



TLM Daily Devotions

January 2019





Intro to the month and the year

Lord, „Into your hands I commit my spirit!” (Psalm 31,6)

Blessed 2019, TLM!

**New Year****Psalm 90**

A prayer of Moses the man of God.

¹ Lord, you have been our dwelling place
throughout all generations.

² Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the whole world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

³ You turn people back to dust,
saying, "Return to dust, you mortals."

⁴ A thousand years in your sight
are like a day that has just gone by,
or like a watch in the night.

⁵ Yet you sweep people away in the sleep of death—
they are like the new grass of the morning:

⁶ In the morning it springs up new,
but by evening it is dry and withered.

⁷ We are consumed by your anger
and terrified by your indignation.

⁸ You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your presence.

⁹ All our days pass away under your wrath;
we finish our years with a moan.

¹⁰ Our days may come to seventy years,
or eighty, if our strength endures;
yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow,
for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

¹¹ If only we knew the power of your anger!
Your wrath is as great as the fear that is your due.

¹² Teach us to number our days,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

¹³ Relent, LORD! How long will it be?
Have compassion on your servants.

¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,

that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

¹⁵ Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,
for as many years as we have seen trouble.

¹⁶ May your deeds be shown to your servants,
your splendor to their children.

¹⁷ May the favour of the Lord our God rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us—
yes, establish the work of our hands.



'Put your hand into the hand of God'

... 'Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you...' 1 Chronicles 28:20

On Christmas Day 1939, at a time of grim foreboding and uncertainty in Europe, the King of the UK, George VI, in his Christmas broadcast, quoted part of the poem, *'The Gate of the Year'*, by Minnie Louise Haskins. *'I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown." And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."* (George VI, by the way, as you may know, had great difficulty with a speech impediment, and the broadcast itself took much work and courage!)

Scripture has many examples of those who, when God called them, *and* along their journey with Him, felt unworthy, unqualified, inexperienced, clumsy of speech, fearful... (add your own feeling about yourself!). Many who faced unknown or *all-too-well-known* enemies were conscious of their vulnerability and weakness. In scripture we read frequently that God assures those He has called with words like, *"Do not be afraid"; "I will be with you" "I will give you the words", "I will fight for you"*. Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah... Peter, Paul, -no doubt you can think of others. The promises are for anyone called by the Lord into His service, -like you or me, -or those we love and are concerned for. No doubt almost all of us have felt an assuring *'peace that passes human understanding'* that comes surprisingly at certain times.

The combination of feeling inadequate within ourselves and feeling fearful about the future or the present circumstances is very much part of human experience, and God's children are no exception. Like Peter, we may respond with joy and confidence to Christ's call or guidance, but then, a step or two in, we realise we are 'walking on water', and our resolution falters, our faith fails.

It is especially true with so-called 'New Year resolutions', when along comes our first 'failure', or when we fall for the age-old tricks of the evil one: telling us we're no good, comparing us with others, urging us to give up! As in God's firm but loving words to Elijah at a time of lonely despair, He may call us to go back, to continue the work to which He called us. He forgives and restores, *"seventy times seven"*, and the promise of His ever-presence abides with us still (Psalm 46:1!).

That poem King George quoted 80 years ago continues, *"So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day ..."*. May that be our experience as we place our hand in His!

David Beazley began involvement with The Leprosy Mission in 1992 when he came as Minister to a Church near the International Office in Brentford. He acted as an informal 'chaplain' to the Office, and served on the International General Council for some years. At the same time he became a member of TLM England and Wales Board, serving as Chairman for six years and on various committees. He chaired the Spiritual Ministry MAWG, and is also able to serve TLMI by leading retreat days and other such things as opportunity allows. He now pastors a Church in South-West England part time, and continues as a volunteer speaker for TLM.



'With God all things are possible'

Sermon held on the TLM Global Fellowship Day, 23 Sept 2019, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible." (Mark 10:27)

Jesus statement came out of the story of the rich young ruler who visited Jesus and asked what He must do to gain eternal life (Mark 10:17-27). It was initially pleasant to see the man responding to the first condition Jesus gave concerning keeping the law; but the man cannot meet the second and final condition of which he was asked to let go of his wealth and worth and then come follow Jesus. He went away sorrowful because He trust so much in his riches, Jesus response to his action by telling the disciples 'how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God'; the disciples were greatly astonished and conclude that 'who then can be save?'

As global fellowship members launching out today a new strategy toward Zero Transmission, Zero disability and Zero stigma we are embarking on being part of building God's Kingdom as we work towards realising our vision of Leprosy defeated and life transformed. What this means for us is an attempt to do impossible things in God's kingdom which has the component of destroying the work of the devil (leprosy disease) and building and transforming lives of people affected by Leprosy.

In order not end up frustrated and go away in sorrow like the rich young ruler in this story, there are things we should strongly avoid and things we should do:

We should not depend on or trust in our riches; it's not about the amount of cash we can raise, the strength of our area of influence, the manpower available not even our experience as a leading and very old Leprosy organisation even though this are essential like the young man keeping all the law

We should not trust in ourselves. Because 'by strength no man shall prevail (1 Sam: 2:9) and the word of God says 'do not put your trust in son of man in whom there is no help. (Ps. 146:3-4)

But we should be in one accord with God, for it is only **'with God'** that all things are possible. Jesus said *'Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in Me....for without Me you can do nothing.'* (John 15:4-5 NKJV). Jesus appointed the 12 disciples that they might be **'with Him'** and He might send them out, (Mark 3:14); and the result is evident in the Ministry of the Apostles; *'when they saw the boldness of Peter and John that they were uneducated and untrained men they marvelled, and they realise that they had been with Jesus* (Act 4:13 NKJV). We can do the impossible if we are ready to release our lives into God's hand and spend quality time with Him. If we get to know Him and His way and be in accord with Him like the Apostle did, we will find our vision of Leprosy defeated and life transformed achieved in our lifetime.

We should Love one another (unity of the body): Loving one another is a command from the Lord our master (John 15: 12, 17). It's the most power gift from God such that anyone that can grasp it can change the world. We saw this gift being misused in the story of tower of babel (*the whole world speak one language*); The Lord testify that *'indeed the people are one and they have one language; and that nothing that they proposed will be withheld from them* (Gen 11:1,6). The apostle were able to do mighty act for God because of their strength of unity; the church was established for the purpose of unity and fellowship. We will be able to accomplish great things for God if we are prepared to invest in our unity. *'Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling (global fellowship) of ourselves as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another and so much the more as you see the Day approaching'* (Heb. 10:24-25 NKJV) -

TLM Global Fellowship will be richly blessed and do the impossible when we strive to honour Him by abiding in Him and fellowship with one another in love.

Bunmi Oluloto - Servant of Christ in the Niger Republic and TLM Country Leader for Niger and Chad



“All things are possible with God”

Mark 10:17-27 What should I do? A very common question we constantly do ourselves. We would like to know what we have to do, especially when it comes to the achievement of the eternal life. But that question could be a blind alley that leads to worry and anxiety.

Jesus repeated the commandments: *"You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal ..."* But, as the man who interrogates Jesus, we often answer: *"I did everything."* We realize, however, like him, that something is wrong; can a non-doing or even to honor the parents correspond to the achievement of the "eternal life". Could we say to God: "I did not steal, you have therefore to make me come into your kingdom!"?

Sometimes we might think instead of getting that award only if we obey to the whole law. But in that case we will always find an unobserved commandment pointing an accusing finger at us; and in despair we will feel: "I'll never make it!".

This is the blind alley of the law as a path of salvation. This is why the disciples ask: *"Who then can be saved?"* Jesus replies calmly: *"With man this is impossible"*. Then, Jesus loves (cf. v. 21) and gives three important messages:

1. It makes you realize first of all, that you "missing" something, but what you miss is that you have too much, wealth and money. Only people with empty hands can receive the eternal life. *"It is easier for a camel through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God"*; It is an illustration of the impossibility of human salvation.

2. *"Follow me!"*. For the man of the story the invitation is clear. He must leave his normal activities and follow Jesus. But for us the indication is more complex: how can we follow the one who is at the right hand of God in heaven? How not to confuse the following of Christ with the idea that I do of what it means? How do I know that I follow Jesus and not my ego? Really, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God!

There is then the third indication with which Jesus says that the law is not a way of salvation, but a word of salvation, such as Deuteronomy says: "No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it" (Dt 30:14): all "impossible with men," Jesus added, "but not with God! Because everything is possible with God".

*When we give up wanting to save us from ourselves when we surrender to God –
then it is when we give him confidence –
then the way of salvation is opened, even in the shadow of our misunderstandings:
we can believe that God guides us.*

Arianna Bobba – Global Programme Advisor at TLMI since November 2016. She is working with TLM Mozambique, TLM Nepal, TLM Sudan and South Sudan and TLM PNG. Also she is supporting partners in Tanzania and Angola. She is Italian, now living in London with her husband and her 8 months old daughter.

**Psalm 91**

¹Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

²I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."

³Surely he will save you
from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.

⁴He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

⁵You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,

⁶nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.

⁷A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.

⁸You will only observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.

⁹If you say, "The LORD is my refuge,"
and you make the Most High your dwelling,

¹⁰no harm will overtake you,
no disaster will come near your tent.

¹¹For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;

¹²they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

¹³You will tread on the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

¹⁴"Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him;
I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

¹⁵He will call on me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble,
I will deliver him and honor him.

¹⁶With long life I will satisfy him
and show him my salvation."



The Baptism of Jesus

Matthew 3, 13 - 17

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴ But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

¹⁵ Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."



Nothing is impossible for God!

George Dantzig ran over Berkeley University's campus area. The heart bumped and the sweat penetrated into the forehead. It should not be true! He was really too late! His first year at the university went to an end and was much harder than George had imagined. Not only the math he had really struggled with but still his biggest fear was that he would not be able to handle the upcoming test. That's why he sat and studied to late every night.

The night before he had fallen asleep at his desk, completely exhausted. Just minutes ago he had been awake with a jerk and the panic had spread throughout his body in a single second, when he realized that Professor Jerzy Neyman's important lecture in mathematics had been going on for a long time. Now he could only gallop over the campus while the cold morning rain hit him in the face. When George carefully opened the door to the lecture hall, there were only minutes left of the lesson. Professor Neyman gave him a sharp look and George would rather disappear through the floor. He had just promised Neyman a few weeks earlier to really work hard with math, and especially the statistics that were extraordinarily difficult for him - just the subject the professor would lecture about this morning. Or rather, had lectured about.

Neyman finished the lesson shortly after George had arrived, and the shame burned deeper within him when he saw everyone getting up while he was just sitting. He quickly wrote off the two statistical problems that were written on the board. There was now only one way to win back Neyman's confidence after the morning's disaster: to do the homework completely without remark.

With a low glance George was looking out of the lecture hall and wished there was a way to disappear when he passed the professor extra quickly.

In the coming days and nights, he worked as an animal with the task. He turned the statistical problems inside out, which were more complicated than anything he had seen before, but there was no alternative to him but solving them. After many broken pencils and a lot of coffee, George finally managed to reach the finish line and prove both of them. He slipped past Professor Neyman's office and put his calculations on his desk, still much more ashamed of his late arrival this week than proud that he actually had solved the problems.

A few weeks later, one Sunday morning at eight o'clock, George woke up that someone bumped hard on the door. When he confused opened the door in his robe, he was surprised that an excited Professor Neyman stood outside the door with Georges paper in hand.

"You proved the problems! Nobody succeeded in the past! Nobody!"

Neyman explained excitedly, and George slowly began to understand what had happened. The statistical problems on the board were no home assignments at all. Neyman had read that morning about the limitations of mathematics and gave examples of two unsuccessful problems, those who were considered impossible to solve. But George - an ordinary math student - had now become the first to prove them both.

George Dantzig later became a professor at Berkeley and Stanford. In response to the question of how he managed to solve the two impossible problems, he used to say with a laugh:

"The most important thing was that I was not present when they said it was impossible."

"For nothing is impossible for God" (Luke 1:37).



Recipe for a Happy New Year

Author unknown

Take twelve fine, full-grown months;
see that these are thoroughly free from old memories
of bitterness, rancour and hate,
cleanse them completely from every clinging spite;
pick off all specks of pettiness and littleness;
in short, see that these months are freed from all the past —
have them fresh and clean
as when they first came from the great storehouse of Time.

Cut these months into thirty or thirty-one equal parts.
Do not attempt to make up the whole batch at one time
(so many persons spoil the entire lot this way)
but prepare one day at a time.
Into each day put equal parts
of faith, patience, courage, work
(some people omit this ingredient and so spoil the flavour of the rest),
hope, fidelity, liberality, kindness, rest
(leaving this out is like leaving the oil out of the salad dressing— don't do it),
prayer, meditation, and one well-selected resolution.

Put in about one teaspoonful of good spirits,
a dash of fun,
a pinch of folly,
a sprinkling of play,
and a heaping cupful of good humour.

And, in the words of Paul to the Colossians: *As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.*

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:12-17 (NIV)



Of sacred value

“Today, I offer one passage for us to ponder as we pray for the Spirit to work on our hearts and mould our understandings. This passage comes from our beginning: *‘Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good.” Genesis 1:26-27, 31 (ESV)*

From the beginning, God wanted us to know that every single person — male or female — is created in His image. The differences and the unique characteristics of each, especially when combined together in love and mutual respect, are “very good”! Each is a sacred person who bears the likeness of his or her Creator in heaven. Each has intrinsic value because she or he was carefully fashioned by God in the womb

‘For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.’ Psalm 139:13-16 (ESV)

God didn't make one a first-class person and the other a second-class person based on gender, social standing or race. *‘for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.’ Galatians 3:26-29 (ESV)*

To treat one as less than the other, or to speak to one as less than a sacred person, is a violation of the Creator's intent and not acceptable in the Lord's kingdom.

‘With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.’ James 3:9-12

Today's message is just one, small, first step in our journey. Yet as small as this step may seem, it is the crucial first step.

What's our next step?”

Marie N Arnachellum

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Adapted from ‘Of Sacred Value’ by Phil Ware from a series ‘Jesus Values Women’ www.heartlight.org



Solace to the Sinner – Part 1

The story of Zacchaeus as recorded in *Luke 19:1-10* illustrates the character of and relationship between Jesus, the redeemer and Zacchaeus the sinner, who was redeemed by the Grace of God.

V 1 “Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through.”

Jesus was travelling, possibly coming from Galilee in the North to Jericho in the South of Israel. He did not call people to where He was. He did not stay in a temple or on a throne and expect people to come to Him to be saved. He went out to meet people. He made himself available to them. He went where there was need for His saving grace; where He would bless them who had lost their souls to Satan. He journeyed on foot. Neither rough terrain nor harsh conditions deterred Him in his ministry.

V 2-3 “A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was,…”

Zacchaeus as the chief tax collector was not much loved by people. Possibly actually very much hated by them, not someone who the crowd would welcome. He was afraid of others – social stigma, fear of others. Made lot of money through wrong means. Felt the exclusion by others. Something inside him was hurting, outside he was normal. Did not want publicity for himself, ashamed of what he was doing in his profession. But became curious; possibly Jesus could do something to relieve him of the burden he was carrying. To remove the pain that was hurting him from within.

V 3-4 “but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So, he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.”

Zacchaeus was a short man. Took the effort to see Jesus. Found a way to overcome his physical limitation. Ran ahead of the crowd. Climbed a tree. Came on the sly – personal life was in a mess. Came to Jesus as he was. With a burden in his heart but with a hope in Jesus. Made a true effort to see and know Jesus. He used the opportunity that came his way. He did not let it go wasted. He had a deep yearning to see, if not meet Jesus.

V 5 “When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.”

What did Jesus do? He noticed Zacchaeus. He volunteered to go to Zacchaeus' house. Beyond anything that Zacchaeus would have expected.

Established a fellowship. He took the initiative. Did not wait for Zacchaeus to invite Him to his house.



Solace to the Sinner – Part 2

V 8 “But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

Grace of Lord Jesus transformed the heart of Zacchaeus. He responded spontaneously and in public. That would have taken him some courage to do so. It is a statement to which he would be held accountable by the people who already hate him. He made himself vulnerable. Grace of God gave him the courage to accept his wrong doings and sacrifice his material possessions in obedience so that he can have fellowship with Jesus. A changed heart leads to a changed behaviour. He acted immediately in gratitude. Made amends to his past life. Zacchaeus must have had great impact on the crowd because he gave his personal testimony publicly. A transformed soul, free from the burden of sin can not be silent.

V 9-10 “Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Jesus did not condemn the sinner but transformed the sin nature inside Zacchaeus. Re-established the covenant relationship between God and Zacchaeus. He demonstrated the purpose of His coming into the world – to save the sinners who had abandoned God. The primacy of God in Zacchaeus’ life was established. Obedience in faith and gratitude brought salvation to Zacchaeus and his family.

Connecting the dots

Jesus does everything for a purpose, redeeming the lost souls to Himself. Saving every person in this world is Jesus’ ministry – He came to save through seeking those who were separated from God’s love. Relationship with Jesus is personal and not positional.

He went to Jericho in search of Zacchaeus, a single man and not a large crowd. He was delighted with Zacchaeus’s spontaneous repentance. Jesus’ commendation was equally instantaneous. He proclaimed salvation to Zacchaeus and his family. A small effort by Zacchaeus brought him the greatest blessing of God, salvation. Zacchaeus had lost majorly in this world (his riches) but gained eternal life in Jesus Christ. A repentant heart is never let down by Jesus.

Whoever and whatever we are, Jesus accepts us when we reach out to Him. Sin and shame need not keep us away from Jesus. It is never too late to have a changed heart and be redeemed by Jesus.

Jesus convicts; and not condemn

For His glory, in gratitude

Dr PLN Raju - Former Director (Resource Mobilization) The Leprosy Mission Trust India New Delhi



Psalm 92

A psalm. A song. For the Sabbath day.

¹ It is good to praise the LORD
and make music to your name, O Most High,
² proclaiming your love in the morning
and your faithfulness at night,
³ to the music of the ten-stringed lyre
and the melody of the harp.
⁴ For you make me glad by your deeds, LORD;
I sing for joy at what your hands have done.
⁵ How great are your works, LORD,
how profound your thoughts!
⁶ Senseless people do not know,
fools do not understand,
⁷ that though the wicked spring up like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they will be destroyed forever.
⁸ But you, LORD, are forever exalted.
⁹ For surely your enemies, LORD,
surely your enemies will perish;
all evildoers will be scattered.
¹⁰ You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox;
fine oils have been poured on me.
¹¹ My eyes have seen the defeat of my adversaries;
my ears have heard the rout of my wicked foes.
¹² The righteous will flourish like a palm tree,
they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon;
¹³ planted in the house of the LORD,
they will flourish in the courts of our God.
¹⁴ They will still bear fruit in old age,
they will stay fresh and green,
¹⁵ proclaiming, "The LORD is upright;
he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him."



Psalm 93

¹The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty;
the LORD is robed in majesty and armed with strength;
indeed, the world is established, firm and secure.

²Your throne was established long ago;
you are from all eternity.

³The seas have lifted up, LORD,
the seas have lifted up their voice;
the seas have lifted up their pounding waves.

⁴Mightier than the thunder of the great waters,
mightier than the breakers of the sea—
the LORD on high is mighty.

⁵Your statutes, LORD, stand firm;
holiness adorns your house
for endless days.



Invited to participate¹

When I have the opportunity I enjoy going to watch the cricket, or the tennis. On rarer occasions, I go to the ballet, or the theatre. The excitement starts when you book your ticket. You think, where can I get the best value for money? Where will the best view be?

Where we sit when we go to an event can determine our interpretation of events. From one seat it might look like the cricket ball was caught, meaning the batsman is out. But from another angle it might look like it actually hit the ground first, meaning he is still in. Or from one angle it might look like the corps de ballet are in perfect sync. But the person in the balcony can actually see one dancer is out of sync.

One of the great benefits of being in a Global Fellowship is we see the action from different view points. We come from different backgrounds, genders, and countries. We all want to see leprosy eradicated. We all want to see people affected by leprosy receive cure, care and restoration. But we're all looking at it from our own perspectives. Our challenge in the New Year is to listen to one another, to find out what it looks like from a different viewpoint. Especially to the viewpoint of people affected by leprosy.

2000 years ago a dramatic scene took place. It had two central characters, and a host of people watching. Each of those people came away with different understandings. We all look at it with different understandings. You can read the story in three different places in the New Testament (Luke 5, Mark 1, Mt 8). It is a story many of us are familiar with – Jesus healing the man affected by leprosy. The Leprosy Mission logo reflects this event. In the same way people watching the original, dramatic healing saw it differently, people understand The Leprosy Mission logo in different ways

When you read the original story what do you see? Some people there saw Jesus claiming to be God. In the Old Testament, their primary text, the only one who could heal leprosy was God. Some people saw Jesus as threatening their power. Others saw Jesus reaching out to a social outcast with great love and compassion. Others may have seen the man affected by leprosy as a bold, driven man who defied Levitical law to seek healing. What do you see?

When I went to the cricket when I was younger, I dreamed of playing for the Australian team. I am now far past the age where that is likely, and I was never flexible enough to be a ballerino. Whatever our age, Jesus, actively invites us to participate in his mission. *John 14:12ff* and *Matthew 10:8* are two passages make it clear we should not just be onlookers.

When I look at our logo, I see it as capturing a moment in time, where Jesus demonstrates what is calling us to. I also see a man affected by leprosy who is bold, and brave.

*This New Year may we all seek to listen to each other's different viewpoints with respect,
as we accept Jesus' invitation to participate in ministry.*

Tim Collison – Engagement Coordinator, TLM Australia

¹ With thanks to Graeme Goldsworthy, Craig Blomberg and Soong Chan Rah for their insights in 'Gospel and Kingdom', 'The New American Commentary: Matthew' and 'The Next Evangelicalism' respectively.



Lord

You have given us over 5,000 promises in Your Word for us to use and be blessed by them. In *Psalm 19:14* you say,

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

May Your Word fill my spirit with Your presence and let me walk through life hand in hand with You. For I confess that I am lost without You and I need You in my life. Therefore, guide my life that I might be all that You have called me to be.

Bless me that I might bless others. I invite you to come and live in the center of my life that You might be glorified and be lifted up.

You, O Lord are my everything and I need You to guide my thoughts, words, and steps so that I might honor You with all that I say and do. Psalm 55:17 says,

Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice.

Thank You, Lord that You are ever present and always available to listen to my prayers. Amen.

Written for Prayer.full by Jack Countryman, author of God's Promises Every Day.

Shared by

Jeffrey Tan – Regional Assistant TLM Southeast Asia (1999-2004)



Fire in your belly?

Three days before Christmas, robbers broke into my garage and stole some of my tools. They were quite fussy and took only my best spanners and wrenches. Now, if you are a regular reader of these devotions, you will know that I treasure these tools and so I was not best pleased to discover that they were missing. I felt that my Yule-Tide was ebbing, so to speak.

Thus it was that a few days later, I paid host to the insurance assessor, who turned out to be a prison chaplain in his spare time. As he shared his passion for proclaiming the Gospel to the inmates of our local jail, my eyes lit up. "Wow, won't you ask your 'parishioners' if one of them wouldn't happen to have my spanners in their pocket?" Well, this is the question I wished to pose, but being anxious to receive the reimbursement from the insurer, I kept this question to myself, lest it prove to be an impediment to the processing of said payment.

We spoke briefly about tools and at length about Jesus. It was an uplifting encounter, although I must be honest and say that as a recent and unwilling donor to the criminal fraternity, I was decidedly less enthusiastic about the topic of prison ministry than was my guest [I do hope that Peter W is not reading this essay].

As we said our farewells, I was reminded of the words of *Psalms 69:9*

"... zeal for your house consumes me ..." or as the CEV puts it "My love for your house burns in me like a fire".

Here was a man truly on fire for God.

It was a humbling encounter. Here I was, bothered about a few missing spanners, but he was worried, really worried, about lost people – and he was doing his utmost to win them back.

He comes from a modest background but has not used that as an excuse for failing to pursue his passion for souls. Next year when he retires, he plans to devote even more time to prison visitation.

Inspiration comes unexpectedly. I wonder where and through whom you will encounter inspiration in 2019? However and wherever it finds you, I hope that it will kindle a fire in your heart. And if it doesn't find you, go and look for it.

We all need a love that burns like a fire, a fire that will set the world ablaze for His kingdom.

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.



Prudence a Christian virtue - 1

2 Samuel 6 1-5 et 12-29 ; Mark 6 14-26

David's dancing before the Lord, and the Beheading of John the Baptist

Two kings, a thousand years apart and both in trouble at home !

I presume with no justification that Michal thought her tall kingly looking father had dignity, and her husband the youngest in his family did not. David having fled the fury of his father in law lived for many years as an out law.

Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart. 2 Samuel 6:v 16. Years before she had helped David flee from her father. Saul then gave her to another man. David seems to have 2 wives and a few concubines, when he orders Michael to return to him. We are left thinking that relationships must have been a little tense. They became worse with jealousies between the sons or maybe more between their Mothers who thought their son should be the next king. Despite his complicated family arrangements, today referred to as a recomposed family, David was faithful to the Lord.

Herod feared John *knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he protected him. When he heard him, he was greatly perplexed; and yet he liked to listen to him. Mark 6 v 20* and he ends up in a situation that he cannot see a way out of. His wife is angry, very angry with John the Baptist for cliticising her behaviour *And Herodias had a grudge against him, and wanted to kill him; Mark 6 v19* She uses her daughter to get her wish; John the Baptist's head on a plateau.

Both David and Herod end up in a mess, in situations where neither has been prudent; John would have not been beheaded if he had not spoken out, hence the title Prudence a Christian virtue. It is meant more as a question than a statement.

If you do a quick search on the meaning of prudence today you come across lots of references to looking after money, financial affairs, investing wisely. When young I glanced at my great grandmothers household accounts and was surprised to see given to TSH, her husband. The reason my father said was that one day his grandfather had emptied the contents of his pockets into the fire and too late saw a fiver go up in flames; his wife saw it and was not well pleased. After that she controlled his cash. A fiver then is equivalent to over 2000 pounds sterling today. They were married about 150 years ago.

Returning to prudent behaviour, it can be a quality but if we had been over prudent in everything we have done would we be reading The Bridge today? Would we have joined this mission?

Elisabeth Barnett Formally worked with the Leprosy Mission in India and Indonesia, formerly a member of the French national council. Anglican Reader, ie prédicateur laïc.



Prudence a Christian virtue - 2

2 Samuel 6 1-5 et 12-29, Mark 6 14-26

Prudence is one of the cardinal virtues taught by the greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle long before the birth of Christianity with

Temperance

Courage / Fortitude

and Justice.

Later the church added the 3 theological virtues. Faith, Hope and Charity, which seem to be straight out of Paul's 1st epistle to the Corinthians.

In the gospel reading Herod calmly offers a reward to his step daughter who has entertained his guests, a thing any parent might do. I will give you anything you'd like, often there are restrictions, and the child knows them. *I could never have asked for a motor bike. My father had seen too many lives cut short.* The girl asks her mother's advice. Herodias grasps the opportunity to get rid of the wild prophet who insults her, and who has an important following, people go into the wildernesses to hear him. He wasn't just any wandering preacher. Here is her chance for revenge. Herod her husband cannot refuse after his public declaration and his step-daughter's public request.

Herod is left in a mess, regrets his promise. Words spoken in haste, but he cannot lose face. *26 The king was deeply grieved; yet out of regard for his oaths and for the guests, he did not want to refuse her.* He must have been worried by the event as at the beginning of the reading from the gospel we heard that Herod has heard of Jesus and has this niggling feeling that, *John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.* Maybe a hopeful wish that this wondering rabbi was actually John the Baptist.

It turns out David's enthusiastic dancing before the Lord was not considered a good thing by his wife. Maybe not majestic but it was full of enthusiasm for the Lord. Was he wrong? Do we side with his wife horrified by his behaviour? She does not mince her words, see v 20 starting sarcastically *'How the king of Israel honoured himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!'*

Or do we take David's part, v21 *'It was before the Lord, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord, that I have danced before the Lord. I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honour.'* Personally I feel sorry for Michal, she had a rough time. It was a time when respect for one's spouse was very different from the norms today.

Should we be prudent or not? Isn't it wisdom the virtue that we should cherish, knowing when we can say or do something that is risky and challenge the status quo, or staying quiet and biting our tongue.

In looking round the web I found this definition of prudence, much wider and pertinent

- 1 : the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason
- 2: sagacity or shrewdness in the management of affairs
- 3: skill and good judgment in the use of resources
- 4: caution or circumspection as to danger or risk.

Today prudence is often seen to be being over cautious, but the definition I have just read focuses on wisdom, not cautiousness. Distinguishing when acts are courageous and the person has been prudent, as opposed to acts which are reckless or cowardly. It is for this reason Prudence is classified as a cardinal (pivotal) virtue.

Like when Jesus sends out the 12 disciples he warns them *See I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Matthew 15 v 16* Isn't this the type of prudence we should aspire to. *Creator God, you made us all in your image: may we discern you in all that we see, and serve you in all that we do; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen* shorter collect for the 7th Sunday after Trinity, common worship, Church of England

Elisabeth Barnett Formally worked with the Leprosy Mission in India and Indonesia, formerly a member of the French national council. Anglican Reader, ie prédicateur laïc.



Psalm 94

¹The LORD is a God who avenges.

O God who avenges, shine forth.

²Rise up, Judge of the earth;
pay back to the proud what they deserve.

³How long, LORD, will the wicked,
how long will the wicked be jubilant?

⁴They pour out arrogant words;
all the evildoers are full of boasting.

⁵They crush your people, LORD;
they oppress your inheritance.

⁶They slay the widow and the foreigner;
they murder the fatherless.

⁷They say, "The LORD does not see;
the God of Jacob takes no notice."

⁸Take notice, you senseless ones among the people;
you fools, when will you become wise?

⁹Does he who fashioned the ear not hear?
Does he who formed the eye not see?

¹⁰Does he who disciplines nations not punish?
Does he who teaches mankind lack knowledge?

¹¹The LORD knows all human plans;
he knows that they are futile.

¹²Blessed is the one you discipline, LORD,
the one you teach from your law;

¹³you grant them relief from days of trouble,
till a pit is dug for the wicked.

¹⁴For the LORD will not reject his people;
he will never forsake his inheritance.

¹⁵Judgment will again be founded on righteousness,
and all the upright in heart will follow it.

¹⁶Who will rise up for me against the wicked?
Who will take a stand for me against evildoers?

¹⁷Unless the LORD had given me help,
I would soon have dwelt in the silence of death.

¹⁸When I said, "My foot is slipping,"
your unfailing love, LORD, supported me.

¹⁹When anxiety was great within me,
your consolation brought me joy.

²⁰Can a corrupt throne be allied with you—
a throne that brings on misery by its decrees?

²¹The wicked band together against the righteous
and condemn the innocent to death.

²²But the LORD has become my fortress,
and my God the rock in whom I take refuge.

²³He will repay them for their sins
and destroy them for their wickedness;
the LORD our God will destroy them.



Psalm 95

¹ Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

² Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.

³ For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.

⁴ In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.

⁵ The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.

⁶ Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;

⁷ for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

Today, if only you would hear his voice,

⁸ “Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah,
as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness,

⁹ where your ancestors tested me;
they tried me, though they had seen what I did.

¹⁰ For forty years I was angry with that generation;
I said, ‘They are a people whose hearts go astray,
and they have not known my ways.’

¹¹ So I declared on oath in my anger,
‘They shall never enter my rest.’”



"The light of the World"

Reading: John 1:1-14

Jesus said "I am the light of the world" ... John 8:12

"You are the light of the world" Matthew 5:14

The track meandered through the rolling hills of Southern Africa. The odd thorn bush and termite "castle" punctuated the golden grass swaying gently in the breeze. Here and there outcrops of rocks stood out like giant mushrooms. The early morning sun bathed the countryside in a delicate light.

My vehicle stirred up a cloud of red dust that coated the sparse vegetation on the sides of the road. The sound of birds and crickets and the occasional gazelle leaping gracefully away from the car were reminders that I was not alone in the world.

Suddenly I was almost blinded by a bright light emanating from the grass. My curiosity was greater than the fear of snakes, so I stopped the car and walked in the direction of the light. To my surprise, I discovered an empty tin.

There was no means of knowing if it had contained canned vegetables, peaches, pears, fruit salad or jam As it had been stripped of all labels or paper, impossible to tell where or by what firm it had been manufactured.

Just an old, discarded, empty tin, but lying in such a way that it captured the sun's rays and transmitted the light with great effect.

Jesus said *"let your light so shine ..."* *Matthew 5:16*. Sometimes our culture, tradition, prejudice, egoism, wealth, education, lifestyle, denominationalism ... can make it difficult for us to reflect His light! We need to be emptied of self, stripped of labels and exposed to Him so that His light may shine through us.

Prayer - *Jesus, light of the world, shine in me and through me that I may reflect you in what I am and do.*

Thoughts - *The One who said "I am the light of the world", wants to be my light.
Have I received Him as my Saviour?*

-

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.



Thankfulness

We live in a world filled with many unthankful & ungrateful people.

- People demanding “**their rights**” for the most ridiculous reasons.
- Others demand when they have never had any input into any form of development... in living. Here is a classic story of thankfulness & unthankfulness

*Luke 17:12-19 NIVUK As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, ‘Jesus, Master, have pity on us!’ When he saw them, he said, ‘Go, show yourselves to the priests.’ And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? **Has no-one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?**’ Then he said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well.’”*

1 out of 10 returned & said thank you!

- Is this statistic true & common?
- It could be!

Some facts:

- 10 people with desperate needs.
- They knew where to go.
- They knew where help could be found.

Because of their medical condition they keep a distance from their solution.

- Yet they called out with a loud voice

From a distance Jesus replied with words that brought healing:

- As they walked away believing in the words of Jesus they were cleansed.
- All 10 had faith & trust in the words that Jesus spoke.
- All 10 received what they asked for.

Then the unthinkable happened! The least expected person returned & gave thanks to Jesus:

- The Samaritan, a foreigner turned around, left the other 9 behind to say thank you to Jesus

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus’ feet and thanked him and he was a Samaritan.

Did this mean anything to Jesus?

- Yes it did

*Jesus asked, ‘Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? **Has no-one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?**’ Then he said to him, ‘Rise and go; your faith has made you well*

Nine men were healed - the tenth man was made well! Thankfulness gave him a little extra, more than the others! Jesus made him well! This man had an attitude of gratitude! An **attitude of gratitude** means making it a habit to express **thankfulness** and **appreciation** in all parts of your life, on a regular basis, for both the big and small things alike. - Many people around the world have an attitude of complaining. They may have some reasons to complain. I think people have lots to be thankful for.

*1 Timothy 6:6-10 But **godliness with contentment is great gain.** For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” ...**godliness with contentment is great gain.** Can I say it this way: **godliness with contentment thankfulness is great gain.** I think thankfulness, gratitude lifts your spirits. Makes sad, miserable people happy. Takes you from being healed to being made whole! Makes being around you a pleasure.*

How can we develop an attitude of gratitude?

Stop complaining

Start saying thank you

Find something nice to say to others & the country where you live!

😊 *My mother often said: Smile, your face wont crack*

An attitude of gratitude, thankfulness determines altitude in life!

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.



‘R.A.I.N.’ !

(Several verses from the Prophet Jonah)

Here in the Cape provinces, we have all earnestly been praying for PHYSICAL RAIN...and God has subsequently sent us excellent rains; the dams are once again 60% full – PTL! NOW, throughout CT, the W.Cape and SA, we are desperately praying for SPIRITUAL RAIN!! From the prophetic book of JONAH, we can glean lessons for our situation - and what to do:

1) REALITY-CHECK As In Nineveh! Since Adam and Eve, we all live in a fallen world! *Rom.3:23 – “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God!”*

Let’s be honest, as Nineveh had many sin-issues then, so do we too have many now!

2)READINESS As In Nineveh!

The sudden appearance of Jonah on the scene, sure got their attention! *Heb.3:12-15 – “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the Living God. but exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “TODAY”, that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.... as it says, ‘Today, if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.’”*

3)REPENTANCE As In Nineveh!

Repentance is a 180*turning away from our sins..... *2 Chron.7:14 – “If My people who are called by My Name humble themselves, and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”* *2Cor.7:9-11 – “I rejoice....because you were grieved into repenting..... for godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourself innocent in the matter.”*

4)REVIVAL As In Nineveh!

True revival is Heaven-sent: God remains sovereign.....but we can position ourselves! *Jer.33:3 – “Call unto Me and I will answer you + tell you great and wondrous things that you have not known.”*

5)RELATIONSHIP As In Nineveh!

The only-true and living God became Nineveh’s primary God..... *Rev.3:20 – “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with Me.”* *John15:13-15 – “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down His life for His friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for they don’t know what their master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I’ve heard from My Father I tell you.”*

6)REASSURANCE As In Nineveh!

Do you have a blessed assurance, that God is not going to condemn you... Has God relented on your behalf?!... *Philp.3:20 – “But our citizenship is in Heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who will transform our lowly body, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself. Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.”* (cf also John1:12)

7)REST As In Nineveh!

120,000 Ninevites, and all their animals, entered into a rest period that lasted for 150 years!

Heb.4:1 – “Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it.”

In CONCLUSION sing :

*“REIGN IN ME, SOVEREIGN LORD REIGN IN ME (2x)
CAPTIVATE MY HEART, LET YOUR KINGDOM COME
ESTABLISH THERE YOUR THRONE, LET YOUR WILL BE DONE
REIGN IN ME, SOVEREIGN LORD REIGN IN ME (2x) -Amen.*

Otto Kingsley is the Cape Regional Director of TLM(SA), operating from Cape Town, RSA.



Life in all its fullness – 5.

**“The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth,
lived among us”**

John 1: 14

I met Shamyla* during a research project. She was eager to tell me her story. Together with several family members she was involved in a road accident. Two family members died and Shamyla was left paralysed. After many months in hospital she could return to her home. Now a wheelchair user she had to hire a helper to assist with personal care.

“For many months I just stayed in my bed. I was not interested to face the world again, let alone trying to do anything for myself. I actually wanted to die. I could not think how I can carry on with life with a paralysed body.

A friend from church came regularly to visit me. She offered to do small things for me and sat by my bed, listening to my depressing stories. Eventually I allowed her to massage my tired body. This went on for many months. One day I felt I wanted to get up again. My friend and helper helped me to get to the kitchen where I made tea for us.

Later on, I started cooking again, and I could invite visitors for a meal. One day I realised, it was because of my friend who was faithful to sit with me, listening to me. Her massaging my body, gave me back my life. I could feel her love; she was patient and understanding until all my resistance about facing a new kind of life has disappeared. I found meaningful life again.”

This story reminded me of Jesus who came to this world as a human being, to make grace and truth a reality for us. Like Shamyla’s friend he entered our world in person, and changed everything. We too can say, Jesus has given life back to us.

*May we all experience this as we start a new year. Jesus is right with us, as a human being he is among us,
sharing his grace and truth.*

*not her real name



Family Likeness

'Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father...' 'Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me'... John 14: 9 and 11 (New International Version)

One of the many stories surrounding school nativity plays is the one in which the small shepherds, in dressing gowns and tea towels, and leading sheep covered in hearth rugs, stumble onto the stage to kneel around the baby Jesus.

The shepherds, encouraged by their teacher in rehearsal to use their own words to act out the story, are quiet for a moment. They shuffle and look at each other. Then they look at the baby. One speaks. 'Oh! He does look like his dad,' he says.

A phrase he'd heard his mother say as she admired a neighbour's new baby. The audience smiled, but behind the fun and the giggles there was a real truth. Jesus did look like his dad.

His whole life, his words and actions, were meant to show us what God was like. To tell us that God isn't way above the clouds in some divine shopping centre, which is as near to heaven as some of us can imagine, but is down here on earth with us, waiting to enter our lives.

Looking at Jesus we can learn a lot about love and forgiveness, and a complete commitment to other people. And when we change the 'looking at' to 'following', he offers us the strength to live more positively and become more 'like his dad'.

Extract from *Slower than Butterflies* by Eddie Askew

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)



Psalm 96

¹Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.

²Sing to the LORD, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.

³Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

⁴For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.

⁵For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.

⁶Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, all you families of nations,
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

⁸Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.

⁹Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.

¹⁰Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."
The world is firmly established, it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity.

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad;
let the sea resound, and all that is in it.

¹²Let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them;
let all the trees of the forest sing for joy.

¹³Let all creation rejoice before the LORD, for he comes,
he comes to judge the earth.
He will judge the world in righteousness
and the peoples in his faithfulness.



World Day of Leprosy

When starting a journey...

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey, for ourselves, our children, and all our goods – Ezra 8:21

World Leprosy Day 2019 is the first WLD of The Leprosy Mission's new Global Strategy 2019-23. It therefore marks the beginning of a new chapter of TLM's journey, for that is what a strategy is, it's a journey, a direction of travel that takes us from 'here' (where we are now) to 'there' (another place, sometime in the future). A destination is usually implied when referring to a journey; we usually have a very good idea of where we want to go. But what is not always clear is what is going to happen along the way.

Journeys can take many shapes and forms; some are short, others long. Sometimes the terrain is easy, other times more difficult. Our transportation can be reliable or it may break down. We may get some form of travel sickness along the way or enjoy perfect health. Detours may have to be taken from the planned route if obstacles confront us along the way. The truth is, regardless of how much preparation we do before our journey, how meticulously we plan, the contingencies we make, we can never fully anticipate everything that is going to happen along the way.

The scribe Ezra was tasked with returning to post-exile Jerusalem from Babylon and restoring the Law for the Jewish people (Ezra 7:1-16). In Ezra 8:21, the party returning to Jerusalem were facing a perilous journey across dangerous lands. Before the journey begun, Ezra proclaimed a fast, and we are told that the group humbled themselves before the Lord, seeking his favour, and as a result they were blessed with perfect safety for the whole of their passage.

I think there is much for us to learn from Ezra's example. When setting out on a journey or a new undertaking, it is all too easy to rely on one's own expertise, knowledge, understanding and capability. At the outset, Ezra committed his party's journey to the Lord, acknowledging the importance of His protection and the need for His provision. Last February, when we were starting to plan and develop the new Global Strategy 2019-23, we called the Global Fellowship family to a time of prayer and fasting, seeking the Lord's guidance for the planning of the next five years of TLM's journey. As a result, I believe that we were blessed with great unity as the Global Fellowship Members unanimously agreed a new strategy, or direction of travel until 2023, and now that journey is underway!

My prayer for this World Leprosy Day is, that regardless of the journey you are on, whether it be your own, or your organisations, that you regularly stop and seek the Lord's favour and guidance. Make space for the 'mystical' along the way; the prompting of the Holy Spirit, the prophetic voices in your midst, and those subtle 'detours' which take you to seemingly unintended places. And may your journey, where God is leading you at this time, regardless of the terrain you must cross, be a time of immense blessing!

Life in all its Fullness – 6.

Testimony of Annelize Boer - volunteer TLM Netherlands



Annelize Boer is a volunteer at the office of TLM Netherlands. She calls donors by phone to thank them for their support and donations. She is a strong believer in the power of prayer, and encourages people to pray for leprosy patients. For that she recommends the prayer letter of TLM Netherlands. Since volunteering, the number of people receiving our prayer letter has grown from 200 to over 750. Our prayer support continues to grow!

Thank God for volunteers!

Annelize tells her testimony:

Years ago I visited my friend Jannie Bosch in Indonesia. She worked for The Leprosy Mission as a nurse field worker among leprosy patients. With a car we drove through the jungle to a village where school children were examined for leprosy. I still see those faces in front of me. They were so afraid that they had this terrible disease. That has always stayed with me.

Since then I have always felt compassion towards people who have leprosy. I looked for clothes and knitted bandages. Three years ago I started as a volunteer at Leprazending in Apeldoorn. I am so grateful that I was born in this rich country. I like to do this work.

I myself - like many ex-leprosy patients - must miss my fingers and a part of my feet. I was born that way. Fortunately, I have never been bullied, as is the case with many leprosy patients. I'm fine. Leprosy patients with a disability have a hard time. If I need custom shoes, I get it. For them, that is still the question.

Comment by Henno: Next to her disability in hands and feet, Annelize also has limited eye sight and hearing. After a fall she was not able to come to the office for a few weeks. After that period she was afraid that TLM did not want her back anymore. In fact we could not wait to have her back! Was it just insecurity of her contribution or maybe a form of self-stigma?

- Please thank God for all our volunteers. That he may use them as a blessing and be a blessing to them.
- Please pray that all of us connected to TLM will be truly inclusive to persons with a disability in our lives and work.

Henno Couprie Henno is Country leader of TLM Netherlands since 2003. Before he worked in Christian development work in Indonesia, PNG and Ivory Coast. Henno is married and has three teenage children.



Some famous sayings by some (in)famous n.t. woman!

1) John4:15 (Woman of Samaria) *"Sir, give me this water, that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw."*

->BE SPIRITUALLY THIRSTY FOR ETERNAL LIFE!

2) Luke 1:38 (Mary) *"Behold, I am the servant of the LORD; let it be to me according to Your Word."*

->BE SUBMISSIVE TO THE WILL OF GOD!

3) Matth.15:27(Canaanite woman) *"Yes, LORD, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their Master's table."*

->BE HUMBLE AND TRUSTING!

4) Matth.9:21(A woman that had suffered bleeding for 12 years) *"If I only touch His garment, I will be made well."*

->BE BELIEVING!

5) Luke1:46ff(Mary) *"My soul magnifies the LORD, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for He has looked upon the humble estate of His servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed."*

->BE JOYFUL AND WORSHIPPING THE LORD!

6) Luke10:40(Martha) *"LORD, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me!"*

->BE CONTENTED AND NOT COMPARING NOR CONTENTIOUS!

7) Luke11:27(Woman in the crowd) *"'Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts at which You nursed.' But Jesus replied, 'Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and keep it.'"*

->BE PRIMARILY ABSORBED WITH THE WORD OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE!

8) John2:5 (Mary)*"Do whatever He tells you."*

->BE SPONTANEOUSLY OBEDIENT TO GOD'S PROMPTINGS!

9) John4:29(Woman of Samaria) *"Come, see a Man that told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Messiah?"*

->BE A FAITHFUL AMBASSADOR OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST EVERYDAY!

10) John20:15b(Mary Magdalene) *"Sir, if you have carried Him away.....Mary.....Rabboni!"*

->BE TOTALLY IN LOVE WITH JESUS – IN LIFE AND IN DEATH!

11)John20:18(Mary Magdalene)*"I have seen the LORD!"*

->BE CONSTANTLY 'LOOKING UNTO JESUS – YOUR AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF YOUR FAITH'!

- Amen.



Saved; yet in bondage?

In his letter to Titus (*The Epistle of Titus*), Paul addresses the issues of correcting, equipping and building the Church in Crete. He lays down norms for appropriate thinking and behaviour by leaders and believers.

The messenger (Paul) - Paul writes this epistle from the stand point of a servant first and then a messenger. As one who has been sent out to preach the Good News, he yields himself to the purpose of God completely. Knowledge, wisdom, authority and power for his ministry comes from the Master who he serves. Preaching the hope of eternal life is God's command for him. He is duty bound as a servant to do what he has been ordered to do. God's Will is his will. He has a reason and purpose for his ministry. Share God's saving grace in the person of Jesus Christ. He is bound to Jesus as a slave.

The message (Eternal life in Jesus) - It's simple and straight. Promises of God are eternal in the new creation of life on receiving Jesus as the personal Saviour. Life in this world becomes meaningful because of the hope we have of an eternal life in Jesus Christ. God's promises are always true from the beginning of time. We are saved not because of the good things we have done, but by His mercy. The Saviour is a person, the person of Jesus and not any theology, religious practice, law etc.. Our allegiance is to Jesus, God in flesh on the earth and His grace.

The co-labourer (Titus) - Titus accepted Jesus as his Saviour as an outcome of the sharing of Good News by Paul. He was a gentile, a non-Jew Greek, saved outside the circumcision of Law of Moses. Spirit filled. Became a spiritual son of Paul. Accompanied Paul on missionary journeys as an understudy. He was someone Paul developed as a future leader. Paul took him to Jerusalem to meet the elders. He was left at Crete by Paul to nurture it.

Challenges of the Church at Crete - The Church at Crete had started experiencing certain challenges, sliding back to the old ways of the Law. They claimed themselves as followers of Jesus but were destroying the gospel of grace. Jewish leaders continued to propagate the Mosaic Law even after accepting Jesus as their Saviour and receiving God's grace. They were still trying to do "good" works to get saved. They claimed to know God, but by their actions were contrary. They became detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good. Receiving Jesus as the Saviour is easy; but sustaining the faith in Jesus is difficult. Human tendency is always to return to our evil ways.

New life in Jesus - If good works can save us, then Jesus had died in vain. Grace must lead to and manifest in good works - The New Way. We are saved to do good works which God has already planned for us. Christians should live by a different value system. Believers must walk a different walk in this world. While we are in Grace, there is no place for foolish controversies, genealogies, arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless. Not to live in ungodliness and in worldly passions but to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives. Grace must be manifested through good works. It's the manifestation of grace in us that draws people to Jesus. Pleasing God in this world through our actions out of gratitude will please God in spirit in eternity.

Christian leaders need personal clarity of the doctrine of grace, commitment and be blameless in character because they are the beacons for others. Controlling people through Law is easy. Leading through grace is challenging. Law (religion) controls but grace (through fellowship) frees people.

Living in Obedience to God's Grace Brings Joy and Peace to One's Soul !

In gratitude, for His glory - **Dr PLN Raju** - Former Director (Resource Mobilization) The Leprosy Mission Trust India



Peter Addresses the Crowd

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him:

“I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;

my body also will rest in hope,

because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,

you will not let your holy one see decay.

You have made known to me the paths of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence—”

“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies

a footstool for your feet.”

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. *Acts 2,14-41, written by Luke MD, evangelist*

Authors in Alphabetical Order

Textuarium

Allan Ekstedt	7 January		Genesis 1,26-27	9 January
Arianna Boba	4 January		2 Samuel 6,1-5	17 and 18 January
Brent Morgan	27 January		1 Chronicles 28,20	2 January
Bunmi Oluloto	3 January		Ezra 8,21	27 January
Dan Izzett	22 January		Psalms 19,14	15 January
David Beazley	2 January		Psalms 69, 9	16 January
Eddie Askew	25 January		Psalms 90	1 January
Elisabeth Barnett	17, 18 January		Psalms 91	5 January
Erna Möller	24 January		Psalms 92	12 January
Henno Couprie	28 January		Psalms 93	13 January
Jeffrey Tan	15 January		Psalms 94	19 January
Kathleen Gavin	8 January		Psalms 95	20 January
Luke MD, evangelist	31 January		Psalms 96	26 January
Marie Arnachellum	9 January		Matthew 3,13-17	6 January
Matthew, evangelist	6 January		Matthew 5,14	21 January
Moses, man of God	1 January		Mark 6,14-26	17, 18 January
Otto Kingsley	23, 29 January		Mark 10,17-27	4 January
Peter Laubscher	16 January		Luke 1,37	7 January
Raju PLN Dr	10, 11, 30 January		Luke 2,14-41	31 January
Silvano Perotti	21 January		Luke 17,12-19	22 January
Tim Collison	14 January		Luke 19,1-10	10,11 January
			John 1,14	24 January
			John 14,12 ff	14 January
			John 14,9	25 January
			Colossians 3,12-17	8 January
			Epistle to Titus	30 January

The Bridge - TLM Daily Devotions

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