



# **TLM Daily Devotions**

**September 2017**





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## Foreword

September in The Leprosy Mission is traditionally the time of the most important meetings of the year: Members, the International Board's, country leaders', country chairs' meetings, discussions and workshops. Besides decision makings, learnings and relevant steps forward it is the time of fellowship, too. This is one of the most precious characteristics of our family worldwide! From East to West, North to South we are by the Holy Spirit united in the common love of our Lord, people affected by leprosy, and each other. When we sing the ancient and ever fresh hymn of Charles Wesley (1707 – 1788), the roof always shakes as we honour our Master, Redeemer and King. Join please to our choir worldwide, TLMers anywhere on the Globe:

*Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer's praise,  
The glories of my God and king,  
The triumphs of His grace!*

*My gracious Master and my God,  
Assist me to proclaim,  
To spread through all the earth abroad,  
The honours of Thy name.*

*Jesus! the name that charms our fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease—  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,  
'Tis life, and health, and peace.*

*He breaks the pow'r of cancelled sin,  
He sets the pris'ner free;  
His blood can make the foulest clean,  
His blood availed for me.*

*He speaks, and, list'ning to His voice,  
New life the dead receive,  
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,  
The humble poor believe.*

*Glory to God, and praise and love  
Be ever, ever giv'n  
By saints below and saints above,  
The church in earth and heav'n.*

**Marta Risko**



## Running time backwards

*Do not condemn and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Luke 6:37*

Our youngest granddaughter, Georgia, is now six-going-on-25. Talking to Mummy the other day, Georgia asked, "Mum, can we run time backwards?" What a question from a six year old. Mum probed a bit. No, Georgia hadn't been watching sci-fi films on telly. She'd been with a group of school friends sharing sweets, and Georgia had missed out. There hadn't been enough to go round. She thought if she could go back in time and live that bit over again, she could make sure she got a sweet.

Running time backwards. I guess we'd all like to do that at some time in our lives. To savour some happy moment, or to get a chance to put right something we regretted. "If only I had my time over again, I'd do that differently," we say.

The trouble is we can't turn the clock back, or run time in reverse. We simply - or not so simply - have to try to get it right first time. That's not always possible - I know that well from my own experience, but there can be comfort in looking honestly at mistakes we've made, facing the consequences and saying sorry. And when it's the other way round and someone's upset us, comfort in forgiving them.

And if we could run time backwards and get another chance, who's to say we'd get it right the second time round?

*Forgiving Lord, I offer you my failures and regrets.  
Knowing that I've tried my best must be enough for me right now.*

**Eddie Askew** (1927-2007) devoted half a century to leprosy and its consequences. In 1950 he and his wife Barbara set sail for India. Eddie's first placement was in Purulia, West Bengal. In 1965 Eddie took up the post of executive secretary at TLM's office in London. His first overseas visit in this new role was to Ethiopia, where he learned of plans to set up a leprosy training centre that would benefit patients and medics throughout Africa. He offered to become a founding member and signed TLM up to support what was to become ALERT (All Africa Leprosy and Rehabilitation Training Centre). The following year, the organisation now known as the International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP) was set up. In 1974 Eddie became general director of TLM. He was keen to develop TLM's work elsewhere, and took a team into the closed land of Bhutan in response to a request from its government. - Inspired by his travels and his Christian faith, Eddie found an outlet for his creativity in painting and poetry. He retired in 1987. From 1998 until his death he was TLM- vice-president, and in 2000 he was awarded an OBE. (Fiona Spence)



## **“I am making everything new!”**

### *Revelation 21, 1-7*

Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,” for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.



## The New Jerusalem, the Bride of the Lamb

*Revelation 21,9-27*

One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls. The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. The angel measured the wall using human measurement, and it was 144 cubits thick. The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass. The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth ruby, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth turquoise, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of gold, as pure as transparent glass.

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.



## Spiritual warfare – Part 1

We as believers need to have "raw power" from heaven. That is spiritual authority that has not been diluted by man's traditions and worldly pressure.

- Sadly many believers don't exercise this authority because they're afraid and scared, they have been taught incorrectly or never been made aware of it.

Jesus saw the necessity to give His disciples this type of authority & power and we need the same today.

*Luke 10:18-19 NIVU "He replied, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.'"*

This is the power & authority God has invested in us while we live on earth.

Why is this power & authority need?

*Ephesians 6:10... "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."*

*2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJV "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."*

While we are living on earth there is a battle between two kingdoms: Kingdom of God & the kingdom of darkness.

The kingdom of darkness was defeated at the cross by Jesus. It's not a battle between God & the devil: the battle is us submitting to the ways & Word of God against the enemy of our souls.

Who can use it?

*Matthew 28:18 NKJV "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go..."*

God expects us to use the victory Jesus obtained when He defeated Satan on the cross.

The pattern: Jesus defeated Satan, delegated this victory to us, returned to heaven & sat down at the Father's right hand.

*Believers in Jesus: it's a purposeful delegated authority!*

**Dan Izzett** - Zimbabwe. Retired pastor. I was diagnosed with lepromatous leprosy in 1972. Served on TLMI board for eight years and on the Zimbabwe board for 15 years. I now serve on the ALM board and do advocacy for them.



## Spiritual warfare – Part 2

*Ephesians 6.10* “...that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” As believers we must use it! Our Heavenly Father expects us to use it!

*2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NKJV* “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,”

It seems that at times this is a forgotten practice by the church & the various ministries the people of God engage in? That is: Taking our God given authority over the kingdom of darkness!

When do we use it? When needed! NB: Whatever work we do, whatever lives we live, more so than ever, especially if it represents & extends the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God and the people of His Kingdom will ALWAYS be under attack from kingdom of darkness! In other words: We need to use it all the time, whatever we do, when and we live - everyday & every activity!

How do we use it? *Mark 16:17 NKJV* “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will...”

When faced with a situation that is being hindered, we, we, take authority in the name of Jesus over the situation.

*Acts 3:6-8 NKJV* “Then Peter said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God.”

*Luke 9:1-2 NKJV* “Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.”

Jesus gave us His authority over the negatives - the kingdom of darkness - of this world:

- To let people know their sins are forgiven!
- To heal the sick!
- To cast out demons!
- To bring good news to those who need it!

He showed His disciples how it was done, they went out & did it, Jesus returned to heaven & the disciples did it - they demonstrated Kingdom of God stuff. The Acts stories are there to show us the disciples did it - we are expected to do the same!

We keep writing the same stories to complete the book of Acts demonstrating the Kingdom of God! Jesus no longer does it! We do it in His name, His delegated authority! This is an established fact.

*We do it!*

**Dan Izzett** - Zimbabwe. Retired pastor. I was diagnosed with lepromatous leprosy in 1972. Served on TLMI board for eight years and on the Zimbabwe board for 15 years. I now serve on the ALM board and do advocacy for them.



## Good and Faithful Servant

I will put you in charge of many things .....

### *Matthew 25: 23*

I have just finished reading Dr Ida Scuder's biography "Passing on the Torch of Life." She was the founder of Christian Medical College, Vellore which primarily opened its door to groom women to become doctors. It was a revelation to me. The transforming power in Dr Ida's life was from unwillingness to be a doctor and missionary to the greatest visionary in the medical field India ever saw.

She was responsible for a small place, only women that too, Those days women doctors were unthinkable, and that too treating men! She was indignant many a time, but she was faithful. And she invested ... her time, money, wisdom, and talents. She also gave up, the lure of America her home, her love, her relationships, her desires and moulded her desires on the desire of God .

Then he said to them all: *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."*

Dr Ida lived by investing her all. So God honoured her by putting her in charge of a medical college, a nursing school, a women's empowerment club, hundreds of mobile clinics and village camps that transformed South India's women and health. Responsibilities grew, along which came power and ability that can be attributed to God only. Her Institution commands awe and wonder at the heights of glory it has achieved in health care and academics.

Her life set me thinking! Will God tell me "Good and Faithful servant "? Is He putting me in charge of 'many' things? Am I faithful enough? Am I found terribly wanting? There is no room or time for complacency and waiting. Ida's favorite word was "Juldi Juldi "....Hurry Hurry ! We need to hurry to harvest the souls that wait for healing and restoration.

**Joydepa Darlong Dr** is a Family Physician, working as Consultant and Deputy Superintendent. For the past 15 years at The Leprosy Mission Hospital, Purulia, West Bengal, India.





## Hard bites in faith - Conflicts

*“If anyone, then knows the good they ought to do and does not do it, it is sin for them.” James 4,17*

I love conflicts! You may say, dear reader: horrible from a pious TLMer! But I hope: if you have not loved conflicts so far, you will change your mind and will get to love them, too!

Few terms are more misunderstood than “conflict”. High percentage of people simply identify it with “quarrelling, hurting each other, shouting, battlefield, spiritual ruins...” They say: it is not nice. So they:

1. avoid conflicts. All the time. Escape from it. Are settled in on avoiding conflicts! Bury their head in the sand, as an ostrich. “If I do not see, do not hear, do not say a word: nothing wrong can happen!” They are based on the misinterpretation of *“be at peace with everybody”*. Where THIS kind of approach dominates, problems explode in drastic ways. People are helpless and don’t know what is right and what is wrong. Children brought up like this do not understand why are they unable to get married, fit into society, are uncertain and helpless like a babe. Lost among views... seeking but not finding... Those thinking in this way are often surprised, why they are not asked for their opinion, or why their advice is not sought. Probably, because they have no voice at all ... as they had all the time hid it behind a false “peace”.

2. Or just the opposite: they make arrangements, solve situations or problems in an authoritarian way! -from a position like a dictator. Loudly saying the verdict, the others have nothing to do just to obey... they grow huge in themselves and their own truths – never listening or influenced by God either! - Why do I love conflicts?

A. Because Jesus all along gave us an example of using conflicts! “Conflict” is derived from Latin ‘conflicto’ which means “to strike two things together”. We are told about this all through Scripture - Good versus bad; broad versus narrow. Our Lord Jesus all through His ministry used conflicts in this sense! He never said in a cynical way “if they want, they can find things out by themselves...” But all through His ministry He always clearly expressed His thoughts, straightly giving voice to them. He struck two things together, offering alternatives: *‘if you...’ or ‘if you not’*. He never hid His thoughts behind a false silence or by politeness-decorated opportunism. Nor behind despotism! But He was at the focus of each situation, fully convinced and strong, brave, calm, struggled, prayed, had courage to confront, oppose and represent the Truth which He was totally sure about, as it was God’s Truth, the only just, ultimate one.

2. I love conflicts as my experience is that conflicts are a blessing. Through conflicts (=striking two things together) I am honouring the other party. Especially when representing God’s truth! Conflicting views are like open doors to get through to the understanding of the other person. Conflicts are holy paths to point on the Way, the Only Good Choice: God’s one! Conflicts are cleansing mechanisms in communication channels. Conflicts are victories even if seemingly, they perhaps end with a blame. The victory is that “I have done my best and all that I could. My part has been done.” Bringing your children up you share what God has given you the responsibility to share. In partnerships you honour and respect your fellowman. Missing this is like sitting comfortably in the armchair, letting the other one riding into his/her fall, while urgency is needed and you could be of help!

*“If anyone, then knows the good they ought to do and does not do it, it is sin for them.” James 4,17*

Did you come about to love conflicts? I hope so! Enjoy them, use them, practice them! You will see: you will be needed and you will be a blessing! Happy conflicting!



## When life happens ... are you prepared!!!!

Good morning dear colleague.

Life happened thick and fast around the apostle Paul – especially on his missionary journeys!

Let's learn from what happened to him in *Acts 16:25 alone!!!*

*"About midnight"* – THE DARK HOUR !

Have you likewise had a dark hour in your life?....

Where everything around you seemed fearful and hopeless!....

*Proverbs 24:10 says, 'If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small.'*

*"Paul and Silas"* - THE DEPENDABLE DISCIPLES !

Both were radically saved; both were dependable in the Chr. community.

Both were divinely commissioned stalwarts – in the will of God!

Do you have an accountability partner like this in your life?

*"were praying"* - THE DAILY DISCIPLINE !

In time of trouble, prayer was always their first resort.

Jesus is our best example in prayer - remember Jesus in Gethsemane!

*Ephesians 6:18 speaks of 'praying at all times in the Spirit'.*

*"and singing hymns to God"*-THE DIVINE DIRECTION !

Not soul music, not the blues , nor pitiful dirges... but God-directed +

God-honouring melodies, pleasing to God in every way (*Col.3:16,17*)!

Dear saint of God, please always try + keep it upward + God-ward!

*"and the prisoners were listening to them."*-THE DEED OF KINDNESS !

Because of their feet in the stocks, they couldn't serve the inmates in any other way. But they did what they could in the circumstances. Never stop reaching out to others less fortunate than yourself.

*Matthew 10:42* urges us to *'give one of these little ones a cup of cold water'* - God will reward!

*Prayerfully now read Psalm 135:1-7 and 13-21.*

– Amen.



## Psalm 5

*For the director of music. For pipes. A psalm of David.*

<sup>1</sup> Listen to my words, LORD,  
consider my lament.

<sup>2</sup> Hear my cry for help,  
my King and my God,  
for to you I pray.

<sup>3</sup> In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice;  
in the morning I lay my requests before you  
and wait expectantly.

<sup>4</sup> For you are not a God who is pleased with wickedness;  
with you, evil people are not welcome.

<sup>5</sup> The arrogant cannot stand  
in your presence.

You hate all who do wrong;  
<sup>6</sup> you destroy those who tell lies.  
The bloodthirsty and deceitful  
you, LORD, detest.

<sup>7</sup> But I, by your great love,  
can come into your house;  
in reverence I bow down  
toward your holy temple.

<sup>8</sup> Lead me, LORD, in your righteousness  
because of my enemies—  
make your way straight before me.

<sup>9</sup> Not a word from their mouth can be trusted;  
their heart is filled with malice.  
Their throat is an open grave;  
with their tongues they tell lies.

<sup>10</sup> Declare them guilty, O God!  
Let their intrigues be their downfall.  
Banish them for their many sins,  
for they have rebelled against you.

<sup>11</sup> But let all who take refuge in you be glad;  
let them ever sing for joy.  
Spread your protection over them,  
that those who love your name may rejoice in you.

<sup>12</sup> Surely, LORD, you bless the righteous;  
you surround them with your favor as with a shield.



## Psalm 6

*For the director of music. With stringed instruments. According to sheminith. A psalm of David.*

<sup>1</sup> LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger  
or discipline me in your wrath.

<sup>2</sup> Have mercy on me, LORD, for I am faint;  
heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony.

<sup>3</sup> My soul is in deep anguish.  
How long, LORD, how long?

<sup>4</sup> Turn, LORD, and deliver me;  
save me because of your unfailing love.

<sup>5</sup> Among the dead no one proclaims your name.  
Who praises you from the grave?

<sup>6</sup> I am worn out from my groaning.

All night long I flood my bed with weeping  
and drench my couch with tears.

<sup>7</sup> My eyes grow weak with sorrow;  
they fail because of all my foes.

<sup>8</sup> Away from me, all you who do evil,  
for the LORD has heard my weeping.

<sup>9</sup> The LORD has heard my cry for mercy;  
the LORD accepts my prayer.

<sup>10</sup> All my enemies will be overwhelmed with shame and anguish;  
they will turn back and suddenly be put to shame.



## "Motivation"

*"For Christ's love compels us ..." 2 Corinthians 5:14*

The setting was beautiful. We were sitting under the palm trees near the swimming pool at the holiday centre enjoying a game of scrabble. The soft background music mingled with the happy sounds of children playing in the water.

At the deep end of the pool, a group of teenagers were swimming and tossing a ball around. A few of their friends were soaking up the sun. Others were standing near the pool chatting and shouting remarks at those in the water.

Those swimming kept on inviting one of the girls to go into the water and join them. Her constant reply was "I don't feel like swimming."

Suddenly one of the others ran up behind her and pushed her into the water. As it was far too deep for her to stand there were only two alternatives - swim or drown. It was amazing to see how quickly the desire to swim came.

For Paul, the motivation to tell people about Jesus came as a result of his awareness of the greatness of God's love and of man's absolute need. The realisation that it is only through Christ that people can find life gave him a sense of urgency ... it was a "sink or swim" situation.

Can I say that I feel compelled (pushed) to share the good news about Jesus to those who do not know him?

### **Silvano Perotti**

Secretary for Europe then Deputy International Director and Director for Support and Development TLMI

Born in Italy - retired in Switzerland.

Worked with TLMI until 1990.



## Released to make mistakes – Part 1

In order to do the things that Jesus did, you have to be willing to take some risks and in order to be willing to take risks, you have to be OK with making mistakes! Making mistakes is one of the best ways to learn how to recognise opportunities to see God's Kingdom come and to grow in your ability to hear God's voice. I've been reading *The Power of A Whisper* by Bill Hybels and am challenged in a new way to be willing to wait on the Lord, hear from heaven and step out in obedience.

However, I am learning not to be discouraged when I make a mistake but to enjoy the journey of walking through fear and taking risks. When we are obedient to take a risk and it all goes wrong, there are always two ways we can respond:

1. You can stop taking risks in the area that brought you the embarrassment – the trouble with this is that you will struggle to grow in hearing God and you may limit what He wants to do through you.
2. Alternatively, you can get up, brush yourself off and choose to have another go, to take another risk.

Two key revelations have really helped me over the years to keep me responding to promptings from the Holy Spirit, especially when things go wrong.

### a) Realise that my identity in Christ is nothing to do with my performance.

Growing up we learn over time that, in order to feel valued and significant we need to get good at performing. We can then believe the lie that, in order to be loved by God and please Him, we need to avoid making mistakes and strive for perfection. If my identity is rooted in my performance, I will only do what I know I can do well so that I can keep feeling good about myself. I will find it difficult to take risks because risks might result in mistakes, and mistakes will result in me feeling rubbish about myself. In order to be free to take risks and make mistakes we need revelation that our identity and God's pleasure over us is nothing to do with our performance. God's grace lavished on us at the cross gives us incredible value and significance, not our performance. God does not love us more when we pray for someone to be encouraged or love us less if we miss an opportunity.

### b) Understand the way God measures success is nothing like I do

Do I measure success by the outcome of my risks – did the person I prayed for get healed? Did I hear God accurately? Did the person let me pray for them? I have learned that the way God measures success is entirely different to how I do. It is all to do with obedience, my willingness to say 'yes' to Him and take some risks to see His Kingdom advance on the earth. The outcome of my obedience is up to Him and to those we speak to. (*Isaiah 55:8-11*)

I take time to listen out for the applause of heaven when I take risks. Sometime at the healing rooms I can pray for someone – to be honest it was not immediately clear that anything had happened. What was clear was that heaven applauds my obedience. We turn up every Monday to pray for the sick – do we stop if nothing appears to change or do we continue to pray in faith knowing it's the Father's heart to see people healed and encouraged? (*Hebrews 12*)



## Released to make mistakes – Part 2

### Growing in obedience

God loves it when we are obedient, because our obedience flows out of our relationship with Him. Sometimes our obedience will be in response to a specific prompting from the Holy Spirit. These can be easily missed or ignored if we don't look out for them – that still small voice. At other times our obedience will be in response to knowing God's heart as we read the Bible. We pray for the sick because we know God loves to heal the sick. Sometimes it is easier to avoid the sick person in front of me rather than feel embarrassed that they will reject my request to pray for them. Thankfully, grace abounds when we miss opportunities God gives us. I have missed so many opportunities because of fear of rejection and embarrassment! Sorry Lord!

Living the normal Christian life does involve taking risks. When you realise that heaven applauds your obedience to the Holy Spirit, it takes the pressure off having to make something happen. It is inevitable when you take risks that there will be time you feel awkward and embarrassed. You will make mistakes and you might sometime wish you had never opened your mouth. But these moments will pale into insignificance in comparison to the times your obedience and your risks lead to people encountering the love and kindness of God. These moments are priceless.

The truth is, God is eager to respond to our obedience and the choices we make to walk through fear and take risks. The God of the universe is for us, and with us, and has got our backs.

How about you take a risk today? Spend time asking God what He wants you to do – then over the next few days, keep your eyes peeled for opportunities to do what God has said. Remember to celebrate your obedience, irrespective of the outcome. There are opportunities to take risks for God everywhere.

What about making a decision today to intentionally take some steps out of your comfort zone, and see what God will do?

It may be a phone call to a friend. It may be a thank you card or a word of encouragement. It may be a listening ear to an anxious supporter on the phone sharing their concerns and being willing to pray for them.

Adapted from *Naturally Supernatural* by **Wendy Mann**

by **Elizabeth Allen**, Executive Assistant to the National Director, TLMEW



## Not by might, nor by power

*“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord Almighty.” Zechariah 4:6*

Whenever I have to face any challenge or make any decision in my life, the verse from Zechariah 4:6 would come to my mind, to remind me that worldly power is inadequate for the purpose of building God’s work; only by the Holy Spirit’s enablement, and then I can complete the work which God has planned for me in His timing.

Over the first few months of this year, I have had a relatively busy life, after celebrating Chinese New year in HK, I went to Chiang Mai for a week’s quiet retreat, and it was a fruitful time to have spiritual refreshment. God blessed me with His healing for my right knee, the pain gradually has gone and by the end of February I did not need to undergo any surgery. It was good news to me as I had to prepare my trip to Nepal after two months.

With the invitation of INF, I had the chance to visit Green Pastures Hospital in Pokhara last May, to meet the hospital team in order to understand opportunities to serve. The purpose of my short visit was to focus on nursing care in leprosy, to give some suggestions on improving the quality care from the nursing prospective, and encourage appropriate nursing care planning for the years ahead.

Since 2015 I have been praying for any opportunity to serve the Lord in Nepal, and then a Nursing Advisor role with INF came out. I had known this mission organization for a long time as I had worked in INF leprosy clinic in Mid-Western Region around seven years (1993 – 2000), during that period I had visited Green Pastures Hospital many times due to workshops, training or other events regarding leprosy. During my working time in Nepal I remember this hospital had good experience in working with leprosy patients, commencing with strong focus on wound care and prevention of disability.

As I have been away from Nepal for nearly 17 years, I can see this hospital has gone through many changes. Especially during my visit time the hospital was going through an important transitional period in many ways. I hope my observations of current leprosy care and suggestions would be supportive and constructive, in order to provide awareness of the quality care and be able to assist in the nursing planning for the future.

During the long waiting time at home, I have learnt that whenever worries plague me, I would follow those three steps by His Spirit: Tell God about my concerns, asking Him to provide for my needs. Do what I humanly can to work on my concerns. Trust in God’s goodness – remember that He cares for me more than even I care for myself, and He will provide all I need at the right time.

**Yuek Ming Poon** - Hong Kong - Worked with The Leprosy Mission for 22 years. 1993 – 2000 seconded to INF to work in Nepal in leprosy clinic as Clinic Manager. 2002 – 2004 worked with TLM as POID Technical Officer in India, 2005 – 2012 worked with TLM as Country Leader in China and Laos, 2013 -2015 worked with TLM in PNG as Capacity Building Advisor. June 2015 left TLM and then studied in Vancouver Regent Bible College from September 15 to April 2016, and then back to HK involving in Nepali ministry in HK. 2017 October go to serve in Nepal with INF.





## A stupid question?

### *John 5: 1-15*

Imagine the scene – a great number of disabled people are gathered together at a special pool known to cure diseases and bring healing. ‘The blind, the lame and the paralysed’ are all mentioned – people who would have been the least likely to be able to help themselves and probably would have lain the longest in their need and suffering. The cure to their physical suffering was in front of them. When the waters stirred, you had to get into the pool to be healed.

As so often in Jesus’ ministry he focuses on the one amidst the multitude of people and need in front of him. The one in this passage is a man who ‘had been an invalid’ for 38 years. Jesus asks him ‘Do you want to get well?’ This seems a strange and stupid question to one who has been ill for so long. Surely the answer is obvious! Of course, he would want to get well!

But that is not what the man says. He responds by explaining to Jesus why he cannot get healed. There is no one to help him and even if he is fortunate enough to get to the pool, there is always someone else quicker and more able to get into the waters before him. The man sees only one way to ‘get well’. Only one solution. He considers his weakness and inabilities and compares himself and his situation to those around him, considering himself to be worse off, and concludes that there is no chance of healing or change for him. His response reveals his heart and we realise that Jesus’ question was not so stupid after all. The questions of Jesus always get to the heart of the matter.

The man’s illness and disability had perhaps become the means of his survival (to beg), they had become his identity, and also a possible excuse for his idleness. Before we are quick to judge him, let us reflect on how we respond when we are asked to do something. Do we too focus on our weaknesses and inabilities? Do we compare ourselves to others and conclude that the job is too hard for us to even try? Do we make excuses?

Having listened to the man’s response, Jesus tells him to get up, pick up his mat and walk – a strange command to one who has not walked for 38 years! This divine command brings divine healing but the man must act upon it. He must do something (get up and walk) to demonstrate the healing and miraculous power of Jesus to change and transform even the worst cases.

And so it is the same for us – Jesus’ healing power and help is available to us if we take our eyes of ourselves and our circumstances and look to Him for the solution. However, we often also need to get up and walk. By acting upon His word to us we demonstrate His power and transforming grace.

The man wasn’t healed by degrees. He went from being infirmed for 38 years with little strength and ability in his body to full bodily strength and the ability to carry a heavy load, his mat. When Jesus brings healing and a solution he does so fully and completely not just in part.

*Forgive us Jesus for when we have allowed our weaknesses to become our excuses. Forgive us for looking to our own strength and circumstances rather than to you as our solution.*

*Thank you Jesus for your transforming power and grace that heals the hardest heart and makes change possible. Help us today to seek your face and your solutions in all that do.*



## Psalm 67

*For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song.*

<sup>1</sup> May God be gracious to us and bless us  
and make his face shine on us—  
<sup>2</sup> so that your ways may be known on earth,  
your salvation among all nations.

<sup>3</sup> May the peoples praise you, God;  
may all the peoples praise you.  
<sup>4</sup> May the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you rule the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations of the earth.

<sup>5</sup> May the peoples praise you, God;  
may all the peoples praise you.

<sup>6</sup> The land yields its harvest;  
God, our God, blesses us.  
<sup>7</sup> May God bless us still,  
so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.



## The Beatitudes

Jesus said:

- <sup>3</sup> "Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.
- <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.
- <sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.
- <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.
- <sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.
- <sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.
- <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*Matthew 5,3-10*



## Joined with Believers, in the Presence of God, Bearing Fruit and Healing

*Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing. -Ezekiel 47:12*

In our recent times together, the 29 members of the Leprosy Mission Global Fellowship, inspired by God's voice, have likened the Fellowship to a group of trees; a place of unity, diversity, where our roots are permanently connected to Christ, where we are dependent on God's provision, where we all can contribute, and where we can show Christ's love in action. It is a Fellowship that allows us to achieve more together than alone, and somewhere we can achieve our vision of seeing '*Leprosy Defeated, Lives Transformed*'.

The Scriptures often depict trees or groups of trees as the people of God; the righteous, the planting of the Lord (Isa 61:3), grafted in to Christ. We see this in Ezekiel 47, where the prophet describes a vision of the river of life, the presence of God, running through the trees, nourishing them and allowing them to flourish. And as a result of their flourishing, the trees produce fruit and provide healing.

I think this depiction of our Fellowship as a group of trees, nourished by God's presence, bearing fruit and healing is a wonderful one for us to hold on to. As prayer partners, staff, volunteers, board members, and friends of the Mission, we are part of this 'group of trees' that makes up The Leprosy Mission Global Fellowship.

Although many of us haven't met before because we are separated by geography, circumstances and other things, we remain 'connected' as different branches of the same tree. I recall an occasion when a tragedy in one 'branch' of the Fellowship was acutely felt across all the other branches, and other times when all the branches have been able to celebrate together.

Later this month, from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> September, the Members of the Global Fellowship will be meeting in London, United Kingdom – a meeting of diverse members, 'trees of all kinds'. Please pray for this time together, for the presence of God in our midst, and that as a result, our global ministry will bear much fruit and healing for those we serve, and bring glory to God. Amen.

**Brent Morgan** is International Director of The Leprosy Mission Global Fellowship, based in Brentford, London.



## Love each other

*Jesus said: "This is my commandment: love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than ...", John 15: 9-13, New Living Translation*

Every member of the huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith (Hebrews 12:1) are part of our family, are our friends, when we want to walk the faith, run the race God has set before us, do the 'work' he has assigned to us.

The apostle Paul is one of such friends. Because of people like him, the World receives the gospel.

In Acts 20:24 Paul says to his friends: "... My life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus ..."

For Paul 'the work' was telling others the Good News. You and I may have been assigned other work: to teach, to give, to serve, to comfort, to listen, to love, ....

We have a friend who received that ministry of serving, caring, comforting. I have witnessed over a very long period that the work assigned was carried out and is still in progress. That work is demonstrating the grace of God. I know it is done, day after day, because of the love for Jesus. I have not witnessed this from far only. At various occasions I have been with our friend and I could observe and be a close witness. Usually when I was exhausted because of the work of the day, the late evenings did not bring rest to our friend. I would hear the knocks on the door and the steps towards that door, the soft voices of people in need at such a late hour, and the gentle farewell once the service was rendered. I have witnessed harassment by the people who did not understand. They realised that while the poor were blessed, comforted by our friend, they themselves could experience a loss. I have listened, with our friend, to the story told by a high ranking civil servant about the cruel acts inflicted on his son, causing his death and I understood the constant thread, the danger our friend lives in.

I myself have been served and cared for and the correspondence between us is a source of comfort. When I think about that work assigned to our friend, I get a deeper understanding of the love of Jesus, of that Man who did not have a place to lay his head, and who laid down his life for his friends. For friends only?

That's that other great thing I learned through the life of our friend: those to whom you are called, called to serve, are your friends. They are not the strange 'others' whom we quickly gossip or complain about.

W.D.Cooley, Irish geographer, published studies about the geography of Africa almost 2 centuries ago. He advised one of the greatest explorers when writing to him: "The world applauds success much more than self sacrifice". I am reading about the journey of that great explorer at the moment. His life impresses me, but how different sounds that advise as compared to the words of Jesus, Paul and the life and commitment of our friend.

Pray with me that our love grows deeper, such that it does resemble the love of Jesus.



## A lesson from a locomotive

This past Saturday, Elizabeth and I took a historical steam-train trip from Cape Town to Ceres, a beautiful agricultural community nestled in the Witzenberg mountains. Although it's the middle of winter in the Cape, it was a peach of a day, and the views were astonishing. Whilst the whole trip is one of scenic splendour, it is the final ten-mile Michell's Pass between the towns of Wolseley and Ceres that draws rail enthusiasts from across the world. The locomotive must tackle steep gradients and sharp bends during this climb of 200 metres, where the track clings precariously to the side of the valley.

The locomotives have been converted from coal to oil burners [to prevent bush fires being started by sparks], meaning that you can lean out of the window without the risk of cinders flying into your eyes; so there we were, as excited as if we were on our first trip to Hogwarts, taking in the grandeur of the Cape fold mountains etched against the turquoise sky. There's plenty of time to savour the view – the Glasgow built Class 19D loco takes almost an hour to traverse the pass.

Looking down, I saw the old road, constructed by Andrew Geddes Bain in 1848. In 1969, this area was struck by an earthquake, burying the pass under rocks, but when the rubble was removed, the road was intact – that's Scottish engineering for you! However, what really struck me was that this old road was in use until the early 1980s, when a new road was completed on the opposite side of the valley.

"Did we really travel on *that* road?" Built originally for ox-wagons, it seems astonishing that for many decades it was used by cars, buses and trucks, speeding towards each other around blind corners. "How on earth did we survive?" From the perspective of the rail pass, the old road looked shockingly narrow and twisty, whilst the new road is all *Le Mans* with sweeping curves and broad lanes.

Many of us may have looked back at our lives and thought the same – did I really travel on that route? [Colossians 3: 7] Without His intervention, we'd be stuck on those old roads, struggling through life without hope, peace or joy.

*"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" Isaiah 43:19*

Take a moment this morning to reflect - ['to perceive'] - on the new things the Lord has done in your life. Give Him thanks for making a way for you in the wilderness. It is so easy to lose sight of what the Lord has done and is doing in our lives. And let us not grow complacent [Rev 3:14-22]. Ask the Lord to continue to do new things in your life. Yes, it is often very uncomfortable, but think of how it will feel next year when you are travelling on a higher road and you look down and think "However did I imagine that was the best route?"

**Peter Laubscher** - Country Leader, Southern Africa. Peter and Elizabeth Laubscher have worked with the Leprosy Mission since 1981. They are blessed with three children. Peter cruises the waters of False Bay when he's not trying to polish scratches out of telescope mirrors.



## What do you want me to do for you?

Jesus was on his way to Jericho. A blind man was sitting there by the roadside, begging. The blind man heard the crowd passing by and was told that Jesus of Nazareth was coming. Probably the blind man had heard about Jesus because he started to cry out: *“Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me!”*

But the people around him did not like this crying; they tried to stop him. However, the blind man was wise enough not to listen to those people. He shouted even more loudly! Then Jesus ordered the people to bring the blind man to him.

Once again, we see that Jesus behaves in a way that probably was not expected. He stops, he talks to this man. He talks to this blind poor man in a very personal, respectful way! He asks the man: *“What do you want me to do for you?”*

Didn't Jesus know that this beggar was blind? Didn't he know that the blind man wanted to be able to see? It is obvious that Jesus knew this; I'm convinced of that! Still Jesus asks what the man wants of him! This respectful behaviour, this asking about the man's wish, is very significant and obvious in Jesus' way of going on with people who came to him or met with him. Poor people, blind, disabled, prostituted, sinners, rich people, all kind of people met Jesus during his life here on earth. Jesus was never coming from a high up position, even if he was a King, when he talked to those people, he never patronised them. Instead people felt that they were respected and loved. He treated them in a way that they understood that they were precious, even if they were poor or sinners.

When I read that well known story in *Luke 18* again, I was “hit” by those words! How often do I ask people what they want instead of telling them what I think they need going out from my competence?

The first time I visited the Leprosy Hospital in Kolkata many years ago, I was touched by the loving way the doctors and nurses treated the patients. There was also this doctor who was seeing more than 100 patients that day and still was kind and respectful when the last one came into the clinic! For me it was love, coming from a Divine source like someone who understood what kind of love Jesus had.

Three of the gospels in the Bible tell this story. In Matthew chapter 20, we get to know that there is more than one blind man. In Mark chapter 10, Mark tells us that the blind man was Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus. It is significant that in all three stories Jesus' question was: *“What do you want me to do for you?”* I would like us to take this question from Jesus with us, in our daily work with leprosy affected people and their families and societies. I would like us to take this question with us in our daily life! That is my prayer!

*Jesus stopped and ordered the man to be brought to him. When he came near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” “Lord I want to see,” he replied. Luke 19:40-41.*



## Hear O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One

### *Mark 12:29 NIV*

Recently I have been reading an excellent book by Lois Tverberg called 'Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus' sub titled, 'How the Jewish words of Jesus can change your life' in which she examines some of Jesus' most important words in the light of their Jewish context.

One passage she looks at is Mark 12:28-31 in which a teacher of the law comes to Jesus asking him what he believed was the greatest commandment and Jesus replies by quoting Deuteronomy 6:4. This is the first line of the Shema, three sections of Scripture repeated twice daily to remind each Jewish person of his or her commitment to God (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21; Numbers 15:37-41)

"Hear O Israel:" 'Hear' (Heb. shema) is more than just the perception of sound. It includes listening, taking heed and responding in obedience. When we read in the Psalms, "Hear my prayer, O Lord" it is more than a request for God to simply listen; it is a request for God to listen and act on the psalmist's behalf. Jesus often ended his parables by saying, "Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear" (e.g. Mark 4:9) meaning, "You have heard my teaching, now take it to heart and obey it. In our worship services we sometimes say, "Hear the word of the Lord" or "Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church" but do we really acknowledge that these words require action not just passive hearing?

"The Lord our God, the Lord is One." The Hebrew word for 'One' (echad) can also encompass related ideas, like being single, alone, unique or unified. This verse can therefore also be read as "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone." It is interesting to note that the New Revised Standard Version translates Deuteronomy 6:4 in this way while Mark 12:29 is translated "the Lord is One".

When we read it as "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone" the meaning moves from being a statement of belief to a statement of commitment. It is a call for absolute allegiance to God. God alone is the one we should worship. In this context Jesus is saying that the greatest commandment is actually a call to commit ourselves to the one true God.

Lois Tverberg puts it like this, "in light of their Hebrew context, we find that Jesus' words call us beyond what is going on in our brains. We are not just to 'hear' but to take heed, to respond, to obey. And we are not just called to believe in the oneness of God but to place him at the centre of our lives. To do that, we are to love God with all of our heart and soul and strength and mind.

**Kathleen Gavin** (nee Finlay) New Zealand Physiotherapist with TLM in India, Nepal & Bangladesh 1981-1996. Now an ordained Anglican Priest and Spiritual Director living in Raglan, NZ and member of the Leprosy Mission NZ Board.





“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

“This, then, is how you should pray:

“ ‘Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from the evil one.

*Matthew 6,5-13*



- TLM Fellowship Day -

### Psalm 133

*A song of ascents. Of David.*

<sup>1</sup> How good and pleasant it is  
when God's people live together in unity!

<sup>2</sup> It is like precious oil poured on the head,  
running down on the beard,  
running down on Aaron's beard,  
down on the collar of his robe.

<sup>3</sup> It is as if the dew of Hermon  
were falling on Mount Zion.  
For there the LORD bestows his blessing,  
even life forevermore.



## Jealousy Vs Conviction

### *A devotional on Psalm 62*

Psalms are recorded expressions of Man's outpouring of praise, hope, expectation, dependency, submission etc., in God. They are the means to connect with God in all our situations in this world. In Psalm 62 we see the character of 3 sets of people; Saul in pursuit of David, David in distress and the God who David trusts.

### *Saul pursuing David to kill him (verses 4-5, 9)*

Though not stated specifically in the Psalm, we can infer that it was King Saul who was pursuing David. When Saul was challenged by the philistine champion called Goliath, he had no answer. It was a wall that Saul could not surmount. He was rescued from the humiliation by a shepherd boy, David. That time Saul loved David because it had benefited him. He gave him high responsibility in the army. Jonathan, son of Saul gave David his robe, tunic, sword, bow and belt signifying his submission to David's authority in love. But Saul's love turned into jealousy when his people adored and praised David for his prowess. Saul saw a threat to his position and power. Jealousy entered the heart of Saul. Jealousy and fear coming out of self-preservation had led to Saul's consuming anger to eliminate David.

### *David's response (verses: 1-2, 8)*

David was on the run, terrified and in anguish with what Saul had done. He felt let down by the very people who honoured him once. But still David asserts that he will find rest in God because God is faithful. His confidence arose because David killed Goliath with the power (and name) of God. David seeks out God with his soul and not mind. He encouraged himself. He sought his strength at the time of his need, in God and not in others. He anchored his soul in faith in God. He also exhorts others to put their trust in God.

### *God's character, the source of David's faith (verses 62:2, 6, 11-12)*

God is a rock on which a solid foundation can be laid. He is a fortress that protects from enemy attacks. In Him we can have the everlasting hope (salvation). God is of our hope in this world and in life everlasting. God speaks. God is strong. God is loving. God is God of justice. He will reward according to what one does in faith in Him.

### *Some reflections*

Do we have the soul of Saul or David? Grace of God is meant to lift-up others and not pull them down. Jealousy comes out of self-importance, self-interest, self-preservation – all about oneself. Jealousy and fear are reflections of the carnal nature of man. Faith and submission are Godly nature. When in fear do not harm others, but seek God's wisdom. God is a God of justice. His promises to the faithful are always true. God is a spirit-being. When we are in distress, God wants our souls to seek and depend on Him. Only with our soul we can truly connect with God; and then have the right standing with Him.



## A voice in the crowd

It was the school holidays and I'd taken my daughter Grace to an enormous soft play centre filled with hyperactive children, thumping music and exhausted parents. It was noisy, busy, chaotic; kids were running, shouting, screaming. Grace ran off to play and I found a corner to sit in, surrounded by shrieks and laughter, but then after about ten minutes I heard a voice cry out, 'Mummy!'

It wasn't the first cry for Mummy I'd heard in the time I'd been there, nor the loudest. But I knew instantly that it was Grace. Despite the noise and the tumult around me, I recognised her cry for help, that precious voice that I know so well.

It turned out to be nothing serious, just a fall from a climbing net that resulted in a tangled foot and a shock to the system. Within a few minutes, thankfully, Grace was off and running like nothing had happened.

The incident reminded me of the story of the woman who touched Jesus' cloak, seeking healing. Mark chapter five tells us that the woman had been bleeding for twelve years, meaning she would have been considered unclean, untouchable. She had lived a life of suffering and rejection, at the hands of doctors as well as the community where she lived. She had given everything, spent every penny, seeking healing that never came. She had looked in all the wrong places for the touch that would heal her life; and then one day, she saw Jesus in a crowd and knew that this was where true healing lay - "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed."

So she reached out and touched him; "immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once Jesus realised that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." (Mark 5:29-34)

Imagine the crowd pressing around Jesus, how hot and noisy and confusing it must have been. With all those people around him, how could he possibly notice one small, frail hand against his cloak?

Because the woman recognised who Jesus was, and reached out in faith. In the same way, when we reach out to God he always hears our voice above the noise and chaos and busyness of life. We may feel like one small voice in the storm, but God hears it. No cry goes without answer; no hurt goes without comfort.

However noisy and busy your day may be, take time to cry out to God. Healing and affirmation are waiting there for you.

*Psalm 18:1-3,6*

*I love you, Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I have been saved from my enemies... In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears.*



## God's handiwork

*Adapted from of Cathy Irvin's post on Christian Broadcasting Network TV.*

Have you ever sat and really looked at God's handiwork? Isn't it amazing? You can see the starlit sky at night. The stars seem to shine like diamonds. Or have you ever watched the heavens at dawn when it looks like a blazing orange canvas? Even when stormy days come, filled with grey skies and torrents of rainfall, and winds sway the trees like they are dancing, it is a sight to see the wonders of God's artistic hand.

I've recently been away to one of my favourite places and that is Cornwall in the UK. I stayed with some friends at a camp site we've stayed at for the previous two years near Wadebridge on the north coast of Cornwall. I was able to see much of God's amazing handiwork on display. It's much different to the flat landscape where I normally live. There are the wonderful rocky cliffs at places like Tintagel castle, where you can explore right up to the cliff edges, and see the crashing waves below. There are the long and swooping roads that cut through fields as you head further south catching glimpses of the sea every now and then. There are the many wonderful, yet each individually unique beaches.

While I was there I was also able to see the beauty of God's creation in the stars, as we sat around a roaring campfire, looking up at the stunning starlit sky. You could almost see the dusting of the milky way, as we sat every now and then there would be a shout of "Wow!", as one (or a few of us) caught a glimpse of a meteor braking up in the atmosphere, leaving a momentary, yet beautiful trail. Although now disappeared, meteor showers seem to leave their mark on you.

We also were even able to see the power of the rain one day, as we sat in a tea room high up, just outside of Penzance with a delicious cream tea looking out over hills, barely seeing much further than a few hundred feet. I always come away from visiting Cornwall, admiring the beauty in creation, God did a good job! Yet there is more...

His greatest masterpiece is you and me. Wow! When the Lord created the heavens and the earth, He rested and said all that He made was good. Yet, something was missing - us. So He made man in the image and likeness of Himself. Man and woman were created to have fellowship with God. We weren't the afterthought in creation. We were the special finishing touches. He longs for the day when He shall gather His children and we shall be with Him for all eternity.

He loves us so much he chose not to live without us at the beginning of creation nor when He went to the cross! We are His greatest work of art, so valuable that He says we are the apples of His eye.

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10).*

<sup>10</sup>*For we are His workmanship [His own master work, a work of art], created in Christ Jesus [reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, ready to be used] for good works, which God prepared [for us] beforehand [taking paths which He set], so that we would walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us]. Amplified*

Next time you look in the mirror, see what God sees and cherish your time on this earth. Take time to tell Him how much you love Him and all He has done for you. Try not to take life for granted, but rather value it. The point is that you are the most prized possession God has. You are His masterpiece. What matters most to Him is you. He loves you.



## Walking with Jesus – Part 1

Have ever thought about the distances that Jesus and the disciples covered as they moved about the countryside during the 3 years of Jesus ministry. Well someone has worked it out and in those 3 years Jesus covered 3,125 miles. Jesus spent a great part of His ministry in Galilee, going from town to town, from village to village teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the Good News, and healing the sick. Galilee was on the west and south of Lake Galilee, the more fertile part, where most of the population would live. Steep hillsides rise from the shore line, and these provided Jesus with the quiet places where He could withdraw and find quiet space to meet with God. It was around these shores and hills that Jesus and the disciples walked many, many miles and sometimes took to the boats to escape the crowds. - The disciples spent many hours walking alone with Him, and in these times they attempted to understand Jesus ministry, as He instructed them, and empowered them so that they could go out and preach and heal too. Let's just imagine a conversation between Peter and Jesus as they walk along:

*Peter:* Jesus...?

*Jesus:* Yes, Peter?

*Peter:* It's just that the disciples and I were trying to work out what your procedure was for healing people.

*Jesus:* What did you come up with?

*Peter:* Well, at first we thought it was to do with your hands. Because when you healed Jairus' daughter and my old mother-in-law, you took them by the hand. But then we remembered the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years. You never touched her. So we decided it wasn't your hands.

*Jesus:* Well done. Was there another theory?

*Peter:* Yes. Martha thought it was your voice. When you raised Lazarus, you shouted at him and he came back to life.

But then Andrew reminded us of how you brought the centurion's servant back to life without shouting or even seeing him.

*Jesus:* So you decided that it couldn't be my voice.

*Peter:* That's right. Oh, Jesus, we even thought it might be something to do with your saliva. Well, you did spit on the deaf man's tongue and that started him yapping as if it was going out of fashion. And you spat on the mud at the pool of Siloam. And you rubbed the mixture on the blind man's eyes. But Thomas reminded us that you cured Bartimeus without spitting. Jesus, we don't think you have a procedure.

*Jesus:* Quite right! I don't have a procedure.

*Peter:* Then how do you heal?

*Jesus:* Peter, when Andrew and you were wee boys, did your mother always treat you the same? I'm not asking you if she had favourites. I'm asking you if she treated you the same.

*Peter:* Well...yes and no.

*Jesus:* Tell me about the 'no'.

*Peter:* Let me think...oh yes, here's an example. If my mother wanted us to get up in the morning, she would tell Andrew it was half past seven and me it was half past eight. Because she knew that Andrew loved getting up and I hated it. The only way she could ever get me out of my bed was to convince me that I was late.

*Jesus:* Your mother, Peter, is like God. She knew she had to treat you as an individual, different from Andrew. When God, through me, changes people from being sick to being healthy, it doesn't happen because of a slick procedure.

When you love people, you treat them and heal them as individuals.

When we meet those who are ill, whether Leprosy or other illness, do we treat them as individuals who need God's touch which is special for them? God loves them and us as though there is only one to love, even those who are not ill!

*The walk will continue next month!*

**Christine Osman**, formerly Treasurer of TLMI



## Psalm 64

*For the director of music. A psalm of David.*

<sup>1</sup> Hear me, my God, as I voice my complaint;  
protect my life from the threat of the enemy.

<sup>2</sup> Hide me from the conspiracy of the wicked,  
from the plots of evildoers.

<sup>3</sup> They sharpen their tongues like swords  
and aim cruel words like deadly arrows.

<sup>4</sup> They shoot from ambush at the innocent;  
they shoot suddenly, without fear.

<sup>5</sup> They encourage each other in evil plans,  
they talk about hiding their snares;  
they say, "Who will see it?"

<sup>6</sup> They plot injustice and say,  
"We have devised a perfect plan!"  
Surely the human mind and heart are cunning.

<sup>7</sup> But God will shoot them with his arrows;  
they will suddenly be struck down.

<sup>8</sup> He will turn their own tongues against them  
and bring them to ruin;  
all who see them will shake their heads in scorn.

<sup>9</sup> All people will fear;  
they will proclaim the works of God  
and ponder what he has done.

<sup>10</sup> The righteous will rejoice in the LORD  
and take refuge in him;  
all the upright in heart will glory in him!



*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,  
and all these things will be given to you as well.  
Matthew 6, 33*

Turn all your thoughts and aspirations to heaven!

Work hard to secure for yourself a place there for ever!

**Father Damien** (Jozef de Veuster, 1840-1889)





## Authors in Alphabetical Order

## Textuarium

Becky Calcraft	26 Sept		Psalm 5	9 Sept
Brent Morgan	18 Sept		Psalm 6	10 Sept
Christine Osman	28 Sept		Psalm 18,1-3	6 Sept
Dan Izzett	4, 5 Sept		Psalm 62	25 Sept
Eddie Askew	1 Sept		Psalm 64	25 Sept
Elizabeth Allen	12, 13 Sept		Psalm 67	16 Sept
Father Damien	30 Sept		Psalm 133	24 Sept
Gunnel Ericson	21 Sept		Isaiah 43,19-20	20 Sept
Joanne Briggs	15 Sept		Ezekiel 47,12	18 Sept
John, evangelist and prophet	2, 3 Sept		Zechariah 4,6	14 Sept
Joydeepa Darlong Dr	6 Sept		Matthew 5,13	23 Sept
Kathleen Gavin	22 Sept		Matthew 5,3-10	17 Sept
King David, of Israel	9, 10, 24, 29 Sept		Matthew 6,33	30 Sept
Marta Risko	7 Sept		Matthew 25,23	6 Sept
Matthew, the evangelist	17, 23 Sept		Mark 12,29	22 Sept
Otto Kingsley	8 Sept		Luke 6,37	1 Sept
Pascal Machefer	25 Sept		Luke 10,18-19	4 Sept
Peter Laubscher	20 Sept		Luke 19,40-41	21 Sept
Piet Both Dr	19 Sept		John 5,1-15	15 Sept
Silvano Perotti	11 Sept		John 15,9-13	19 Sept
Silvano Perotti	11 Sept		Acts 16,25	8 Sept
Stuart Towell	27 Sept		2 Cor 5,14	11 Sept
Yuek Ming Poon	14 Sept		Ephesians 2,10	27 Sept
			Ephesians 6,10	5 Sept
			Hebrews 12	12 Sept
			James 4,17	7 Sept
			Revelation 1,1-7	2 Sept
			Revelation 9	27 Sept

**The Bridge** - TLM Daily Devotions

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