine and authentic in expressing love and devotion to God. Wholehearted devotion to God is the act of giving God our complete attention and focus. This requires surrendering our desires, plans, and ambitions to Him and aligning our lives with His will. When we devote ourselves to God, we experience a deep sense of love, joy, and peace that comes from knowing and following Him.

One of the key benefits is that it strengthens our love for God. When we give Him our full attention and focus, we can deeply experience His love and presence. This love that we experience fuels our desire to continue seeking God and to grow in our relationship with Him. As we continue to devote ourselves to Him, our love for Him deepens and becomes more genuine.

Worship helps us to prioritise God in our lives. It is easy to get caught up in the busyness of life and neglect our relationship with God. However, when we wholeheartedly devote ourselves to Him, we find time for prayer, reading the Bible, and worship. We recognise God as the most important aspect of our lives and prioritise Him above everything else.

True worship encourages us to seek God's will for our lives. We become more open to His guidance and direction when we focus on Him. Then, we are willing to let go of our own plans and ambitions and trust in His plan for our lives. This helps us to live a purposeful and meaningful

*"Wholehearted devotion to God is the act of giving God our complete attention and focus. This requires surrendering our desires, plans, and ambitions to Him and aligning our lives with His will."*

life and to experience a sense of fulfilment that comes from following God's plan for us. It helps overcome distractions and temptations that can pull us away from God. When we fully devote ourselves to Him, we can resist the distractions and temptations that come our way. We can focus on Him and remain steadfast in our faith.

After all, worshipping God gives us a sense of peace and contentment in our lives. Moreover, when we devote ourselves to God, we experience a sense of peace and contentment that comes from knowing Him and following His plan for our lives. As a result, we can trust in His love and provision and find joy in serving Him. It strengthens our love for Him, helps us to prioritise Him in our lives, encourages us to seek His will, helps us to overcome distractions and temptations, and fosters a sense of peace and contentment in our lives. Thus, by His grace, all will be able to strive to live a life of wholehearted devotion to God.

Jesus spoke about how to worship God in John 4:23-24, where He says, "Yet a time is coming

and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and truth." This verse reiterates the point of true worship, which is not performance-based but rather it is a sincere devotion to God. Sincere devotion to God will change man's nature completely and produce spiritual fruits in all walks of his life.



**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.



# HAS DEATH IN THE TOILET EVER ALARMED YOU?

**A**lthough it's rare, severe straining in the toilet can be deadly for chronically constipated people who have recently had heart surgery or suffer from several other disorders.

### What happens when you strain in the toilet?

Straining causes an increase in blood pressure in the brain, which can lead to a stroke or a ruptured aneurysm. An aneurysm occurs when a blood vessel has a weakened wall, which can rupture with increased pressure. When straining and holding the breath occurs, a breathing mechanism known as Valsalva Maneuver can stimulate the vagus nerve that connects the brain and the colon. The vagus nerve reflex causes a sharp drop in blood pressure and a sudden slowing of heart rate. It could lead to fainting (vasovagal syncope) as blood flow leaves the head and moves rapidly to the legs. And fainting in the toilet could mean a head injury. This can cause you to become dizzy and faint. And if blood flow to the heart is compromised, especially in someone who already has some artery blockages, that can also be enough to trigger a heart attack.

### When to do Valsalva Maneuver?

Your doctor may suggest the Valsalva manoeuvre if you have supraventricular tachycardia or SVT. This is a problem with your heart's electrical signals that causes it to beat too fast. It isn't usually serious unless you have other heart problems.

### Who is at risk?

In healthy guys, this physiological response isn't a problem. They can quickly regulate the drop in blood pressure before feeling any symptoms. But people with heart disease or blood pressure disorders or who take meds for hypertension are more at risk. That's because the special receptors in their bodies that regulate BP are already functioning less than optimally, making them less likely to be able to maintain proper blood flow. Healthy guys don't have to worry about passing out while trying to defecate. But people with heart disease or blood pressure problems may want to avoid excessive straining on the bowels. This intensifies their body's response to the Valsalva manoeuvre. Sometimes the manoeuvre causes a rise in pressure behind the eyes. Don't use it if you have retinopathy (damage to the retina in the eye) or have an implanted lens.

### How can you prevent the risk of death in the toilets?

Cardio-vascular events at defecation are, to a considerable degree, the consequence of an unnatural (for a human being) seating defecation posture on a common toilet bowl or bedpan. The squatting defecation posture is associated with reduced straining and may prevent many of these tragic cases. It requires sitting with knees and hips sharply bent and the buttocks close to the ground. Squat toilets are designed to facilitate this posture. Do not do excessive straining. Try

to reduce your risk of constipation so that stool comes out more smoothly with little straining. You can do that by increasing the fibre in your diet, drinking lots of fluids and exercising properly. If there is no relief, make sure to take some laxatives to prevent constipation.



**Priya Merin Mathew**  
Dallas, USA

Priya Mathew is a Family Nurse Practitioner and working in the Department of Endocrinology at a US Government Hospital in Dallas. She has written Christian devotional songs in Malayalam. She is married to Wesley Mathew and resides in Dallas with their two children.



## MAKE YOUR HEART SING AGAIN!



There may be times when songs of praise escape from us,  
That adds us to the ones that sat by the rivers of Babylon,  
Who hung their beautiful harps on the willow trees,  
And refused to sing praises to God in the strange land.

Though human in his weak times may falter and fall,  
Faithful Lord and His everlasting word will never fail,  
Ever ready to help those who lay every care upon Him,  
Then put their trust in God alone and believe His promises.

O weary soul, find new courage and hope in the lord,  
Arise and clear up your voice without a choice,  
For He will surely strengthen your heart to walk by faith,  
And will give you a new song to sing all through the night.

Oh pilgrim, Join the happy throng with a joyful heart,  
Who sing and praise God at all seasons of life,  
For they know God works all things for good,  
And everything will be fine in His time.



**Elizabeth Mathew**  
UAE

Elizabeth Mathew is a born-again, Spirit-filled Christian. As a former Vice Principal, she had a close association with educators, parents, and children.

## MISSIONARY CELEBRATIONS

MORIAH MALA, MANATHAVADY

2023 May 29-31

### Guest Speakers



Pastor George P.C.



Rev. James Chacko



Evg. George Abraham

**CHRIST AG  
CHURCH**

[www.christagchurch.org](http://www.christagchurch.org)





FROM HISTORY

## The Spread of Early Christianity



### MORE THAN A BUILDING

The earliest Christians did not have church buildings. They typically met in homes. (The first actual church building to be found is at Dura Europos on the Euphrates, dating about 231.) They did not have public ceremonies that would introduce them to the public. They had no access to the mass media of their day. So how can we account for their steady and diverse expansion over the first three centuries? After the Apostle Paul, we do not run across many "big names" as missionaries in the first few hundred years of Christian history. Instead, the faith

spread through a multitude of humble, ordinary believers whose names have been long forgotten.

### TO THE CITIES!

Early Christianity was primarily an urban faith, establishing itself in the city centers of the Roman Empire. Most of the people lived close together in crowded tenements. There were few secrets in such a setting. The faith spread as neighbours saw the lives of the believers close-up, on a daily basis. And what kind of lives did they lead? Justin Martyr, a noted early Christian theologian wrote

to Emperor Antoninus Pius and described the believers: "We formerly rejoiced in uncleanness of life, but now love only chastity; before we used the magic arts, but now dedicate ourselves to the true and unbegotten God; before we loved money and possessions more than anything, but now we share what we have and to everyone who is in need; before we hated one another and killed one another and would not eat with those of another race, but now since the manifestation of Christ, we have come to a common life and pray for our enemies and try to win over those who hate us without just cause." In another place Justin, points out how those opposed to Christianity were sometimes won over as they saw the consistency in the lives of believers, noting their extraordinary forbearance when cheated and their honesty in business dealings.

### CARE AND PRAYER

Christians became known as those who cared for the sick. Many were known for the healing that resulted from their prayers. Christians also started the first "Meals on Wheels." By the year 250, they were feeding more than 1500 of the hungry and destitute in Rome every day.

When Emperor Julian ("the Apostate") wanted to revive pagan religion in the mid-300s, he gave a

most helpful insight into how the church spread. This opponent of the faith said that Christianity "has been specially advanced through the loving service rendered to strangers and through their care of the burial of the dead. It is a scandal that there is not a single Jew who is a beggar and that the [Christians] care not only for their own poor but for ours as well; while those who belong to us look in vain for the help we should render them."

On the surface, the early Christians appeared powerless and weak; they were an easy target for scorn and ridicule. They had no great financial resources, no buildings, no social status, no government approval, and no respect from the educators. Moreover, after they became separated from their first-century association with the Jewish synagogues, they lacked institutional backing and an ancient tradition to appeal to.

However, what finally mattered is what they did have. They had a faith. They had a fellowship. They had a new way of life. They had a confidence that their Lord was alive in heaven and guiding their daily lives. These were the important things. In addition, it made all the difference in laying a Christian foundation for all of Western civilization.

**TRUE LIGHT CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY IN HOUSTON, TX IS SEEKING FULL TIME SENIOR PASTOR**

**SENIOR PASTOR NEEDED**

### QUALIFICATIONS

- BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN THEOLOGY
- FLUENT IN ENGLISH
- ABILITY TO DELIVER SERMONS IN BOTH ENGLISH AND MALAYALAM
- MINIMUM 5 YEAR OF PASTORAL EXPERIENCE AND MARRIED
- US CITIZENS OR US PERMANENT RESIDENTS

Interested candidates must email resume to:

[tlcapastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:tlcapastorsearch@gmail.com)

**LAST DATE  
JULY 15,  
2023**



**TRUELIGHT  
CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY**  
HOUSTON, TEXAS



[www.truelightchristianassembly.com](http://www.truelightchristianassembly.com)



832-429-8455



5431 W Ridgecreek Drive  
Houston, TX - 77053



Continued from Page 01

## WORSHIP OF LORD *Jesus* Christ

answers with compelling evidence in the scripture and history.

One of the earliest apostolic confessions Paul incorporated in his letter to the Corinthians clearly indicates early Christians attributing worship to Jesus alongside God the Father without compromising their strong monotheistic belief in One God. He wrote, *“although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth - as indeed there are many ‘gods’ and may ‘lords’ - yet for us, there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist,”* (1Cor. 8:5-6). Hurtado observes that this verse is Paul’s deliberate adaptation of the Shema Israel in Deuteronomy 6:4. Paul uses a parallelism to equate Jesus with God the Father by emphasising the creation formula: all things are *from* the Father and are *through* Jesus Christ; all things exist *for* the Father and *through* Jesus Christ. It is also placed against the Greco-Roman

pantheons, with multiple gods and goddesses. This statement cannot evolve by accident in the strong monotheistic Jewish setting; rather, it is articulated and expressed in response to the revelation the early church has received.

Angels refused to accept worship (Rev. 22:8-9) on the contrary the Risen Christ never refused anyone’s worship (Mt. 28:17; Lk. 24:52); in one instance, during his ministry, Jesus accepted worship (Jn. 9:38). All the New Testament writings clearly indicate that there was no dispute among the early Christians about the divinity of Jesus and offering worship to Him. Pauline epistles pre-date the gospels, and it was in circulation just over a couple of decades after the death and resurrection of Jesus which is not a time gap sufficient for the formation of a new tradition and practice, especially deifying someone who was brutally executed by the state. The earliest followers of Jesus who lived within the first three or four decades since the death and resurrection of Jesus, despite being strong monotheistic Jews, were able to worship Him as God besides Yahweh not because they were influenced by the New Testament writings but with their own personal experience and convictions about Jesus. John’s gospel gives a clear indication of how Jesus’ disciples’ perception about devotion to God radically changed as they encountered the risen Lord (John 2:22; 12:16).

Even today, it is no different. Unless the reason to accept Jesus as one’s saviour and God and worship Him is rooted in their personal

experience of Jesus, it might eventually lose its value and purpose and may become mediocre in their faith and devotion. The “attractive” church services that are heavily influenced by commercialisation of ‘worship’ should not be the key determinant of devotion to Jesus. Rather, a personal understanding of the reality of God entering history in the form of a human and restoring the world to himself as an undeniable truth is the key motivation for worship. The early Christians’ devotion to Jesus was a celebration of His victory over numerous human experiences like poverty, injustice, oppression, ostracization and humiliation. They commemorated it is a victory over slavery of sin and death. Therefore, those who worship Jesus today may participate in his victory that assures us personal victory over world, flesh, and Satan.

**"All the New Testament writings clearly indicate that there was no dispute among the early Christians about the divinity of Jesus and offering worship to Him."**



*For all your travel requirements contact*

**GLOBAL**  
TRAVEL EXPERTS

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

9823 Bustleton Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19115, USA  
Email: info@GTetravels.com | www.GTetravels.com



## King Charles III's Coronation Remain Religious, Even if the Country isn't



Last year, a *Washington Post* journalist interviewed Ian Bradley, a professor of cultural and spiritual history here in the United Kingdom, about the accession of King Charles III to the throne. The reporter remarked, "For a country which is so secular and where so few go to church, you sure mention God a lot." It's a fair comment.

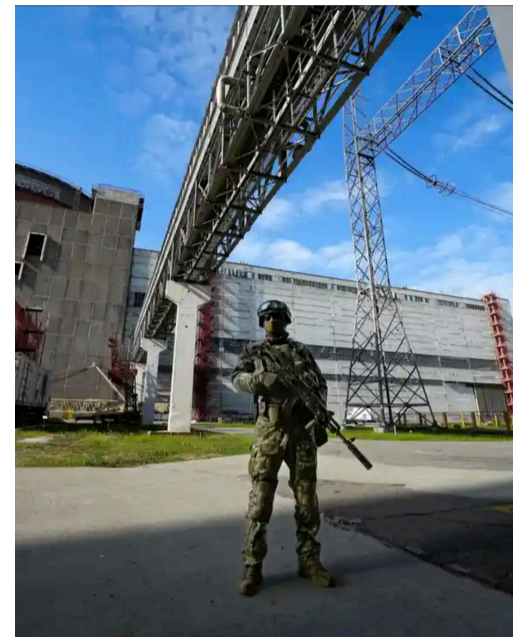
As monarch, King Charles is not only the head of state for the UK but also the Defender of the Faith (a title given to King Henry VIII by the pope in 1521 before the king's famous break with the Roman Catholic Church) and Supreme Governor of the Church of England. When he was crowned in Westminster Abbey, he was anointed with holy oil by the Archbishop of Canterbury while the choir sang "Zadok the Priest," an anthem used in every coronation since 973 that draws on the anointing of Solomon by the priest Zadok in 1 King.

"It is the coronation more than any other event that underlines the sacred nature of the United Kingdom monarchy," writes Bradley in his book *God Save the King: The Sacred Nature of Monarchy*. "At their coronations, kings and queens were not simply crowned and enthroned but consecrated, set apart and anointed, dedicated to God and invested with sacerdotal garb and symbolic regalia. Here, if anywhere, we find the divinity which hedges the throne."

All of this took place in a country in which, as a recent census revealed, fewer than half the population describe themselves as Christian. The Church of England's own statistics suggests that just 1.5 per cent of the population attend a weekly service, while a 2018 British Social Attitudes survey found that 43 per cent of us "never or practically never" attend a religious service. For many of the millions who watched the coronation on television, it was likely the first church service they've observed in years or possibly ever. Even those who attended church will probably need to rely on the BBC's commentary to comprehend what was underway; for most of us, it will be the first coronation of our lifetimes. Westminster Abbey, the setting for every coronation since 1066, is home to the shrine to Edward the Confessor, a king made a saint by the pope in 1161. King Charles will be crowned in Saint Edward's Chair, which dates back to 1300 and will receive regalia dating back to the 17th century.

source: *Christianity Today*

## World News



### Residents Worry as Russia Evacuates Town near Zaporizhzhia Plant

Russia has told people to leave 18 settlements in the Zaporizhzhia region, including Enerhodar, near the plant, ahead of Kyiv's anticipated offensive. The Ukrainian mayor of Melitopol, Ivan Fedorov, said there were five-hour waits as thousands of cars left. The UN's nuclear watchdog warned a "severe nuclear accident" could occur.

Although its reactors were not producing electricity, they were still loaded with nuclear material, he said. Earlier, the IAEA warned in a statement that the situation at the Zaporizhzhia facility was "becoming increasingly unpredictable and potentially dangerous". Operating staff were still at the site, but there was "deep concern about the increasingly tense, stressful, and challenging conditions for personnel and their families". It said IAEA experts at the plant had "received information that the announced evacuation of residents from the nearby town of Enerhodar - where most plant staff live - has started". On Friday, the Russian-installed regional head Yevgeny Balitsky said, "In the past few days, the enemy has stepped up shelling settlements close to the front line".



### Covid no Longer a Global Health Emergency: WHO

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared that Covid-19 no longer represents a "global health emergency". The statement represents a major step towards ending the pandemic and comes three years after it declared its highest level of alert over the virus. Officials said the virus' death rate had dropped from a peak of more than 100,000 people per week in January 2021 to just over 3,500 on 24 April. The head of the WHO said at least seven million people died in the pandemic.

But Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said that the true figure was "likely" closer to 20 million deaths - nearly three times the official estimate - and warned that the virus remained a significant threat.





Continued from Page 01

## VIOLENCE BREAKS OUT IN MANIPUR



"Residents of Manipur say there has been a breakdown of law and order. The state's government, led by India's Hindu-nationalist ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), last week issued "shoot-at-sight" orders for "extreme" cases, while the army said Sunday it has "significantly enhanced" its surveillance in the state."

order and authorities blocking internet access for the state's approximately 3 million population.

Residents of Manipur say there has been a breakdown of law and order. The state's government, led by India's Hindu-nationalist ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), last week issued "shoot-at-sight" orders for "extreme" cases, while the army said Sunday it has "significantly enhanced" its surveillance in the state.

Skirmishes broke out in the state capital Imphal on May 3 after thousands of people from the Naga and Kuki tribes took part in a rally against the majority Meitei ethnic group being afforded special status under India's "Scheduled Tribe" grouping.

The Meitei community, a largely Hindu ethnic group that accounts for about 50% of the state's population, have for years campaigned to be recognised as a scheduled tribe, giving them access to wider benefits, including health, education and government jobs. If the Meitei community are given scheduled tribe status, other ethnic groups – many of whom are Christian – say they fear they will not have a fair chance for jobs and other benefits. The divide between the Meiteis and the other ethnic groups is cut sharply across political and geographic lines. While last week's protests appear to have sparked the recent violence, tensions between the two groups have been simmering for years over a complex range of issues, including land rights and a crackdown on minority groups. The Meiteis dominate positions within the state government and have been privy to more economic and infrastructural advancement than the other ethnic groups. They mostly live in the more developed but geographically smaller Imphal Valley, while the Naga and Kuki groups live predominantly in agriculturally rich and geographically larger protected hill districts. Tensions remain high, and the situation remains volatile. It is unclear when or how the unrest will end, but residents of the state and their loved ones outside or overseas have urged for calm and restoration of law and order.

## World News



### India Extends One Billion Credit Line for Sri Lanka.

The credit line, part of about US\$ 4 billion in emergency assistance extended by India during the peak of Sri Lanka's financial crisis early last year, was scheduled to end in March. Post-negotiations, the credit line was extended until March 2024, said Sri Lanka's Deputy Treasury Secretary Priyantha Rathnayake. "There is about US\$ 350 million left of the credit line that can be utilised as needed," he said.



### India Builds New Hospitals but Needs More Doctors

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has built more than a dozen medical institutes for specialized treatment since he took office in 2014. The government has plans to build at least one major hospital in each of India's 761 districts.

The problem is a lack of doctors, a shortage reaching crucial levels as India becomes the world's most populous nation. India's doctor-to-patient ratio hit a record high of 1.2 doctors per 1,000 patients in 1991, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), but as its population surged, the ratio dropped to about 0.7 in 2020. The WHO recommended level is 1, and China, with a comparable population to India, is at 2.4. Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya told parliament in March that India, in fact, had a ratio of 1 doctor per 834 patients, well above the WHO level, but the number included doctors practising traditional forms of medicine such as Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, and Naturopathy. The WHO and doctors groups such as the Indian Medical Association do not include traditional medicine practitioners in their calculations.