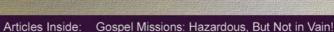
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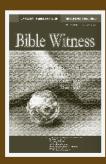
Bible Witness

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Mark 16:15



Promises for Missions
Theology and Missions
Giving to Missions
The Struggles of Missions
Things that Wreck Short-Term Missions
Bible Trivia - Genesis 18
God Provides a Graduation Suit



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Gospel Missions: Hazardous, But Not in Vain! Prabhudas Koshy

7 principles for missionaries from Paul's testimony in 1 Thessalonians

Then Paul wrote to the Christians in Thessalonica, he briefly summarized his Gospel attempt in their city this way, "For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain" (1 Thessalonians 2:1). His Gospel mission in Thessalonica did not last long because of the violent opposition. Nonetheless, he had nothing to regret in making that hazardous Gospel expedition into Thessalonica.

Paul had his own conscience bearing witness to the integrity of his ministry. But he also appealed to the Thessalonians concerning the faithfulness and fruitfulness of his Gospel enterprise. Like him, his co-workers in the work of the Lord, Silas and Timotheus, also discharged their office: "For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you." Matthew Henry comments, "It is a great comfort to a minister to have his own conscience and the conscience of others witnessing for him that he set out well, with good designs and from good principles; and that his preaching was not in vain." Paul was not making any idle speculations. It was a sound fact that his Gospel mission bore much fruit regardless of all the harrowing experiences he encountered.

Principles for a Successful Gospel Mission in Hazardous Conditions

When we consider the opposition and hazards that Paul encountered in his mission attempts in Thessalonica and other cities, we may wonder what caused him to make the bold statement in 1 Thessalonians 2:1 that his coming to the Thessalonians was not in vain. Thankfully, Paul had clearly indicated what made his hazardous Gospel efforts very effective and fruitful.

1. Minister by Preaching the Powerful Gospel

The very first ingredient that Paul mentioned is found in the first chapter. He wrote in verse 5 about what constituted the Gospel endeavour in Thessalonica - "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake."

When Paul said, "Our gospel came . . . unto you in word," he was referring to the preaching of the Gospel to the Thessalonians. He could not have been talking about the eloquence of the preachers who declared the Gospel.



He never claimed to be eloquent. In fact, he said he never attempted to be eloquent in his preaching. He wrote, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom" (1 Corinthians 2:4a). Then, what did he mean by "our gospel came . . . unto you in word"? He was simply saying that the Gospel was brought to them by clear preaching.

Christian mission is all about preaching the Gospel faithfully and fervently. That is why Paul said elsewhere, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16). To assume the responsibility of Christian missions and not to preach the Gospel is indeed woeful. Christian missions are not about merely doing charitable acts, though they are a necessary and beneficial undertaking. Preaching of the Gospel must be the pre-eminent task of every Christian mission.

We should never be doubtful of the pre-eminence of preaching the Gospel. Paul said to the Thessalonians, "our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power." Paul was absolutely sure the faithful preaching of the Gospel will have the divine power needed for the salvation of souls. In another letter to the Romans, he boldly declared his conviction about the effectiveness of the Gospel, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). Likewise, he also mentioned to the Corinthians: "For the preaching of the cross is . . . unto us which are saved it is the power of God. . . . But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18, 24). Paul's words remind us of Jeremiah's description of God's Word, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29). Paul's sentiments about the efficacy of the Gospel is so overwhelming that he wrote, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

2. Minister in the Power of the Holy Spirit

In 1 Thessalonians 1:5, Paul not only said that "our gospel came . . . unto you in word . . . in power," but also "in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." This is certainly a proof that Jesus kept the promise that He made prior to His ascension – "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Every missionary or preacher of the Gospel must trust and hope in the leading and empowering of the Holy Spirit, which is promised by the Lord Jesus Christ. It will be in vain to attempt anything in the Gospel endeavour by one's carnal strength.



Paul was deeply convinced that the Holy Spirit was at work in Thessalonica, where he preached with much reliance on the Spirit's strength and wisdom. It would have been in vain, if he had relied on his prowess.

As they relied on the Holy Spirit to minister the Gospel, the ministry was also wrought "in much assurance." The original Greek word for "assurance" can mean deep conviction. It is the Holy Spirit that brings about convictions of sin, the need for salvation, and Christ, the way to salvation. A deep conviction about the Gospel is an absolute necessity, both in the preacher's heart and in the hearer's heart, if the Gospel effort is to be successful. It is brought about by the inner working of the Holy Spirit (cf. John 16:8).

3. Minister through an Exemplary Life

One more thing that the Apostle Paul mentioned in 1 Thessalonians 1:5 is that "as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." He further elaborated this thought in the next verse, "And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord" (v. 6a). Later in chapter 2, Paul again reminded the Thessalonians of the missionaries' exemplary life, "For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile. . . Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe" (vv. 3, 10).

The apostle and his companions were careful to maintain a holy manner of life. They lived a life that was worthy of following. The word "followers" in verse 6 can also mean "imitators." The men of the apostolic preaching team lived a life that is worthy of imitating. As ministers of Christ, they lived a life that is reflective of the Gospel of Christ. The Thessalonians, who observed what manner of men they were among them, upon hearing their preaching, showed a conscientious desire to be followers of them, or to imitate their good example. Thus they also became followers of the Lord, as the apostle and his co-workers were followers of Christ. Paul was always mindful of the necessity of living an exemplary life as a preacher of the Word. He wrote, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). The so-called preachers of the Gospel who live a carnal life will bring much shame to the Christ of the Gospel. So, every missionary's life must be an exemplary life that his Gospel efforts may not be in vain. The preacher's holy and exemplary life is essential to exalting Christ through the preaching of the Gospel.

4. Minister with Boldness and Endurance

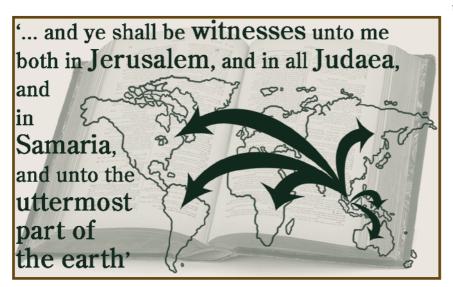
While Paul continued to write about their missionary work in Thessalonica, he wrote about their experiences of violent opposition against their Gospel efforts. "But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention" (1 Thessalonians 2:2).

The story of Paul's hazardous missionary journey begins in Acts 16 when Paul and Silas crossed the Aegean Sea from (in modern terms) Turkey to



Greece. Then they came to the Macedonian city of Philippi. One day, a demon-possessed slave girl began following Paul around. When Paul cast out the demon spirit, the girl's owners became angry because they could no longer make money by using her as a fortune teller. They stirred up a crowd, caused a huge commotion, and had Paul and Silas severely beaten and thrown into prison. At midnight, while Paul and Silas were singing hymns, a violent earthquake shook the city, causing the doors of the prison to open and the chains on the prisoners to be broken. But Paul and Silas did not try to escape. That very night, they led the jailer and his family to Christ and baptized them. The next day, the authorities asked Paul and Silas to leave Philippi for their own safety and to prevent further disturbances.

From there, they went to Thessalonica where Paul preached in the synagogue on three Sabbath days. Although he was only there a few weeks, he managed



to start a church instruct new believers in the Christian faith. Not everyone was glad that he had come to Eventually, town. certain Jews stirred up the rabble so that a riot ensued. Under cover of darkness, the believers spirited Paul and Silas away to Berea where they found a good hearing at first. But the Jews from Thessalonica

went to Berea, stirring up so much opposition that Paul left for Athens. There, he preached the Gospel on Mars Hill and came face to face with the intellectuals who regarded him contemptuously as a "seed-picker," a country bumpkin not worth noticing. Some believed, some doubted, and others mocked Paul's message. Eventually, he made his way to the major port city of Corinth where he established a church and preached for a year and a half. Once again, the Jews attacked Paul and dragged him before the local authorities.

Here is a record of Paul's visits to these five cities:

Philippi—Beaten and jailed.
Thessalonica—Riot, Paul escaped by night.
Berea—More trouble, Paul went to Athens.
Athens—Ridiculed by the intellectuals.
Corinth—Taken to court, falsely accused.



In spite of all the sufferings and reproaches, Paul and his companions "were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention." Every missionary must be resolute in his heart not to let adversities affect his duty. Paul's sufferings only emboldened him. He wrote that "we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God." When opposition increases, every preacher of the Gospel must learn to strengthen himself in his God. Paul wrote that by trusting in God, he brought the Gospel to the Thessalonians "with much contention." The original Greek word for "contention," agano (from which we get the English word, "agony"), means strive or contest agonizingly for a prize. As opposition and persecution increased, Paul increased in his resolve and agonized through all the adversities to preach the Gospel.

The Greek word for "contention" (agano) is translated as "fight" in the following verses, which were written with Gospel missions in view. Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." He also said towards the end of his life, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7). Only a preacher who is ready to bear all the inward agonies resulting from external adversities can bear much fruit for the Lord in his mission field.

5. Minister unto Men Not as Man-Pleasers, But as God-Pleasers

In 1 Thessalonians 2:4-6, Paul wrote, "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness: nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ."

Paul was mindful to preach to please God and not men. This is because he was always mindful that his ministry was from God, for he wrote, "we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel." He disciplined his heart not to lose sight of this truth, lest God may search his heart and find him unfaithful. Because of such God-pleasing mentality, he avoided flattery, which was used by covetous men who often sneaked into the ministry of the Gospel. Paul's integrity in this matter was enhanced by his calling on God as his witness. The apostle and his men desired neither fortune nor fame. They were not looking for the applause of men. Nor did they demand any privileges because of their office as apostles.

Only God-oriented ministers of the Gospel can keep clean from coveting money and fame. The glory of God must be their primary goal in preaching the Gospel. The grace of God must be their primary source of provision. The goodness of the Lord must be their primary expectation of reward. God alone must be their focus that their labour may not be in vain.



6. Minister with Love, Compassion and Tender Care

Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12, "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. . . . As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father *doth* his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."

Paul and his companions cared for their converts as a nursing mother gently cares for her little children. He also said that he and his co-labourers nurtured them like a father. The gentleness and unselfishness of Paul as a spiritual parent shine through in this illustration. These instructive illustrations provide a good example for all who are responsible for the care of new believers.

They not only gave the message of eternal life, the Gospel of God, but also imparted their own souls as well. They gave whatever they had in order to help the beloved Thessalonians. Their genuine love finds expression in giving to people—not only to their spiritual needs, which are primary, but also to their physical needs.

7. Minister with a Heart to Labour Painstakingly

In verse 9 of 1 Thessalonians, chapter 2, Paul reminded his readers from Thessalonica, "For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God." Paul and his team's ministry in Thessalonica are described as "labour and travail." The Greek word for "labour" is *kopos*, and it gives the idea of intense labour encompassing toil and trouble. Likewise, the Greek word for "travail" refers to hardships and painstaking efforts. These words, when used together, emphasize the industry and commitment of Paul and his co-labourers. To be fruitful in the work of the Lord, one ought to be very diligent and be willing to pay whatever be the price for the accomplishment of the task.

May all the missionaries and preachers of His Word take care to avoid a scandalous life and a fruitless and unfaithful preaching ministry. Let their preaching and way of life all magnify Christ, the Saviour. Herein, said this apostle, "do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16).

"Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."

William Carey, Missionary to India



Promises for Missions Reggor Galarpe

Matthew 28:18-20

Introduction

As I ponder upon the theme "Promises for Missions", I am reminded of some quotable words from missionaries themselves testifying of the Lord's goodness and faithfulness in their mission work. William Carey, the father of modern missions, once said, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." J. Hudson Taylor, founder of the China Inland Mission, said this, "God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply." Adoniram Judson (missionary to Burma) has this to say, "The prospects are as bright as the promises of God." These are testimonies of missionaries mightily used by God in proclaiming the Gospel wherein we see bright "promises for missions."

As we consider the theme "Promises for Missions", I would like us to look at the Lord's Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

The Great Commission being found in all the four Gospels (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21) may be the most preached text in many churches, but sadly, it is also often the most misunderstood and ignored topic. It is tragic that the Great Commission has been more discussed, if not debated, than it has been obeyed in churches today.

To justify their failure to obey the Great Commission, churches and Christian individuals alike would come up with different excuses like: not being called for missions; not able to do missions; not ready for missions; no open door for missions; and no budget for missions.

Looking closely at our text, you would realize that there is no excuse valid enough to justify one's indifference to the Great Commission as we see here two wonderful promises for missions.

The Lord's Empowering as We Go for Missions (v. 18-19)

Very often, when we talk about promises from this text, we go straight to



that last portion of verse 20 that says, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world", not realizing that there is one promise before that from verse 18 onwards: the promise of the Lord's empowering as we go for missions.

The Lord Jesus said to His disciples in verse 18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Here is the total authority and power asserted by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. And by this same power and authority, He commissions His disciples in verse 19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Lord's commissioning of His disciples here comes with His promise of empowering and enabling.

In a parallel passage in Luke 24:48-49, we read, "And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." The promise here pertains to the Holy Spirit's empowering and enabling the disciples to be effective witnesses for the Lord by preaching the Gospel among all nations.

Prior to His ascension in Acts 1:8, the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Pursuing missionary endeavour is a high calling from God. When one is called and commissioned to go for missions, the authority is vested upon him to pursue the Lord's work. And in that pursuit, he can trust the Lord's empowering through the Holy Spirit to:

"Teach all nations" (v. 19) – Meaning to make disciples of all nations. The missionary is to preach and proclaim the Gospel for the purpose of making disciples for Christ. This is the one great purpose of missions – to make disciples of every kindred and every tongue. The great Gospel must be preached to bring repentance upon men and for the remissions of sin. They must be led to the saving knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

"Baptizing them" (v. 19) – Discipleship must then be coupled with public profession of faith through baptism. The authority to administer baptism is also vested in ordained ministers and pastors. Except for infants and children of Christian parents, adults are to be taught and instructed in the Word of God before they are baptized.

In our church set-up, we conduct catechism class using the Westminster Shorter Catechism and the Basic Bible Knowledge course preparing the catechumens for baptism.



"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded" (v. 20) – In addition to discipleship and baptism, the missionary work involves continuous teaching from the Bible. Missions is not just presenting the Gospel (or evangelizing). It also includes the establishing of the believers in doctrines, principles and practices of Christian living. This is one ministry that ought to be given much attention, especially in this time of doubts and confusion, apostasy and compromise.

When we first started, one ministry that we seriously pursued is the Home Bible Study. Together with my wife, Carol, we would go and visit various homes on weeknights for the Home Bible Study. This is primarily aimed at establishing the brethren in the foundations of the Christian faith. This is in addition to our midweek prayer meeting and Bible study in church.

Not long after, the Lord enabled us to start the Couples' Fellowship to minister to the couples and parents in our midst. Then very recently we started our Ladies' and Men's Fellowship. Earlier on, we already have had an existing ministry for the children as well as a combined fellowship for the Teens and the Youth. All these are for the purpose of ministering to the brethren at different age levels, establishing them in their Christian faith.

Considering one's limitations and insufficiency, it is all by the grace of God and through His enabling that we are able to do these things to the glory of His name.

The apostles and the disciples then could never have planted the Gospel, and set up churches as they did, if they had not been endued with such an empowering.

The Lord's Presence in Our Pursuit of Missions (v. 20)

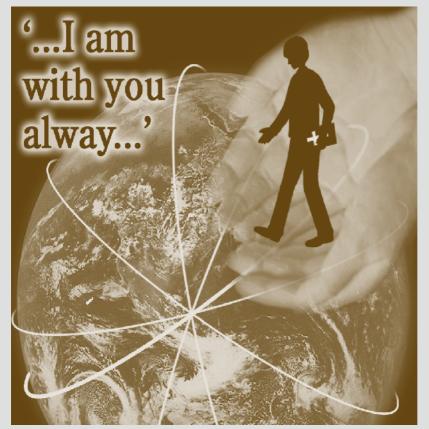
Now, let's proceed to the more obvious promise in verse 20 "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Not only are we promised of His empowering but we are also promised of His presence to accompany us in our missionary endeavours. There's no greater assurance than this – "I am with you alway."

In the Scriptures (especially in the Old Testament), the Lord gave the same promise of His presence to His people. He said to Isaac in Genesis 26:3, "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father." He said to Moses in Exodus 3:12, "And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." He said to Joshua in Joshua 1:5, "There shall not any man be



able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." There are many such promises in the Scriptures given to God's people in anticipation of uncertainties and trials and difficulties in pursuing specific endeavours.

No doubt about it, there are many uncertainties and trials and difficulties in missions. But we need not be dismayed, for the Lord has promised, "I am with you alway." His presence is our guarantee and assurance that He will guide us and sustain us as we carry on with His Great Commission.



One of the common reasons why brethren are indifferent to going for missions is the fear for their own welfare and safety. May we be encouraged and comforted by this promise of the Lord, "I am with you alway."

I have heard and read stories of missionaries bravely going to the mission fields despite the risk upon their lives just to bring the Gospel to the people.

John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides in the Southern Pacific, was not afraid to preach the Gospel to the maneating tribes of the

island. Violent attacks were made on him. At one point, Paton and a local co-labourer locked themselves in a room for four days as natives waited outside to kill them. This did not hinder him from preaching the Gospel.

I remember the testimony of one Cambodian brother whom I studied with in Far Eastern Bible College, of how the Lord had protected him and the ministry from the untoward attack of the rebels in his country. One evening, a group of rebels was planning to attack and burn his home while they were asleep. To the amazement of the rebels, when they approached the brother's house, they saw a great light surrounding the house. Therefore, they were afraid and did not pursue their plan. This



incident came to be known when one of the rebels confessed after his conversion. What can this be but the Lord's providential care upon them?

Of course, there are accounts of missionaries losing their lives in the service. It does not mean that the Lord cares less for them. Trusting the Lord's presence with them, it no longer matters whatever befalls them in pursuing the Great Commission. The Apostle Paul said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

John Williams together with two other European missionaries were clubbed to death upon their arrival in the shoreline of Erromango Islands in the New Hebrides. James Chalmers and Oliver Tomkins were on an exploratory trip along the coast of New Guinea, an area known for ferocious cannibals. When they went ashore and did not return, a search party went in and came out shortly with the grisly news that Chalmers and Tomkins had been clubbed to death, chopped into pieces, cooked and eaten before the search party even arrived. It was a shocking incident that stunned the Christian world, but it was one that Chalmers and Tomkins had always been prepared to endure. How about us?

We may not encounter such life-threatening situations today, but I believe, we all have our own challenges to face: perhaps strong resistance and opposition to the Gospel; political instability in the mission field; and other difficulties unique to our respective mission stations. Let us not be discouraged, neither be dismayed but continue to trust and stand on the Lord's promise, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The more I ponder upon this promise of the Lord's presence, the more I realize it is all sufficient. You see, with the Lord's presence we are also assured of His provision. Missionary work does not provide a high salary and all the comforts that usually come with a secular job. But rest assured that you shall not be in want as the Psalmist said, "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing" (Psalm 34:10).

When Gethsemane B-P Mission Church in Cebu first started, we literally had nothing but the burden and the eagerness to start the work. I praise and thank God for His provision through the commitment of mother church, Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church in Singapore, to help us with the monthly rent of the hotel function room as well as for the personal support of the missionary. Having our services in a hotel function room, we do not have to worry about other resources like the air-conditioning, the PA system, OHP, chairs, etc. But when we recently moved into a rented apartment building, we started to feel the need. We need to have our own PA system, chairs, electric fans, and many other things for the church, not to mention the monthly rent of the place. As a fledgling missionary work, we could not do much, though the local brethren tried



and took part by their giving. In His own timing, the Lord provided us with these things through the generous (and sacrificial) giving of His people from various B-P Churches such as Gethsemane BPC, Bethel BPC and Calvary Tengah BPC.

The Lord's provision does not end there! The Lord provided us with not just the physical and material needs of the work but more so the spiritual. I praise and thank God for the provision of Sunday school materials, Christian literature through Bible Witness Media Ministry, KJV Bibles, even the provision of *Revival Hymns and Choruses* songbooks and a hymn player that helps us to learn to sing more hymns. And we, at the mission church, are thankful to the Lord for them!

I believe every pastor and missionary has his own story to tell about the Lord's gracious provisions upon him. As we all move on to pursue the Lord's work, there will be many more burdens ahead of us. But then again, let us put our trust in the Lord.

There are many promises for missions in the Scriptures but I believe these two wonderful promises in the Great Commission stand as the all-sufficient promise of them all: (1) The Lord's Empowering as We Go for Missions; and (2) The Lord's Presence in Our Pursuit of Missions.

Conclusion

Having experienced these two wonderful promises, I do not see any reason why we, as a church and as individuals, could not go and pursue after the Lord's work on missions. May we be challenged to GO as we are commanded; may we be challenged to GO as we are mandated; and so we shall GO trusting and standing on the Lord's promises for missions.

SEVEN RULES FOR DAILY LIVING by Jonathan Goforth

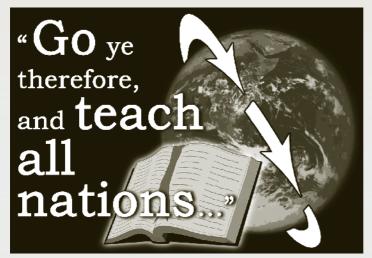
The following rules for daily living were made by Dr. Goforth in 1894 and written on the fly-leaf of his Bible:

- 1. Seek to give much expect nothing.
- 2. Put the very best construction on the actions of others.
- 3. Never let a day pass without at least a quarter of an hour spent in the study of the Bible.
- 4. Never omit daily morning and evening private prayer and devotion.
- 5. In all things seek to know God's Will and when known obey at any cost.
- 6. Seek to cultivate a quiet prayerful spirit.
- 7. Seek each day to do or say something to further Christianity among the heathen.
 - from Goforth of China by Mrs. Rosalind Goforth. Appendix p. 355-356.



Theology and Missions Jeffrey Khoo

he Lord Jesus Christ—the Lord of the harvest—in Matthew 28:18-20 says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."



No Theology, No Missions!

No theology, no missions! Theology is the study or the knowledge of God. Biblical missions have to do with telling people who and what God is, and that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour of the world and the only way to heaven.

Missions must always be Wordcentred. It is not man's intelligence or methods but God's Word and God's Word alone that will transform hearts and change lives for eternity. That was why Jesus

commanded His disciples to "teach all nations ... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Note that the word "teach" occurs twice. The Great Commission is a didactic commission.

Not Social But Spiritual Gospel

The church is not called to feed the world with a social gospel of bread and butter. Such a gospel of bread and butter can satisfy our body but it cannot satisfy our soul. The bread of this world can satisfy us temporarily but not permanently. That is why the church is called to feed the world not with a social gospel but a spiritual Gospel, not the bread of flesh which lasts for a moment but the Bread of Life which lasts forever.

Jesus says, "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). The Bread of Life refers not only to Jesus Christ Himself who died for our sins and rose again from the dead according to the Scriptures which is the good news of salvation to the world, but also the Holy Scriptures—the words of eternal life (John 6:68). We must tell the world about the (1) Living Word—Jesus Christ, and His (2) Written Word—the Holy Scriptures.



Who can save me from my sins? Only Jesus Christ! What can wash away my sins? Only the blood of Christ! Christians have truly good news for this sincursed world. That was why the Apostle Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

Bible College First, Not Mission Field

If the Word of God is that which is essential and vital for missions, it goes without saying that those who wish to enter into ministry and missions must be thoroughly trained in and equipped with the Word of God. Some may have the zeal to go to missions but do not wish to be trained first; such become dangerous people, for zeal without knowledge can be deadly. Saul of Tarsus hurt the church badly with his great zeal that was not according to knowledge (Romans 10:2). Saul the zealous must become Paul the learned if he is to be effective for the ministry of the Gospel.

It is no wonder that Paul should speak of the Scriptures as being indispensable for the spiritual life and growth of a believer, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is no wonder that Paul should seek to declare the whole counsel of God in his work of missions and evangelism, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27).

If there is anyone who desires to enter into full-time ministry or missions, the first place to go is not the mission field, but the Bible college. It is not our zeal for lost souls but our faithfulness to God's Word that will determine our success in ministry and in missions. That was why Paul told Timothy, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Needed: Faithful Not Faithless Missioners

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38). Pray for more to enter into full-time ministry, but first to be trained in the Bible college. Indeed, "the trend is toward the trained." But be sure that your training is gained from a Bible-believing and Bible-defending school. Seek a faithful school and not a faithless school. Biblical missions must be entrusted to faithful and not faithless men as Paul told Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2).

Who will answer God's call to biblical missions? Will you be like the prophet Isaiah? "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).



Giving to Missions Errol D. Stone

2 Corinthians 9:1-15

ften the matter of giving amongst Christians is a difficult area because of the fact of being motivated by self, rather than the spirit. During the festive season, much giving occurs, especially the commercialized period of Christmas when often the expense of giving is in excess of budgetary constraints. Consequently, much time and labour is required to cover such expense. It is important for us to understand in relation to giving, where the ability to gain legitimate finance comes from and what the Word of God encourages us to do with our finances. In all matters that the Lord entrusts upon His children, He expects them to be faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2). Giving is a privilege, a blessing, an honour, and giving to missions is another important means of sustaining the work of the Lord in places where His work can progress.

The Source of Good Gifts

In contemplating these issues, it is most significant for us to understand that all things come from God who gives the ability to earn. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). Everything belongs to the Lord as is recorded in Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Both the Scriptures of Haggai 2:8 and Exodus 19:5 also express the same sentiment.

Giving to Missions

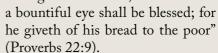
In the book of 2 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul addresses the Christians at Corinth with great respect. He knows of their willingness to do good works after salvation, and of their concern for poorer brethren. Whilst in Macedonia, he commended their earnestness in collecting for missions (cf. 2 Corinthians 9:1-5). The Apostle knew that the work in which the Lord had started in them would continue, and he encouraged them to persevere in that which they had already commenced. He knew of their generosity of heart and advised that he would dispatch Titus and other faithful and reliable brethren to them. An important lesson here is that of accountability, where several faithful men were appointed to handle financial matters. In his prudence, Paul gave them time to complete their collection, that when Titus arrived, they would be found ready.



The Manner of Giving

In 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, the Apostle exhorted the brethren to a correct means of the giving of relief and charity to the advancement of the Lord's work. He encouraged them to give liberally, but with certain conditions attached. He did not want them to be covetous, and reminded them of the good harvest that comes about when the seed is sown generously. Seed sown sparingly will often yield proportionately. "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Corinthians 9:6). Much prayer and thought must also be given, that due deliberation may result in giving willingly. A hasty decision may result in difficulties and regrets later, whereas a willing and faithful giving will surely be blessed.

God loves a generous giver, especially one who gives willingly and with a cheerful disposition. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). An unwilling heart defeats the purpose of the gift, for a grudging heart is not what God requires, but He loves the willingness of those who give, for it is the Lord who has given the ability to earn and provide for others. King Solomon said, "He that hath





The Blessing of Giving

There is no doubt that giving beyond what is required is a blessing to both the receiver and the giver, for it pleases the Lord. As the seed is buried in the ground for a while, so in due season it will sprout, and produce manifold. They who give freely will receive good returns. The reward for giving to the Lord's work is eternal, for God grants through His grace sufficiency in all things.

The Apostle Paul prayed that they may be blessed for their giving — blessed in their supplies, and their yield that their prosperity and righteousness be enriched. Both would obviously benefit, being the giver and the receiver. Giving to the household of faith shows our sincerity to the Gospel to the glory and praise of the Lord. In return for the giving, the receivers will no



doubt offer up prayers for the kindness of those who had freely given to their necessities.

Paul Lee Tan records in his Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustrations:

God made the sun - it gives
God made the moon - it gives
God made the stars - they give
God made the air - it gives
God made the clouds - they give
God made the earth - it gives
God made the sea - it gives
God made the trees - they give
God made the flowers - they give
God made the fowls - they give
God made the beasts - they give
God made the plants - they give
God made man - he ...

— Selected

Conclusion

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15). As we give to the Lord's work and to missions, may we reflect upon the most precious gift, the eternal gift, the gift of life, the unspeakable gift of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who gave His life that men may be reconciled unto God. It pleases the Lord for Christians to give as good stewards of His blessings. Stewardship of our money, as the Apostle Paul has encouraged the Christians at Corinth, is so important, for all money is from God, and is God's. "But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day" (Deuteronomy 8:18). May we be mindful of the giving to missions and be in prayer for all who faithfully serve the Lord in mission fields, whether they be our own area, our own country, or in far-off countries. May the Lord's work be propagated even through our willingness to support His faithful works.

"Any church that is not seriously involved in helping fulfill the Great Commission has forfeited its biblical right to exist."

Oswald J. Smith



The Struggles of Missions Ephrem Chiracho

Matthew 10:7-39

he work of Christian missions can be full of difficulties and problems. Both the missionary and the church that sends him to the field must be prepared to face all sorts of uncertainties and struggles. This has been the case in every age since the fall of man. Noah, the preacher of righteousness, was to fight against discouragement from the mocking wicked around him as he built the ark for saving his family. Jesus Christ, the God incarnate, was misunderstood, opposed and ill-treated by the majority of His own countrymen. The apostles of Christ met so many insurmountable problems as they went everywhere preaching the Gospel of Christ. And most of them died as martyrs. The stories of missionaries throughout the history of the Christian church bear witness to the fact that the work of missions cannot be done without difficulties and oppositions. This is true of every missionary who is faithfully labouring to extend God's kingdom on this earth, whether at home or in foreign lands. This message is intended to highlight only a few of the struggles of missions which, I believe, are of paramount significance.

Rejection of God's Word (vv. 7, 11-15)

When Jesus sent the twelve on a mission of preaching, He forewarned them of the rejection they would experience. He said, "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet" (v. 14). As in the days of the prophets, of Christ, and of the apostles, faithful teaching and preaching of God's Word is rejected by the majority, even till today. Preaching the exclusive Gospel of salvation by faith in Christ alone is increasingly unacceptable in our pluralistic world. Preaching repentance from sin and forsaking one's sinful way of life are not acceptable to most in a sintolerant society of our time. The teaching that we should live a holy and separated life, as the Gospel requires it, is not palatable to those who do not want to give up their worldly pleasures. The teaching of a perfect and unconditional obedience to God's Word is not tolerated in a society that compromises many of the biblical moral standards. To demand submission to the teachings of the Bible as the final authority and the only rule of life is not welcomed in the world that is plagued with the destructive teachings of situational ethics. Because of such opposition, the faithful preachers and teachers of God's Word are ever rejected,



falsely accused and persecuted. Today, this is one of the most painful struggles of missionaries.

Dear friends, what kind of attitude do you have towards the faithful preaching of God's Word? When your sins and worldly way of life are exposed by the light of God's infallible Word, how do you respond? When your conscience is pricked by the power of the preached Word, how do you respond? Do you submit to God's authority, and change your ways or do you get angry with the faithful teacher of the Word and with God Himself?

<u>Urgent Needs in the Mission Fields (vv. 8-10)</u>

When Christ sent His disciples to preach, He taught them not to worry about their physical provisions because the workman is worthy of his share of daily necessities (vv. 9-10; 1 Corinthians 9:13-14). We are instructed to trust the Lord to provide for all our needs in the ministry. In reality, the work of the Lord has many needs. It is also a reality that the workers in God's vineyard have individual and family needs waiting to be met. I have witnessed bitter sufferings of some faithful men of God. Sometimes they do not have food on the table. Their children either drop out from school or go with inadequate provisions that drastically affect their academic performance. Some of these children blame their parents for all their woes and failure in life. This breaks the hearts of God's servants; and some of them are led to think that they had failed in their parental responsibilities. But is it their failure? What could they have done?

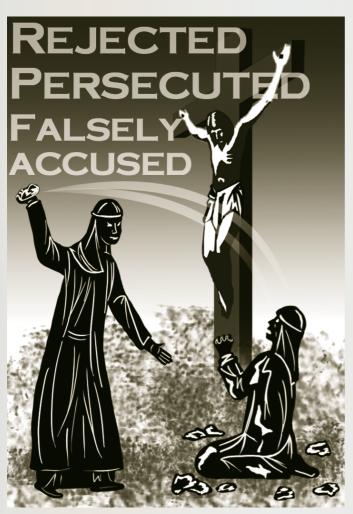
Moreover, the needs of the flock are also the needs of the shepherds (v. 8). How does a pastor feel when his children join the Sunday school class well-dressed, but his members' children come with tattered clothes? What can a pastor do when he looks in the eyes of some feeble-looking children and realizes that they have not eaten breakfast and it is not certain whether they will get lunch after the service? Now consider another scenario - A pastor is called upon to pray for a sick member; and he visits and prays for the sick. Some days later, he is called again to pray for the same as the sickness is getting worse. And then he realizes that the family could not take the sick to a clinic for lack of money. Can a pastor shut his eyes and ears and go away? These are some of the very trying experiences of many home and foreign missionaries. I am not advocating the so-called "social gospel." Sharing with the needy is a practical aspect of the Gospel ministry. As it is written, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James 2:15-16). "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). We share, not because we have much, but because others have none.



Another area of financial difficulty is the lack of sufficient funds for the training of workers. This is what I witnessed while I was serving in the Bible College of East Africa. God calls so many men and women who come from poor families. They need training to serve God. The college receives them in order to educate them for free as they are not able to pay their fees. But who is to cover the cost of their training? Or how can we dare to turn away these called ones from biblical training? We all need to pray and give to the support of such worthy cause for the glory of Christ's name (cf. Hebrews 6:10).

Hostile Working Environment (vv. 16-39)

Jesus declared, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge



you in their synagogues" (v. 16-17). The three major sources of hostility to the work of the Gospel are the political, religious and cultural factors. The political factor manifests itself through persecution and restrictions. Preconditions of many governments in starting a church or engaging in any form of religious work are often a hindrance to the furtherance of the Gospel work. In some countries, Protestant Christianity is regarded as an illegal religion and therefore, believers are persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, their properties confiscated, and their rights are denied. In many places, churches are shut down or changed to cinema holes.

The religious factors: In some nations, evangelical Christianity is not treated equally as the traditional religion. Though there is a constitutional freedom and equality of all religions, there is no practical application of this right when it comes to the activities of evangelical churches. At times, churches are denied a piece of land for church

building or burial place. In some places, they are required to renew their permits every two years or so, while the traditional religious groups can function even without any permit. In some places, members of the dominant religion persecute or even kill believers and missionaries, or



burn down their homes and churches. But our Lord said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (v. 28).

The cultural factors: there are some cultures that are hostile to Christianity simply because the Gospel exposes and denounces their wicked cultural practices. So the people think that we go there to destroy their identity or change their "inferior" culture and impose on them ours. This brings persecution upon the ministers of the Gospel. That is why Christ forewarned, "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (v. 38). In some cultures, fornication and adultery are as normal as taking breakfast. When women in such communities are saved, they meet tremendous oppositions and persecutions when they refuse to yield to the cultural demands of their wicked society. Ministers have to heal the physical, mental, or psychological wounds inflicted upon their members by their unbelieving family members or neighbours. Moreover, breaking through those sinful customs, teaching practical righteousness and holiness and subduing the minds and souls of the converts to the obedience of the Gospel of Christ is a daunting task for missionaries.

All that is said above hinder the work of God in many nations and discourage the hearts of Gospel workers. But we cannot expect better treatment from the world than what the Son of God received when He ministered on earth (vv. 24-25). Jesus Christ was all holy, righteous, and lovely. He was all gracious: He healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the mourning, and preached the Good News of salvation to all men. Yet, when Pilate asked them, "What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified" (Matthew 27:22). That is why Christ told His disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Therefore, let us not be discouraged nor count it strange when we are persecuted and ill-treated because of the faithful preaching and teaching of the Gospel of God. And let us remember Christ's words, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Let us pray for our missionaries who experience countless such struggles as they serve our Lord and Saviour (cf. Ephesians 6:18-20).

"The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become."

Henry Martyn



Things that Wreck Short-Term Missions Prabhudas Koshy

ur self-conceited attitude, unreasonable expectations and hypocrisy can disrupt or even ruin the short-term missions organised by our churches or fellowship groups. To maximize your contribution to the missionary, mission church and the mission team, avoid doing the things mentioned below:

- 1. Negligence of personal daily devotion. Some have neglected their time of prayer and meditation of God's Word, because they have to pursue a busy schedule. It is totally inadequate just to rely on group devotions and the preaching of the Word during the mission activities.
- 2. Unwillingness to do any menial work. To make a mission trip successful, everyone in the team has to be always ready to take up any task or challenge. It is totally absurd to refuse to do any menial work, saying that during the missionary trip your only duty is to win souls. It is totally false to think that doing menial works like data entry, loading trucks, or cooking, etc. will distract you from your primary task of winning souls. Not everyone is called to be preachers. For example, younger Christians in the team who are not equipped to preach and teach can contribute by helping in the physical aspects of the ministries.
- 3. Pick on the missionaries and their mistakes. Do not jump to conclusions quickly, when you notice something that appears to be wrong. Be patient and careful not to make unjust and erroneous judgment.
- 4. Disagree, criticise and murmur against your team leaders. Normally, leaders of mission trips are Christians who are experienced and matured men. They make decisions based on their best knowledge and judgment. It will be far better to prayerfully cooperate with the leaders in whatever

- way you can than being a dissident in the mission team. If you complain and murmur, it will affect the unity and effectiveness of the team.
- 5. Harshly deal with team members who made a mistake. Unkind remarks and discourteous behaviour can lead to much grief and problems during mission trips. Be gracious and affectionate one to another.
- 6. Being too suspicious or being too trusting of everyone you meet during the trip. It is wrong to think that everyone in poor countries is out to get something from you. Also, it is dangerous to think that everyone who appears to be friendly is safe to trust. The best is to follow the instruction given by the team leaders and local leaders.
- 7. Refuse the local food, as it might not have been cooked well to your taste!
- 8. Keep your distance from team members who could not raise their full support. Be kind and generous towards one another.
- 9. Get involved romantically with someone, or get into a quarrel with your friend. Though there is nothing wrong in getting to know someone closer, you must not lose the focus of the nature and purpose of the mission trip. Also, avoid getting into petty quarrels with your friend.
- 10. Scold your home church upon your return from the mission field for their lack of commitment, for their weak prayers, and for their inadequate giving to missions.

 One or two mission trips do not prove that you have become the perfect Christian.

 Instead, encourage the home church by your example in supporting the missions, since you have witnessed the needs and struggles of missions.

BIBLE TRIVIA - GENESIS 18

Sarah Ng

THERE ARE TEN MISTAKES IN THE FOLLOWING STORY BASED ON GENESIS CHAPTER 18. CIRCLE THE WRONG WORDS OR PHRASES AS YOU SPOT THEM AND WRITE THE CORRECT ANSWERS ABOVE THEM.

The LORD appeared to Abraham in the plains of Moreh, as he sat in his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham saw two men standing nearby and he ran to meet them and bowed himself towards the ground. He offered them water to wash their hands, and gave them a place to rest under the tree. He told Sarah to prepare thirty measures of fine meal to make cakes. He fetched a calf tender and sickly, and gave it unto a young man to prepare it for the visitors. While eating they asked, "Where is Mary thy wife?" and he told them that she was in the tent. The visitors said that Sarah would have a son at the time appointed by God. Sarah laughed loudly, but later denied it when she was reprimanded, for nothing was too hard for God. As the visitors rose to leave, the LORD told Abraham that through him all the nations of the earth would be blessed. After the visitors left to go to Siddim and Gomorrah, Abraham drew near to the LORD and pleaded with Him to spare the city for the sake of the wicked. In the end, the LORD answered that He would not destroy the city if twelve righteous people could be found.

Answer to Vol. 5, Issue 6 - Christmas Trivia.

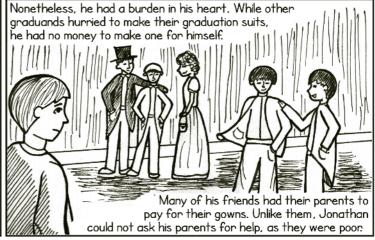
Pg. 23 - Forty-two generations

God Provides a Graduation Suit

A real experience of young Jonathan Goforth that taught him that God will provide all the needs of those who trust Him. Later he became one of the greatest missionaries to China.

Jonathan was soon to have graduated from Knox college, and he was very happy that four years of his study would soon have a successful end.





Jonathan soon decided to make his need of the graduation suit a special item in his prayers.



He believed that God will provide all the needs of His children. He remembered the promises in the Bible, such as,

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).



One day, he was walking down Yonge Street. . .

He heard someone calling him Hay, Jonathan, you are the very man I'm looking for! Come in.

It was Mr. Berkinshaw, the head of a well-known tailoring establishment, who was standing in front of his shop.



When Jonathan entered the tailor's shop, Mr. Berkinshaw brought to him a black suit of the finest quality.

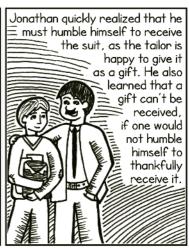


Seeing the magnificent suit," Jonathan objected, "I do need a suit, but this is too much for my pocket." However,
Mr. Berkinshaw insisted
Try on the suit, Jonathan.

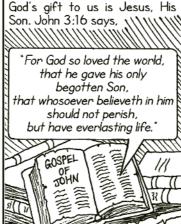
FITTING ROOM

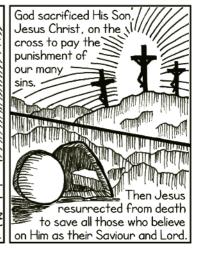


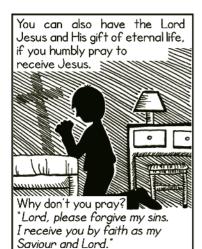












Bibliography: "Goforth of China" by Rosalind Goforth The stories are written by Rev. Dr. Prabhudas Koshy, and the illustrations are done by Sis. Sharon Ng.

This is the first of the series of illustrated stories from the real-life experiences of Jonathan Goforth's childhood and teenage days. The stories in the series will not be in chronological order.

We also hope in the Lord to print illustrated real-life stories of other missionaries and great men of God for the edification of our readers, particularly children and teens.

Gethsemane BPC Missionary Conference Dec 2005 Pastors, Missionaries and Bible College Students who attended the Conference

PHILIPPINES

ETHIOPIA

KENYA



Bro. Reggor Galarpe, Sis. Caroline and baby Ruth



Bro. Ephrem Chiracho, Sis. Gete and baby Daniel



Rev. Joseph Kendagor & Sis. Rhoda with Rev. Wee Eng Moh and Sis. Helen



(fr. L to R) Bro. Dominino, Bro. Eben Yoon Bro. Richard Tiu and Bro. Edsel Locot



Rev. Lee Kim Shong and his son, Josiah Lee



Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Khoo and Bro. Eben Yoon





Gethsemane B-P Church Missionary Conference Group Photo 2005

