

Bible Witness

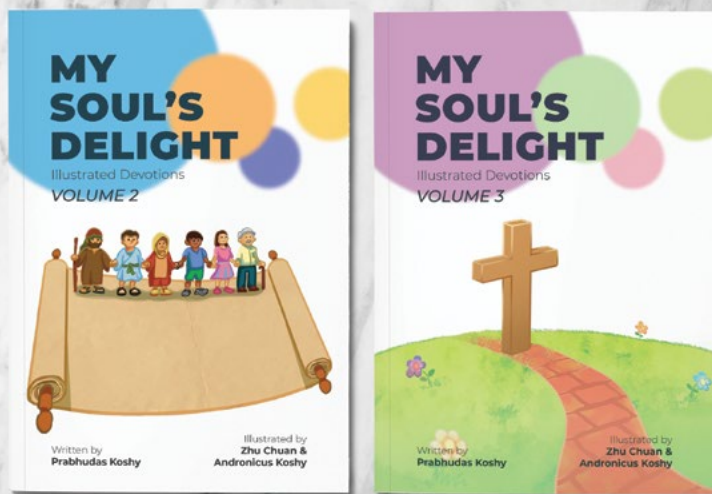
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WITNESS UNWAVERING!

THE 100TH
ISSUE

COMMEMORATIVE SPECIAL
20TH YEAR OF BIBLE WITNESS



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▲ On the Cover

With Christ at the centre of our work, as an unwavering witness, we have been spreading God's Word through the printed page for the last 20 years.



▲ Scan Me!

Past issues of Bible Witness magazine are available online at biblewitness.com/magazine

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WITNESS UNWAVERING!

COMMEMORATIVE SPECIAL
20TH YEAR OF BIBLE WITNESS | THE 100TH ISSUE

Volume 21 Issue 4 | July–August 2021

The editorial and articles are written by Prabhudas Koshy, Pastor of Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church and Editor of the Bible Witness Magazine.

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EDITORIAL

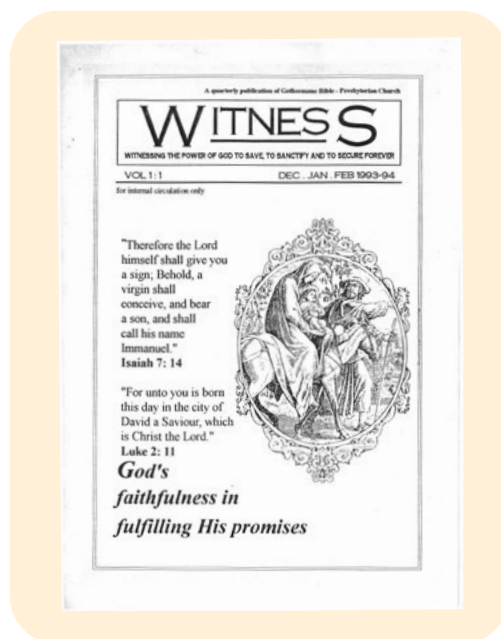
Beloved readers,

All praise, honour and glory be to God now and forever!

With this 100th issue, Bible Witness commemorates 20 years of publishing God's truths through the printed page.

It all started with a long-felt burden that the LORD had placed in my heart to publish biblically sound literature. Before the magazine could go into print, I had to wait and pray for the LORD's provision of resources, support from the church (Gethsemane Bible-Presbyterian Church), and a co-labourer to coordinate the publishing. While waiting on the LORD for all the needed provisions, a humble preparatory effort was made—with the help of youths in the church—to publish a quarterly magazine by the name, "Witness" (see pages 40 and 41 for other issues of "Witness"). Photocopies of these were distributed among the members of the church and their friends.

In the year 1999, the LORD moved the leaders and congregation of Gethsemane BPC to overcome whatever apprehension they had felt earlier, and support the publication of the magazine. The small congregation of Gethsemane set aside S\$10,000/- to begin the publication of the magazine. At about this time, the LORD's good providence led me to Bro. Lok Kwok Wah, who had a keen interest in Christian literature ministry. I asked him to join me to set up the Bible Witness Literature Ministry whereby we can publish a magazine that will faithfully disseminate the truths of God's Word. After prayerful consideration, he soon returned and expressed his preparedness to co-labour with me to start the literature ministry. Bro. Lok joined Gethsemane as a church staff in January 2001, and has tirelessly served the LORD in this ministry since then.



"Witness", the predecessor to the Bible Witness Magazine

Soon after the first issue (July–September 2001) of Bible Witness was published, many brethren, in response to having tasted the blessings of the publication, started to support this endeavour cheerfully with their prayers and love gifts. From time to time over the ensuing years, brothers and sisters have come forward to offer their time and energies to serve as proofreaders, layout artists, illustrators, content providers, etc. We trust that the LORD will have richly rewarded them for their labour of love.

Notwithstanding the initial enthusiastic response, severe testing soon fell upon our efforts to publish and distribute the magazine. In standing unashamedly and firmly for the doctrine of God's inspired, infallible, preserved Word and its faithful English Authorised Version (KJV), we drew the ire of those who rejected the doctrine of perfect preservation of God's Word in the original language texts underlying the Authorised Version. Not surprisingly, those Bible-Presbyterian churches that rejected the doctrine of perfect preservation of God's Word—which is a clear and repeated promise of God (cf. Psalm 12:6-7; 119:89-90, 152; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; 1 Peter 1:25)—also rejected the Bible Witness Magazine with contempt. In the face of such distressing circumstances, we trusted the LORD to strengthen our hearts and we persevered in publishing the magazine. It has pleased the LORD to bless us—"The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable" (Isaiah 42:21). Bible Witness continues till this day in its publication, only because the LORD has the pleasure to raise it as a standard for the propagation and defence of His Word and all its wonderful doctrines.

Over the past 20 years, God has sustained Bible Witness Literature Ministry, though there were many fears and tears. He even enabled this ministry to spread its wings to catch the "rising wind" of modern digital and internet media facilities, that it may "soar high" and reach the farthest ends of the world with the truths of God's Word. Hence, today, the ministry is known as Bible Witness Media Ministry.

We may not have the fame and fortunes of great Christian media enterprises. But with the strength that God has been pleased to endue us, we have climbed and conquered the "hills" of challenges God has set before us. While we thank God for the contributions of all His servants in the past 20 years, we look forward to doing more to spread His glorious truths everywhere with the present Bible Witness publication team whom God has assembled—Pr Ho Kee How (Assistant Editor), Dn Lok Kwok Wah (Publishing Coordinator), Matthew Peh (Design & Layout), and all brethren who avail themselves regularly.

Please pray that the LORD will direct brethren of His choice to come forward to co-labour with the present team to achieve greater things for His kingdom. We covet your prayers and continued support for this ministry.

Heartily in His service,
Prabhudas Koshy



EVERY CHRISTIAN, A WITNESS OF CHRIST!

PRABHUDAS KOSHY

“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).

Jesus Christ unequivocally stated, concerning His servants, that “ye shall be witnesses unto me”. It is every Christian’s lifelong spiritual responsibility. Witnessing Christ to others is inherent in a Christian’s make-up.

What It Is to Witness Christ

The task of witnessing is to make Christ and His truths known to those who know Him not. As Peter points

out, the apostles “were eyewitnesses of his majesty” (2 Peter 1:16). Jesus’ own words in Matthew 28:19-20a tell us what it is to be witnesses for Him—“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”.

In recording his witness of Christ in 1 John 1:1-2, the apostle John wrote, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)”. Our witnessing should bear testimony to Christ and urge others to

put their faith in Him as their Saviour and Lord, that they too become partakers of the eternal life He gives.

Christian witnessing includes bearing testimony about Christ, our submission to and partaking of all things Christ has instituted. Witnessing to others about Christ is done verbally and visibly to all who have not heard, understood, or experienced His greatness and goodness. Not only our words, but our actions also, must manifest Christ and His truths to all around us. That’s why those who defy Christ and live a disobedient life will fail to be faithful witnesses of Christ. The apostle Peter urged, “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Peter 3:15). The manner of Christians’ living and service should lay a solid and sound platform of charity, integrity and purity, on which they can stand boldly and preach Christ and His truths!

How We Can Be Witnesses of Christ

Jesus said, “..ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me...”. The assurance of our Saviour to all His servants is that in the new dispensation of the Holy Spirit’s work that would follow the ascension of Christ, all of them will receive the power to be His witnesses. It is to enable all His people to be witnesses that He has sent His Spirit into us.

The word “power” translates the Greek word (*dunamis*), from which is derived the English word “dynamite”. All genuine believers have the “spiritual dynamite” (the Holy Spirit’s power) to enable them to be witnesses of Christ. No believer is denied the power of the Holy Spirit, hence every believer who yields to the Holy Spirit would be thus activated by His power to be witnesses of Christ. Believers must be careful not to grieve the Holy

**WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT INCREASINGLY
STRENGTHENS THE CHURCH,
ITS LIFE AND MINISTRY WILL BE RADIANT
WITH THE GLORY OF CHRIST.**

Spirit (cf. Ephesians 4:30), but to be filled with the Spirit [i.e. to be under His direction that He gives through His Word (Ephesians 5:17-18)]. When a believer is under the complete control of the Holy Spirit who guides him by His Word, the life of that person will be an amazing witness to Christ.

Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3 shows the power of the Spirit-filled church. He prayed "that [God] would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (vv. 16, 20-21). When the Holy Spirit increasingly strengthens the church, its life and ministry will be radiant with the glory of Christ. A people yielded to the Holy Spirit will be a powerful witness to Christ!

Where We Should Bear Witness of Christ

Jesus said, "...ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in

all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The Lord's mandate to the apostles was to begin their witnessing in their current locale ("Jerusalem"), then to their neighbourhood ("Judaea"), and further to the next region ("Samaria") and distant lands ("unto the uttermost part of the earth"). The Book of Acts shows how the apostles executed their Gospel mission from Jerusalem unto the earth's remotest parts.

As witnesses of Christ, we must first declare Christ to those who are close by—to our relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbours, etc. We also have the responsibility to spread the truths of Christ throughout this world. Near and far, we must go as witnesses of Christ. While Jesus

prayed, He said, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:18).

Christians are the Lord's agents of a worldwide geographical expansion of Christianity. With the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, witnesses of Christ will reach people near and far with the Gospel. Like ripples in a pond, their witnessing will spread outwards even to the farthest place where the Lord may send them. Wherever the Spirit leads us, we must speak a word in praise of our wonderful Saviour and Lord. We cannot be silent,

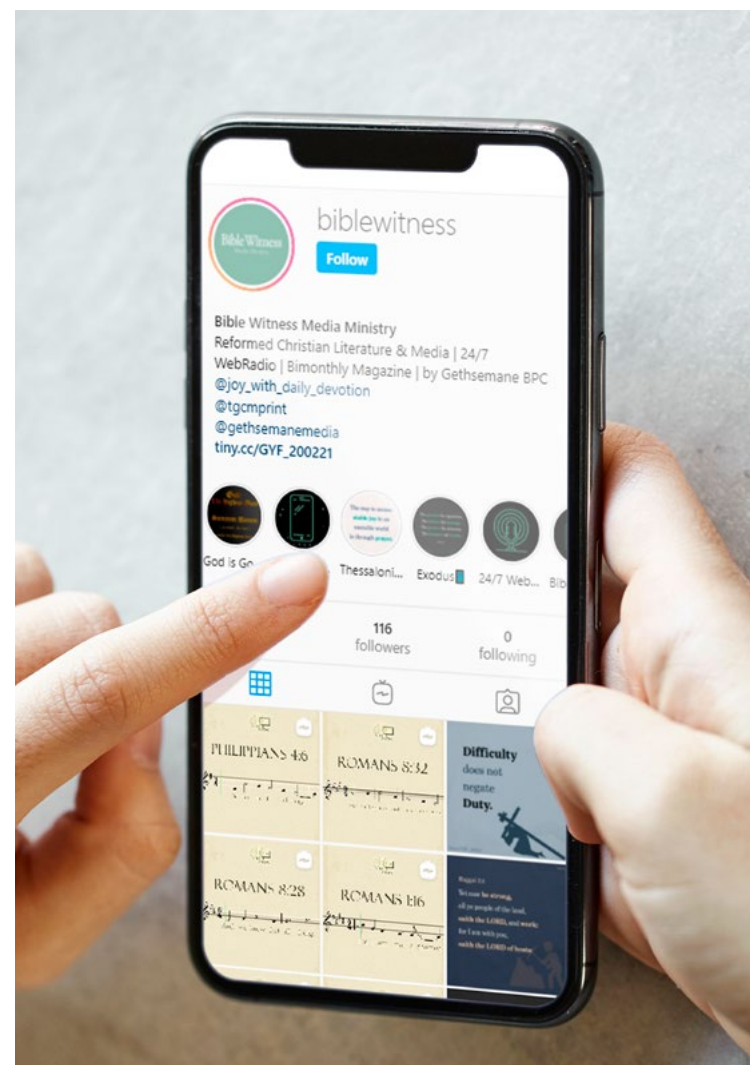
but must be witnessing Christians in our homes, schools, workplaces, markets, and journeyings. We must bring the truths of Christ to every place—lands, cities, towns, villages, camps, resorts, companies, palaces, parliaments, etc.—where the Lord will direct our paths.

The history of the church tells us the story of Christians who, for the most part, were unlearned men and women, propagating the Gospel rapidly through their witnessing of Christ. More so than missionaries

and preachers, Christians, who had heeded their Master's calling to be His witnesses—in being informal evangelists—had contributed more to the rapid spread of the Gospel. That was the secret of the sudden global expansion of Christianity in the first century, as well as other flourishing times in church history.

And that secret is also our spiritual responsibility today. The Lord Jesus Christ demands that every Christian fulfil his or her obligation—to bear witness to the Saviour everywhere! 🙏

CHRISTIANS ARE THE LORD'S AGENTS OF A WORLDWIDE GEOGRAPHICAL EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY.



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LET US BE A SOUL-WINNING CHURCH!

PRABHUDAS KOSHY

A church's God-given mission on earth is to preach the Gospel of Christ, that sinners may be saved and brought to the church for their spiritual growth. A church that is not committed to doing the Gospel-work has no right to exist, and it shall soon weaken and die off.

Church's Primary Task

Preaching Christ is particularly important to the church that seeks true biblical growth. All its members must engage in soul-winning ministry, because it is the work that the Head of the church, the Lord Jesus, has given them to do. Jesus defined His work thus: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Then, He told His

disciples that "as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21b). Hence every faithful church member, who goes about doing the will of his Saviour and Lord, must be mindful to do the work of soul-winning which Christ has given to us to fulfil.

The apostle Paul is a fine example to all of us in the work of the Gospel. While writing to Timothy, he wrote how he had dedicated himself to be a soul-winner for the Lord—"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Timothy 2:10). He then urged Timothy, "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5).

Evangelism must then be the primary purpose of the local church,

and is one of the major reasons for which it exists. God's work in this day and age centres in the local church, and God's concern has always been to reach out in love to a lost and dying world with the good news of eternal life. Evangelism should be at the top of the list of our church's ministries. All our leaders and members must be involved in evangelism. Evangelism is not an option for the local church; it is a command. Jesus has said, "... 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)!

Soul-Winning Requires Personal Involvement

Evangelism is not a system or a programme, but a personal involvement in the lives of people to help them know the things they need to know and believe on Christ in order to be saved. Evangelism involves the message, as well as the presence and conduct of the messenger. "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ" (Philippians 1:27a). Scripture insists "that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life..." (Philippians 2:15-16a).

As the saying goes, many people talk a lot about evangelism, but not many are doing it. Much time and effort are put into many different plans

and programmes, but it seems that evangelism is still one of our neglected areas of ministry. There are two basic principles that should give us a starting point for an understanding of evangelism. First, the local church is central to God's plan for ministry in this age. This means that biblical evangelism centres in the local church, and the ministry of the local church must focus on evangelism. Second, it is the responsibility of all leaders to be involved in training others in ministry and leadership. This would place great emphasis on the responsibility of the church and its leaders to train and equip its members to do the work of the ministry (cf. Ephesians 4:11-13).

Let all of us in the church make special efforts to be ready to do the work of evangelism. I urge you in the Lord, dear reader, to dedicate yourself with all your heart, that you may be a joyful soul-winner for our glorious Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Church's Glory and Joy

A church that is dedicated to the work of evangelism will bring unbounded joy to its leaders and Christians everywhere. As a result, an evangelistic church will bring glory to the Lord. "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father ... For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and

THE LOCAL CHURCH IS CENTRAL TO GOD'S PLAN FOR MINISTRY IN THIS AGE.

Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing" (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, 8).

Beloved, our initial enthusiasm to spread the Gospel should not die off. We should always be committed to do the work of evangelism. Let us not allow difficulties or lethargy hinder our involvement in this God-given duty. How wonderful it will be if our church receives from the Lord a similar commendation as the church in Thessalonica had received from the apostle Paul! May we never be a spiritually barren people, lest

the Lord's judgment be upon us for wasting the opportunities and resources (which He has so graciously afforded us) for selfish and worldly purposes. Beware of being accursed for wilful barrenness; may we be warned: if we are found to be like the fruitless fig tree, God will pronounce His curse upon us (cf. Matthew 21:19)! Such a curse was an allusion to the unfruitful and disobedient Jews, whom Jesus decried, "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matthew 21:43).

Rather, as we yield our all to serve Him and be fruitful, we may expect His blessing. We must be ready to thrust forward when God opens the doors of the Gospel for us, and prepares us with convictions and capabilities to do whatever He would lead us for the extension of His kingdom. We must believe that His purposes shall not fail. And when He bids us do His will, we must count it a great privilege and honour to give all that He requires of us, knowing that we are given the honour to be part of His great plan for the redemption of a people whom He wants us to reach for His name's sake. A sacred compulsion is laid upon our hearts by our great Saviour and Lord. May the persistent love of our Lord work through us to call sinners from eternal damnation, and out of their guilt, shame, misery into His kingdom of light. One day soon, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15)!

Let us be a soul-winning church! 🌿



UNASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL!

PRABHUDAS KOSHY

Christianity has spread all over the world because of men who have unashamedly gone forth to preach the Gospel everywhere. Hence, we can say that the history of the church is the history of valiant men of faith. Chief among those men is certainly the apostle Paul, who said in Romans 1:16, "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."

Be Not Ashamed!

Feelings of shame and fear are not helpful at all in the work of the Gospel. Those who are ashamed of the Gospel are a hindrance to the work of the Lord. Dear brethren, in these days we are witnessing an increasing aversion to the Gospel of Christ everywhere.

Sadly, the unpopularity of the Gospel has compelled many Christians and preachers to compromise the content and delivery of the Gospel. They try to make the Gospel inoffensive. But such a gospel is not the Gospel of God (cf. Romans 1:1) or the Gospel of Christ (cf. Romans 1:9, 16), but the gospel of man, which cannot save sinners!

What are your personal feelings concerning the Gospel? Would you say, "I am not ashamed"? Without a bold determination, we cannot make progress in the Gospel work—in the face of extreme ridicule and opposition. In the past, men and women suffered much to hand down to us the Gospel of salvation. Today, it is our duty to preach the Gospel. We cannot fail. So, let us not cower and falter in our duty to preach the Word of salvation. If the people in the church would fail

to preach the Gospel, there will be none other to do it.

We who have received the salvific blessings of the Gospel have a great responsibility to declare it. We are entrusted with the Gospel, that it may be preached. Let our resolve be clear and well expressed, like Paul who said, “for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Gospel Has Power!

Our motivation to preach the Gospel in all circumstances is its power to save sinners. Paul said about the Gospel that “it is the power of God unto salvation” (Romans 1:16b). The power of the Gospel is “the power of God”. Through the Gospel, the resources of God’s infinite power work to save sinners from the bondage of sin. The Gospel is the way through which God exerts His omnipotent power for the quickening of souls that are dead in trespasses and sins. It is the efficacious or mighty plan of God, by which His power goes forth to save,

and by which all the obstacles to man’s redemption are taken away.

In 1 Corinthians 1:18, Paul said, “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” Again, he wrote in the same chapter in 1 Corinthians, “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (vv. 24-25).

The fact that the Gospel is the power of God implies some profound truths about the Gospel. Firstly, the Gospel is completely God’s plan, and not a device of man. Secondly, it is the perfect and effectual means to the salvation of sinners. Thirdly, the Gospel is mighty; hence it is called “power”—“the power of God”. The Gospel is not at all feeble or ineffectual, but it is “mighty ... to the pulling down of strong holds” (2 Corinthians 10:4b). It has shown its power to be applicable to every degree of sin and every combination of wickedness.

Nothing can make the Gospel void from saving God’s elect.

Gospel Saves!

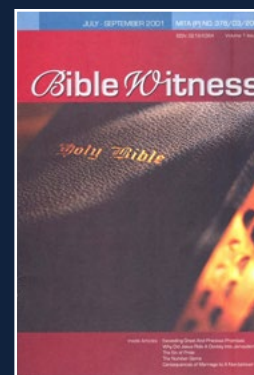
The Gospel guarantees complete deliverance from sin and hell, for it is “unto salvation”. By the power of God in the Gospel, those who trust in it shall be saved to the uttermost (cf. Hebrew 7:25). The Gospel also offers salvation to everyone who believes—“to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16c). Salvation is offered to everyone who believes in the Gospel of Christ. Those who reject the Gospel will not be saved, for it is the only way of salvation. But salvation is conferred on all who receive it by faith. One’s racial or social background would not prevent one from being saved upon faith in Christ. Jews and Gentiles alike can receive salvation by faith in the Gospel of Christ.

The phrase “to the Jew first” does not suggest that Jews are better or that they have preference over the Greeks when it comes to salvation. It simply indicates that the Gospel came to the Jews before the Greeks, through the ministry of Jesus Christ (cf. Matthew 10:5-7) and the apostles (cf. Acts 3:26). “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:12-13).

So dear brethren, since the Gospel has the (divine) power to save sinners from eternal damnation, let us never, for a moment, be ashamed of the Gospel—but “Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ ... that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (Philippians 1:27). ☞

**IF THE PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH WOULD
FAIL TO PREACH THE GOSPEL,
THERE WILL BE NONE OTHER TO DO IT.**

Bible Witness Magazine Design History

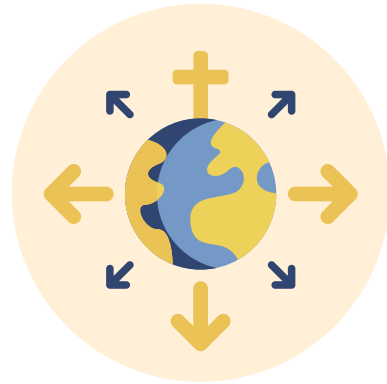


THE FIRST ISSUE OF BIBLE WITNESS

The first issue of Bible Witness was printed in July 2001. We printed the magazine with woodfree paper, in duotone colour printing.

With only two colours, our illustration choices were limited. Due to cost-saving measures, we also had to layout the text in a tight manner, squeezing all the text into as few pages as possible.

(Read more about the history of the Bible Witness Magazine on page 33.)



BE EXTROVERTS, NOT INTROVERTS IN GOSPEL ADVANCEMENT!

PRABHUDAS KOSHY

Homebound by Pandemic!

For more than a year, many globetrotting people have become homebound people. Worse still, all have become homebound, leaving home only for essential matters. That is what the COVID-19 pandemic has done to us all.

Christians have lost their opportunities to worship and serve together. The fellowship gatherings

are no more. The recent surge in COVID-19 infections once again stopped us from meeting together for our usual spiritual activities.

However, the enforced restrictions to our social gatherings and travelling, though necessary, should not make us spiritual “introverts”. We cannot become negligent of our Lord’s mandate to reach out to others, with love and compassion, to care for them and spread the Gospel. Even though we have many constraints today in physically meeting with others, especially those who are far

away, we must resist the temptation to become introverts.

Outward-Bound for the Lord!

We must be thankful that by His good providence, we have many ways to reach others these days (live-streaming, interactive platforms like Zoom, Facebook, etc.), to encourage them and to spread the Gospel blessings, even to people farthest from us. Do not the experiences of the last 16 months prove to us that the church is presented with more opportunities to make the Gospel known to our friends and relatives in our communities and afar off? After all, the mandate of our Lord—“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15)—challenges us to be always outward-bound for the Gospel’s sake. Not even this time of pandemic should negate this mandate. Though many of the evangelistic methods we had used in pre-COVID-19 days are not practicable due to the government-mandated restrictions upon us, let us not assume that the Great Commission is rescinded! Our methods of reaching people for the Gospel’s sake may change, but we must not waver in our commitment to being outward-bound for the Lord.

Christ’s commission to His apostles gives the Gospel work a global scope. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is to be offered to the whole world. It is His will concerning us that we make every effort to extend the Gospel beyond all boundaries, divisions and classes. The whole world is to be reached with

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the Gospel. When it comes to our commitment to spreading the Gospel, it should not be subject to limitations of country, or distinctions of culture, or barriers of ethnicity, or restraints of language. We are commissioned

to preach the Gospel to “every creature”. Wherever there is man, Christians should attempt to bring the Gospel. Our Lord has commanded us to expand our vision for the Gospel outreach constantly. It is gross disobedience to limit our attempt to spread the Gospel beyond our region. We must be ever ready to forward the Gospel to new frontiers.

No one who takes the words of the Lord seriously can remain passive about the global advancement of the Gospel. Christians must know that they are commissioned by their Lord and Saviour to be wholly involved in the global movement for the Gospel. They must join forces, as God has enabled them to send forth the Gospel everywhere, with the rest of the church. Not every Christian is called to be an evangelist or missionary or preacher. However, every church and every Christian must joyfully yield to advancing the Gospel across the world.

Gospel Advancement Unbounded!

The preaching of the Gospel is the greatest work that Christ has entrusted to Christians. Therefore, all true Christians must enthusiastically give themselves to make Gospel-preaching a worldwide movement. It must be their joy to be part of the Lord’s grand plan for redeeming sinners and gathering them as His saints for the eternal celestial home which He is preparing. The apostle Paul asks rhetorically, “How then

shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:14-15).

Without a doubt, in every age, the church has flourished through the efforts of men and women who have heeded God’s call to spread the Gospel. Christians who have sacrificially and unselfishly given themselves for the Gospel’s sake have been instrumental in the church’s triumphing over severe challenges and advancing the kingdom of God. Even in this pandemic period, if the church would reach out to the community, if church members act with love and compassion towards the needy or sick, the Lord will use them to win and establish many souls in the Gospel.

Our Lord says to us, “Go”. Will we then answer Him, “No, we will stay back or hold back”? Our Lord’s charge is that we must always be committed to spreading the Gospel. Let us arise then and go to preach the Gospel to the uttermost part of the world. Let us do our part to joyfully partake in fulfilling our Lord’s mandate concerning global Gospel dissemination. May none of us turn his or her back on serving our King in His kingdom expansion on earth. Let us all seek to know God’s will and do His pleasure with a renewed zeal, that the love and truth of Christ may be effectively proclaimed through us. Be extroverts, not introverts when it comes to Gospel advancement! 🌿



OFFERING UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES ACCEPTABLE TO GOD!

PRABHUDAS KOSHY

Serve in the Church Readily

The church is a spiritual house, where every believer is called “to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5). Every Christian, who is thankful to be forgiven and received by the Lord into His kingdom, will count it a high honour to have a part in God’s glorious purposes for this age—which God is accomplishing through faithful local assemblies of believers. Would

a thankful child of God despise or forsake the role(s) which God expects him to undertake in His church? Undoubtedly, the one who is genuinely committed to the Lord Jesus Christ will also be committed to doing all that Christ has required of him in His church. In doing so, his life of godly service becomes a living witness to God’s marvellous enabling grace!

Though the Lord expects all His people to serve in the church, it is a sad reality that some have chosen to remain as mere spectators and avoid

serving in the church dutifully and humbly. In a growing local church, there are various areas of service. Brethren can serve in multiple areas in the church. Serving the Lord does not necessarily mean rising to leadership roles of the church or entering into full-time service in the church. Without a doubt, God will call some to leadership and some others to full-time service in the church. Be that as it may, God expects all church members to serve in the church, according to their God-given abilities.

Service in the Church are Manifold

Areas of service in the church are many: welcoming the worshippers and attending to their needs, helping in ushering duties, preparing the auditorium for the worship and meetings, setting up and safekeeping all the equipment before and after the meetings, fetching the physically disabled to church meetings, praying with those who are troubled, helping in gospel outreach programmes, visiting the sick and needy to express the love and care of the church, hosting fellowship groups in one's home, and aiding our global mission outreaches—just to mention several general areas of service. While many areas of service are presently available, more can be set up when more members prayerfully and willingly seek to be part of the church's ministries. Members of the church should extend their God-given spiritual gifts (which include skill, expertise, assistance) to

sustain services, resolve problems, as well as improve efficiency of the church ministries.

Consider the apostolic exhortation in Romans 12:4-8: "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness." Indeed, manifold are the areas of service in the body of Christ!

Serve in the Church Responsibly

Rendering of service must always be with the following right attitudes:

1. humility before God;
2. obedience to His Word;
3. meekness, love and patience towards fellow workers and the recipients of the service;
4. willingness, commitment and thoroughness;
5. sacrificial and joyous spirit.

People who whiz past and thrust themselves into service in the church like a "hot shot", usually end up in quarrels over petty issues and a quick exit from serving. We must

continuously maintain attitudes that will foster harmonious co-labouring, "for we are labourers together with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9). "Giving no offence in any thing," said Paul concerning his cautious attitude in serving with others, "that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Corinthians 6:3). God's Word teaches us not to let our attitudes or actions be a stumbling block or an offence to others who serve fervently. When you join a team that is working together efficiently in a particular manner, be careful not to stick your oar in a disruptive way. If changes are necessary for improvement, they must be discussed with leaders and fellow team members, and then implemented with patience and prudence. Do nothing rashly, or else it will hurt a well-functioning ministry.

Serve in the Church with Faithfulness

Above all else, faithfulness to God's Word must always be maintained

in every aspect of service in the church. 1 Corinthians 4:2 reminds us, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Along with it, 1 Peter 4:10 says, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." The faithfulness of a good steward of God should always characterise every church member. God desires that His people be consistently obedient to His Word, unwavering in their commitment to be faithful to Him and His purposes. Faithfulness is paramount in our service in the church. Faithfulness must supersede pragmatism and efficiency in all our decisions, choices, attitudes, methods and activities. Loyalty to God and trustworthiness are paramount, not cleverness or creativity or popularity. God requires faithfulness from all who serve Him.

While the church members serve diligently and faithfully, they must also be appreciative and encouraging of those who serve faithfully around them. Such a commendable

**MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH SHOULD EXTEND
THEIR GOD-GIVEN SPIRITUAL GIFTS
TO SUSTAIN SERVICES, RESOLVE PROBLEMS,
AS WELL AS IMPROVE EFFICIENCY OF
THE CHURCH MINISTRIES.**

EVERY CHURCH MEMBER MUST BE READY TO SERVE RESPONSIBLY AND FAITHFULLY IN THE MANIFOLD MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH.

disposition is manifested by the apostle Paul. While he served the Lord faithfully, he sincerely and joyfully recommended and spurred on those who were his faithful fellow-labourers. He declared of Tychicus, "a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord" (Colossians 4:7; cf. Ephesians 6:21). Of Onesimus, he said, "a faithful

and beloved brother, who is one of you" (Colossians 4:9). Concerning Timothy, he fondly commended, "Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church" (1 Corinthians 4:17). Paul's generous words about Epaphras were thus: "our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ" (Colossians 1:7). Paul also instructed the Philippian church to receive the faithful Epaphroditus and hold him in high regard—"Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation" (Philippians 2:29).

Conclusion

Every church member must be **ready** to serve **responsibly** and **faithfully** in the manifold ministries of the church, so that various ministries for the salvation of souls and the edification of the saints will grow from strength to strength. Dear saint of God, having understood the Lord's expectation of you to be a serving member of the church, can you be unconcerned and apathetic towards serving in the church? Will you continue to be indifferent, saying, "I don't know if I want to get involved in the church ministries; I don't know if I want to work with those fellow Christians"?

Rather, in being willing and wholehearted to avail yourself to serve in accordance with biblical guidelines, you are, in effect, consecrating yourself to "offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God". This is an indispensable part of our being unwavering witnesses for Christ! ❧



Testimonial Special

PEN MIGHTIER THAN SWORD!

A CONTEMPLATIVE WORD FROM THE ASSISTANT EDITOR

HO KEE HOW

Origin

The **Bible Witness magazine** came about because of a growing burden, which the Lord had laid on Pastor Koshy's heart (since the turn of this century), for a literature ministry to reach the world with the Gospel of Christ. In a sense, this burden grew out of an acute awareness that in this spiritual battle for men's hearts and minds, "silent truth is no match for outspoken error!" What Pastor Koshy did with this burden is what one would expect of an earnest contender against prevalent error, and an indomitable defender of long-held biblical truths. For out of this burden, was born the Bible Witness magazine.

Motivation

In order for God's tender and vulnerable flock—the church—to be protected and nurtured, there must be constant access to sound, biblical reading material, among

other things. This is all the more so, in the face of a proliferation of liberal and ecumenical material flooding the Christian market through the media out there. Having good Christian literature is simply not an option but an indispensable avenue for biblical teachings to be disseminated. We, in the publication team, believe the Bible Witness magazine (just past its **20th year**) is one such means to this end. Since the publication of the first issue in 2001, not a few thanksgiving testimonies from readers (local and overseas) have been received, telling us how the articles have nourished their souls and fortified their faith. Such indeed is the power of the printed page, which vindicates Pastor Koshy's foresight, as well as our ministry's firm belief in the old adage that "*the pen is mightier than the sword*"!

Means

We are grateful for the many who have had a hand in this humble but consequential production. We

are most mindful of the unstinting and tireless contributions of the faithful pool of like-minded servants of God and writers whom God has blessed us with, and to whom we give thanks for "inditing a good matter ... (with) the pen of a ready writer" (Psalm 45:1). Not to mention all the invaluable help rendered by brothers and sisters working behind the scenes as well, who serve voluntarily as proofreaders, layout designers, illustrators, compilers of children's stories and Bible quizzes, etc. Above all, we thank God for His sustaining grace in the continued publication of this bimonthly magazine, for the spiritual edification and admonition of God's people.

Challenge(s)

To be sure, there can be no resting on our laurels. God willing, we hope to compile and publish more material. Thank God for the recent publication of Pastor Koshy's **365 Daily Exhortations in Mandarin** and **My Soul's Delight (Volumes 2 and 3)**. Notwithstanding, Pastor Koshy's God-given burden is still growing—he is envisioning the compilation of Sunday School activity books, children's

teaching material, and booklets on contemporary and doctrinal issues. Now, this may seem a tall order but we are not starting from scratch. There is a ready pool of sound, biblical material waiting to be tapped—in the form of Pastor Koshy's "collections" of sermons, Bible study notes, theological research material, retreat messages, etc. In other words, these hoped-for Christian resources for the edification of all believers young and old constitute realistic challenges for the publication arm of the Bible Witness Media Ministry.

Prayer

Well, to borrow a phrase from Paul's words, "What shall we then say to these things (challenges)?" (Romans 8:31a). Indeed, who can be sufficient for all these? In the King's service, we have no business to request for tasks equal to our puny strength; but we can ask for **strength equal to the tasks** God has laid upon us in the publication ministry. After all, had not Christ, in His Olivet discourse to His disciples, given us the mandate? "And the gospel must first be **published** among all nations" (Mark 13:10)—before the end comes. Amen. ☞

**"AND THE GOSPEL MUST FIRST BE
PUBLISHED AMONG ALL NATIONS."
—MARK 13:10**

REFLECTING ON GOD'S GOODNESS & DIRECTION

TESTIMONY BY FIRST BIBLE WITNESS STAFF

LOK KWOK WAH

What were some initial thoughts or apprehension (if any) you had when you were called upon to co-labour with Pastor Koshy to start a literature ministry (from scratch)?

Certainly, that was a momentous point in time of my life, when my heart was set on any area of work that Christ has intended for me. I had no desire to go back to secular work; I have purposed in my heart to serve the Lord full-time, come what may. So, when Pastor Koshy shared his desire to start a literature ministry and his need for a co-worker (though I knew it would be a daunting task), I was led to say 'Yes' (after a period of prayer) to the literature ministry. I recall Pastor Koshy saying, "Do or die!" And it was his determined spirit that spurred me on to adhere to what Jesus has said in Luke 9:62—"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Truly, I count it a privilege to serve alongside Pastor Koshy who has always wanted to start a literature ministry in Gethsemane. All praise be unto the Lord!

What are some things about the BW magazine and the work involved that you would like to thank and praise God for?

I praise God for how the BW magazine came into existence because of Pastor Koshy's burden and vision for a literature ministry to reach the world with the Gospel of Christ and the truths of His Word. This desire has its foundation in Acts 1:8, where the Lord said, "ye shall be witnesses unto me" (Acts 1:8). This theme verse has been the emphasis of BW magazine in the spreading of God's Word to all corners of the earth and in nurturing the faith of saints. Thank the Lord that the publication of spiritual truths and counsels within the magazine has made this possible, through which I have also been personally strengthened.

As I recall, I am thankful that this magazine has in the past been regularly used for teaching in the Adults' and Youths' Bible Study on Sunday, with the aid of discussion questions

(that are also uploaded on the Bible Witness website for Christians who wish to do private or group Bible study). Moreover, two "milestones" deserve mention: a special BW issue dedicated to the late Rev Dr Timothy Tow was published in 2009, while in 2011, a double commemorative BW issue was published in conjunction with the 400th anniversary of the KJV and the 10th anniversary of Bible Witness. Praise be to God!

Over the past 20 years, what is one challenge or struggle you have witnessed God helping you or the ministry to overcome, and the lesson(s) learnt?

One struggle we faced was the dwindling support from many churches due to the Bible preservation controversy. Many churches cancelled their subscriptions, drastically reducing the support for the BW magazine (to no one's surprise). Nonetheless, we continue to depend on God for provision of funds, and for motivation to persevere in this work of publishing the magazine. The Lord has never failed to send His help through like-minded brethren among His people. Now our principle is to distribute Bible Witness magazines free of charge, based on Matthew 10:8—"freely ye have received, freely give." Despite our setback, several noteworthy "milestones" (as mentioned above) have been achieved. These accomplishments (in the face of potentially disruptive and distressing trials) are not the result of our superior technical skill or wealth of resources, but rather the divine working of the Lord who graciously provides for our every endeavour

and need in His glorious work. Truly, this is cause for great rejoicing and unceasing praise to the Lord, even as we expect greater blessings in the days ahead according to His leading.

To be sure, while we are grateful to God for brethren who are presently doing the work involved in the production of Bible Witness magazine, there is a need for more co-labourers to share the burden of the ministry as we look forward to producing more biblical material beyond the magazine. This is an ongoing process, and we trust that the Lord will supply all our needs (both resources and personnel) in His good time—"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

What is your prayer or aspiration for the future of the BW magazine?

Praise the Lord that the Bible Witness magazine is available not only in printed form, but it can also be downloaded digitally from our website. My hope is that there will be more channels of distribution for the printed copy, especially to countries which lack access to good biblical literature. Needless to say, my constant prayer is that God will continue to sustain the Bible Witness team of dedicated brethren that they may sacrificially and diligently serve the Lord, and also for more like-minded ministers, missionaries and writers to contribute articles to the Bible Witness magazine on a regular basis. Truly, may the BW magazine continue being faithful "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9b). ☺



FELICITATIONS

from Church Leaders,
Missionaries & Associates



Felicitations

from Church Leaders,
Missionaries & Associates



**Elder Mah Chin Kwang,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

The twofold milestone of the Bible Witness magazine in publishing this 100th issue in its 20th year is surely a cause for great joy in the Lord. May the Lord be pleased to receive all the glory for the faithful publication of this magazine, and especially in the work of preaching the Gospel and the edification of the saints.

At a time of certain dearth in sound, fundamental biblical magazines, the BW magazine stands as a blessed resource for all believers of the living and true God—to be spiritually nurtured and strengthened. May the Lord continue to bless and prosper this ministry, as He tarries.

**Elder Alan Choy,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

We thank our faithful Lord Jesus for enabling the Bible Witness publication team to labour in the dissemination of God's truth for

these past 20 years. Despite much difficulty in the beginning years, the Lord has blessed us with resources along the way. Today, the magazines are printed beautifully in full colours, and distributed both to local like-minded churches and overseas mission stations. This 100th issue of the Bible Witness magazine stands as a testimony to the Gospel and biblical truths being spread throughout the world. May many Christian readers be edified. My prayer is that someday it may be translated into Chinese for readers literate in Chinese. All glory to our mighty God.

**Elder Ng Poh Kok,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

Praise the Lord for showering His blessings upon the publication of the BW magazine throughout the past 20 years. "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (Psalm 126:3). The reading of this printed material has been a great source of help and encouragement to me and my family. May the Lord

use this magazine to bring “good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation...” (Isaiah 52:7). Keep up the good work!

**Elder Francis Lee,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

We thank and praise God for His blessings upon the ministry of the Bible Witness magazine for the past 20 years. From the first issue (of July-September 2001), the Lord has been using this literature ministry to bring the Gospel of Christ and the truths of His Word to many countries around the world. As we reach the 100th issue of the BW magazine, let us remember and be thankful for the Lord's goodness and grace working in our midst. “Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare” (Psalm 75:1).

**Dn Low Boon Siang,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

I thank and praise God for preserving the publication of the Bible Witness magazine for these last 20 years. It is truly by His marvellous grace and sustaining Hand that this ministry has prospered. The clear exposition of God's Word and unwavering stand for the Truth have indeed blessed countless believers with a greater understanding of God's Word and a closer walk with the Lord. All glory be to God who has increased this ministry such that it does not only publish Christian magazines, but also produces audio and video

programmes, as well as organises retreats that build up the faith of believers all around the world.

God has demonstrated His sovereignty and faithfulness, and will surely bring this ministry to greater heights for His own glory. I look forward to many more years of spiritual nourishment through Bible Witness Media Ministry. May God's name be magnified!

**Pr Samson Hutagalung,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

The Bible Witness magazine has been truly a “witness” to many around the world. It has been God's instrument to open the spiritual understanding of readers to see the truth and also errors exposed. Its contents are practical and easily understood, yet keeping to the veracity of God's Word. I am thankful to the Lord for such an important work in this evil, perverse generation, where many are shying away from the truth and pandering to the modernistic liberal expectation. May the Lord raise more faithful writers to expound what the Lord says in His Word. May the Lord continue to use this magazine to enlighten believers' hearts (Psalm 119:105).

**Pr Cornelius Koshy,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

My heart is full of thanksgiving to God for 20 blessed years of the Bible Witness literature ministry—in particular, for “the 100th time” God has shown Himself to be faithful in enabling His servants to come up with

the publication of this 100th issue of Bible Witness magazine. Personally, I have benefited tremendously from the published articles, which are devotionally written with doctrinal precision. As a preacher and student of God's Word, I have often dug through the archives of Bible Witness magazines to read and learn more on a particular topic.

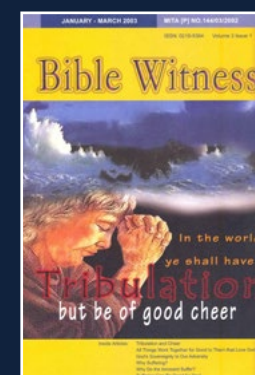
As I look back at recent history, I thank God firstly that recent pushbacks against the distribution of this magazine did not deter its continual publication. This can only be because the teachings gleaned from the BW articles are based not on “... the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (1 Thessalonians 2:13b). Secondly, I thank God for the diligence and perseverance of the editing team, toiling tirelessly in the same spirit of John who testifies, “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full” (1 John 1:4). I thank God especially

for Pr Ho Kee How, who labours with skill and love in editing the Bible Witness, since coming on board in the last decade. Thirdly, I thank God for the unceasing prayers and the continual provision of funds from like-minded brethren to print magazines, devotional books and other material. May our good Lord sustain this ministry, that His Word be well expounded to His people worldwide.

**Rev. Reggor B. Galarpe, Pastor,
Gethsemane B-P Church,
Cebu, the Philippines**

The occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Bible Witness magazine calls for great joy and thanksgiving to the Lord. This milestone brings to my memory how Pastor Koshy had been burdened by God's Word to start this literature ministry—“...and ye shall be witnesses unto me...” (Acts 1:8). Hence the name “Bible Witness”—a magazine which, over the ensuing two decades, has proven beneficial

Bible Witness Magazine Design History



A NEW LOGO

The next design milestone for the Bible Witness Magazine is marked by a logo refresh for the magazine. This refresh was seen in Volume 3, Issue 1 of the Magazine.

This logo, used since 2003, has been the logo for the Bible Witness Magazine since then.

(Read more about the history of the Bible Witness Magazine on page 38.)

for the nurture of individual Christian life, for every Christian home, and for Bible study groups.

As I recall, the maiden issue (July-September 2001) on the “Holy Bible” was most appropriate in establishing the fact that this literature ministry stands squarely on the Word of God! Through the faithful production of issue after issue, we are witnesses to how the Lord has sustained the work. Subsequently, with the setting up of the Bible Witness Web Radio, the ministry eventually came to be known as the “Bible Witness Media Ministry” which, apart from publishing magazines and Gospel tracts, grew to include producing CDs and DVDs of animation programmes for children, hymns and choruses, sermons and other edifying materials.

Such work was not without its challenges and difficulties, but the Lord is faithful to sustain and prosper this ministry by raising up committed labourers to meet the demands of the work. In the Lord’s provision of the Gethsemane Media Centre, we rejoice that the up-to-date facilities and resources will help cater to the ever-increasing workload of the ministry, even in this digital age. May I take this opportunity to thank Pastor Koshy and all our brethren at Bible Witness Media Ministry for “your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name” (Hebrews 6:10). May you be “stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58). All praise and glory be unto God for the 20 fruitful years of the Bible Witness magazine!

**Rev. Ephrem Chiracho, Pastor,
Gethsemane B-P Church of
Ethiopia, Alem Gena, Ethiopia**

This publication began amid heated controversy over the Bible, and had played an immeasurable role in presenting biblical and theological proofs of the plenary and verbal preservation of God’s Word in the KJV translation. Thus, it has provided reassurance for our faith in the infallible and inerrant Bible. That’s not all. The publishing of various themes on practical Christian living, missions, doctrinal issues, ecclesiastical apostasy and dangers of worldliness in the church have corrected many erring ones, encouraged the faint-hearted, instructed and edified many believers’ souls around the world, including myself.

Heartfelt congratulations to Gethsemane B-P Church for her relentless work in the publication of BW magazine for 20 years! May this good work continue for generations to the glory of God.

**Rev. Paul Cheng, Pastor, Bethel B-P
Church, Melbourne, Australia**

On behalf of Bethel B-P Church in Melbourne, we send congratulatory greetings to the Bible Witness team on this special 20th anniversary of Bible Witness. Praise God for your courageous and uncompromising stance in the proclamation of the truth, as well as the vigilant exposure of errors and faithful defence of God’s perfect Word. Your magazines have always been a great source of encouragement to our members, both

young and old. May this significant milestone spur you on to continually print more biblical materials, especially in this age of unbelief and apostasy. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

**Rev. Lee Kim Shong, Calvary Jaya
B-P Fellowship, Malaysia**

Literature ministry is an important work. It has far-reaching influence on the readers, including those who are unbelievers. While many Christians have been built up by reading sound Christian publications, some people had been led to Christ by Christian reading material.

The Bible Witness magazine has been instrumental in imparting faith to many. Though a largely behind-the-scene ministry, its godly influence cannot be underestimated. The Lord had been pleased to use it for two decades—may the gracious Lord continue to use it for His glory. May He continue to strengthen the hands of those who serve in this publication ministry. “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7).

**Rev. Joseph Poon, Pastor,
BPCWA, Perth, Australia**

It was with joyful surprise when I learned that the Bible Witness magazine is celebrating its 20th

anniversary—how time passes so quickly! I am sure many, like me, are thankful to God for His preservation and the progression of Bible Witness over these two decades. With the scarcity of biblically sound material these days, the BW magazine is certainly of spiritual benefit, particularly to those in countries with few such material. May our Lord continue to preserve this work for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ!

**Elder Eliezer Ortega, Bogo & San
Antonio, the Philippines**

All glory and honour be unto the Lord for His blessings upon the BW magazine for 20 years of faithful publication of godly and biblical articles—amidst the prevalence of error and falsehood in the modern church. This faithful witness reminds me of Psalm 11:3—“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” May the Lord, whose mercy and grace have sustained the BW magazine for the past 20 years, continue to use and guide Pastor Koshy, together with the brethren co-labouring with him, for more fruitful and blessed years ahead!

Personally, I have derived great spiritual blessings reading through the BW articles. The articles in the magazines not only grant me a deeper understanding of the Word of God, they are also very apt and relevant to living a godly life and bearing a good testimony to the Lord in these changing and perilous times. Furthermore, the BW magazine has also been a great help in the ministry.

It is a handy, useful resource material for teaching in Sunday School. It is a most worthy reference for our teaching of sound and biblical lessons to the congregation—sparing the teacher from worries of teaching or propagating unbiblical lessons. Having gone through the study of “Heavenly-Mindedness (Part I & Part II)”, as well as “Hearts Failing Men for Fear”, we are currently dwelling on the theme, “Beware: Spiritual Pitfalls Lurking!”.

Praise be unto the Lord for blessings both personal and in the ministry, which the Lord has bestowed through the BW magazine. My constant prayer is this: “Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me” (Psalm 119:49-50). All glory be unto God!

**Pr Edsel Locot,
Bohol, the Philippines**

Praise God for leading and guiding Pastor Koshy to start the Bible Witness magazine 20 years ago. Truly, it has blessed many Christians in Singapore and around the world. As a missionary preacher in Bohol, I look forward to constantly receive copies of these magazines from Singapore. The articles contained therein enhance my knowledge of the Word of God, greatly helping me to grow as a Christian and as a preacher. The lessons learned from the different articles also help in my preaching and teaching.

Truly, Bible Witness is God-given material that caters to my spiritual need. Over the years, the magazine

has touched on various topics—which rebuked me about sin and worldliness, encouraged me to be prayerful, and gave me instructions on how to serve and please God. These different topics have helped me to be informed about what things I must do in the ministry, and be warned of things I should not do. May the Lord continue to use Bible Witness magazine for His glory.

**Pr Donald dela Cruz,
Pangasinan, the Philippines**

Praise the Lord for preserving the Bible Witness magazine for the last 20 years. Every page of the magazine has brought great encouragement and added spiritual knowledge to readers. God knows that His children need godly reading material, especially in our present perverse generation. One copy of each issue is distributed to every family here in the mission station. The topics are very well thought out and tackle the current concerns of our time. Thank God for enabling us to share the wonderful truths contained in these magazines with some of the Baptist churches as well, including the kindergarten school which my son Jesher attends. They have expressed their appreciation of the articles and would like to extend their thanksgiving!

Among the countless titles that I consider as great reading material, Volume 19—Issues 1 and 2 [on “Heavenly-Mindedness (Part I & Part II)”] are the ones which encourage me most. Reading them once is not enough as I need to be constantly reminded that I should possess a heavenly-minded life. I was

so blessed by the spiritual realities which I have learned and re-learned, that I am now using the articles in some of our weekly Bible studies and Home Visitations. I want to teach the brethren the importance and need of heavenly-mindedness.

Praise the Lord for giving heavenly wisdom and enablement to the staff and editors of the Bible Witness magazine. Praise the Lord for the publication team’s tireless labour in preparing a spiritual feast (come each issue) for the readers to enjoy. I am looking forward to the next spiritual feast!

Pr Sujith Samuel, Vizag, India

Praise God for sustaining the ministry of Bible Witness magazine for the last 20 years. I am most thankful to Bible Witness Media Ministry for sending printed copies of the magazines to India. We give it freely to our regular worshippers and also to students of Gethsemane Bible Institute. Many visitors coming to our bookshop in the city also get free copies of these magazines. Most of the time, those who take them would usually ask about the price of the magazine, considering the high-quality, full-colour publication. It’s amazing that our God continues to provide for this ministry so that it can be freely given, as testified by the publication team’s oft-quoted tagline: “freely ye have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8).

God willing, we like to reprint some editions as booklets here. If we get good translators, we can consider the translation of these material into

local languages as well. Thank God for all those who help in the production of this magazine, including (editors) Pastor Koshy and Pr Ho Kee How. May the Lord continue to bless this ministry for the publishing of good tidings of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Rev. Dr Jeffrey Khoo, Pastor, True
Life B-P Church; Principal, FEBC**

Praise the Lord for the 20 years of biblical and spiritual articles published in the 100 issues of the Bible Witness magazine. As the saying goes, “Publish or perish!” It goes without saying that Bible Witness is published not for self-promotion but for the salvation of the lost and the sanctification of the saints. This is in keeping with the twofold teaching mandate of the Great Commission—“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations... Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20). May the Lord continue to bless and use your magazine to teach His Good Word until He returns.

**Rev. Tan Kian Sing,
Pastor, Berean B-P Church**

We praise our Lord God Almighty for giving Gethsemane B-P Church the vision to embark on publishing the blessed Bible Witness magazine in the year 2001. Today we rejoice with the Bible Witness Media Ministry of Gethsemane on the 20th Anniversary of Bible Witness and the publication of the 100th issue of the magazine. We in Berean B-P Church have been greatly edified and blessed exceeding

abundantly by your work of faith and labour of love, as we use the Bible Witness magazine for our Bible Study. May the Lord continue to prosper Bible Witness, that the Word of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ be published far and wide, and “that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified” (2 Thessalonians 3:1). May the Lord continue to keep this ministry going for many more years for the perfecting of the saints and for the edifying of the body of Christ everywhere, as the Lord tarries.

Rev. Hien Nguyen, Pastor, Brisbane B-P Church, Brisbane, Australia

We thank God for your burden to start publishing the Bible Witness magazine 20 years ago to be a witness to God's Word—to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3), to defend God's Truth, and to promote God's divinely inspired and perfectly

preserved Word. God's Word is truly the spiritual Bread for our souls (cf. Matthew 4:4) and the Sword of the Holy Spirit for our spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:17). We are thankful to the Lord for guiding and helping you and your team to write edifying, challenging and relevant topics for the past 20 years, as well as for recently providing a decent building to house the BWMM. Praise the Lord for such a faithful ministry in these last days of doubt, compromise, confusion, false teachings, deception and apostasy!

The brethren of Brisbane B-P Church are grateful to Bible Witness Media Ministry for kindly sending the magazines to us free of charge over the years. May our good and faithful God strengthen, guide, help, and richly bless the BWMM team for being witnesses unto the Lord, His Word and His Truth around the world. “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).

Rev Wee Eng Moh, Pastor, Berith B-P Church

We greatly rejoice with you on this happy occasion of the 20th Anniversary of Bible Witness. Truly, the Lord has been faithful to preserve this media ministry of the church. We thank God for the Bible Witness team's labour of love. As a church, we have been richly blessed by your publications which you have sent regularly to us. We have found the articles edifying and profitable for our souls.

Without doubt, these past 20 years of treading on the “narrow way” (cf. Matthew 7:14) has not been easy. We praise God for your shining example of persevering faith and devotion to the ministry the Lord has entrusted to you. Keep up the good work of grace. May Bible Witness continue to hold forth the Word of life and abide faithful in the service of the Lord. Wishing you God's richest blessings in all your endeavours for His glory and the blessing of His people.

Rev. Lek Aik Wee, Pastor, Blessed Hope B-P Church

Praise the Lord for the milestone of the 100th issue of the Bible Witness magazine. We thank God for the faithful exposition of God's Word in the topical articles written to edify the believers in the church (both locally and overseas) over the years.

We also thank our God for the labour of love of all the brethren. It is most appreciated. May the Lord bless this good work for many more good years to come. To Him be the glory.

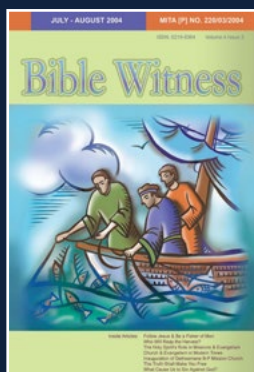
Rev. Clement Chew, Pastor, Tabernacle B-P Church

By the grace of God, the Lord has sustained the production of Bible Witness magazine for 20 years until this current 100th issue. Since July 2001, when the first issue was published, the Lord has used the Bible Witness magazine to instruct and edify readers through the faithful proclamation of biblical truth. All praise and glory to the Lord.

The Bible says in Hosea 4:6, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge”. The priests failed miserably to teach God's Word to the people. Instead, they engaged in falsehood and deception, leading the children of Israel to idolatry and apostasy. Thus, the children of Israel were destroyed because of a lack of knowledge of the truth due to these derelict priests. The literary scene in Christianity is no different today. There is much that is false and abominable in these published works. May the Bible Witness ministry play a critical role in breaking through this darkness by shining the light of God's Word through its God-honouring publications—so that Christian men and women may not be destroyed by the lack of knowledge of God's Word.

As a reader of the Bible Witness magazine in my youth, I have been richly instructed in the truths

Bible Witness Magazine Design History



CHANGES IN PRINTING QUALITY

The next time the magazine saw some design changes is in Volume 4 Issue 3, when we started to print in full colour. We also changed our paper choice, from woodfree paper to matt art paper.

It was also with this issue that we shifted our printing schedule from a quarterly to a bimonthly schedule.

(Read more about the history of the Bible Witness Magazine on page 44.)

faithfully explained in the articles published. I know of others who have been similarly blessed through this ministry. I thank the Lord for the loving labour of the editor, writers and various team members of the Bible Witness Media Ministry. "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (Hebrews 6:10). In response to the changing media scene, Bible Witness also has expanded to producing audio and video material. This commitment to reach out to others with the Scriptures is laudable. Continue to press on in this good work, and may the Lord be pleased to bless the ministry's vision to be a faithful witness for the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Acts 1:8).

**Rev. Jose Trinipil Lagapa,
True Life B-P Church**

On behalf of the True Life BPC ministries in the Philippines (namely

Christ BPC, Cebu; Trinidad BPC, Bohol; Golgotha BPC, Bukidnon; Philippines Missions Bible Center), I am grateful to the Lord for the many spiritual blessings received through the Bible Witness magazine. It is my prayer that this ministry will further reach to the many parts of our country for the Lord's glory and honour! In this age, when we are eagerly anticipating the return of our Lord and Saviour, "... this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). Let the Bible Witness magazine play a part in this! May God bless Gethsemane BPC and all her ministries!

**Pr Joshua Yong,
Calvary Pandan B-P Church**

Praise and thank God for sustaining the ministry of the Bible Witness magazine through 20 years of service. I rejoice with you on this anniversary. Thank God for He has raised His own witness for His Word in these

last days. In an age of apostasy and falsehood, it is so crucial that God's people have a resource which they can use to receive the sound and faithful doctrines of the Word of God. The various themes covered, especially those concerning the Word of God, the Church, the Reformation, and the family, are themes which are most important today. May the Lord continue to sustain and preserve this ministry, that it may continue to be a blessing to God's people. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

**Pr Samuel Joseph,
True Life B-P Church**

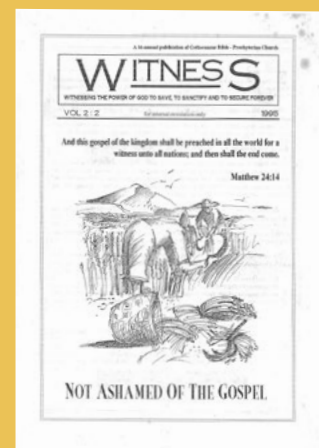
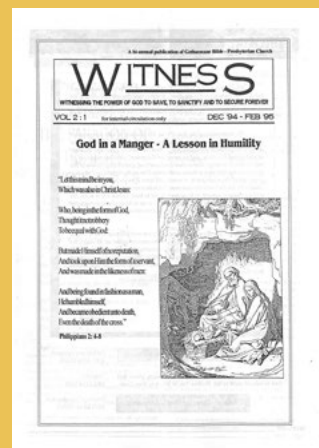
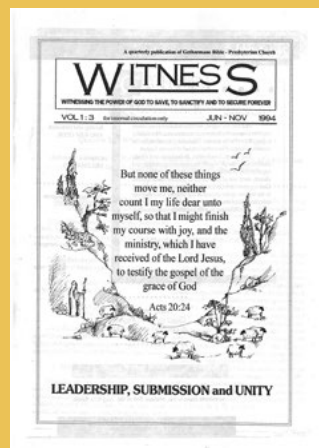
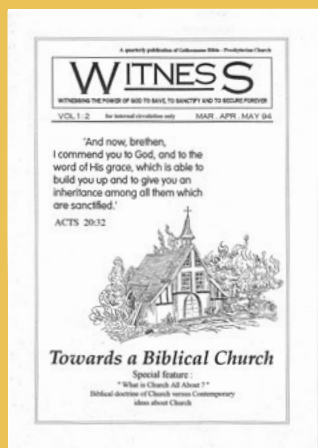
Praise the Lord for this 20th anniversary of the Bible Witness ministry! As Christians, we are called to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3)—which entails not only studying to know the truth, but also

endeavouring to proclaim it and, furthermore, rising up to defend it. The times (a chaotic mixture of confusion and false dogmatism) are such that a ministry like Bible Witness is sorely needed. May the Lord grant strength, courage and wisdom to persevere in the years ahead, even in the face of persecution and opposition, "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9).

**Elder Winston Chew,
Truth B-P Church**

All praise and thanksgiving be rendered unto our Lord God for His grace and mercy in using the Bible Witness magazine over the last 20 years. This ministry has been a great blessing to many Christians around the world. The articles covering various aspects of doctrine and practical Christian living are instructive and edifying. May the Lord continue to use this magazine for His glory for many more years to come. ☺

OTHER ISSUES OF "WITNESS", THE PREDECESSOR TO "BIBLE WITNESS"



THANKSGIVING

Testimonies from Bible Witness
Magazine Readers



Thanksgiving Testimonies from Readers



**Chong Lian Neo,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

The sincere seeker of good and sound Christian literature will find the Bible Witness magazine a treasure trove of delights. They cover a plethora of well-expounded articles dealing with diverse topics that cater to the individual's spiritual growth and Christian education. I have been so greatly blessed by such rich nourishment for the last fifteen years, that I must thank God for enabling faithful men to contribute fine and relevant material for this bimonthly publication. Great has been my joy of reading such works that I decided to distribute copies to my neighbours and friends, with the aim of pointing them to God and building up their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In one of the issues about redeeming the time and living with the end in view, I was particularly drawn to King Solomon's exhortation in Ecclesiastes 9:10a—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might". I have decided that while I still

have breath, I must wholeheartedly respond to whatever needs there are around me, "for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Ecclesiastes 9:10b).

The children's segment is a gem. Carefully selected stories of heroes of faith were simply and succinctly retold—to draw out themes of faith, obedience, courage, commitment and sacrifice. It must have been a painstaking task for the writer. I often share these stories with my grandsons, hoping to instil in them some missionary zeal.

The publication team and writers will one day receive their rewards from the Master, who will say to each of them, "Well done, good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:23).

**Olive Balicao,
Pangasinan, the Philippines**

In this day and age when there is a lack of sound, biblical Christian literature,

we thank God for the Bible Witness magazine, which has remained faithful in proclaiming the Word of God.

Looking back, when my husband was still working in Singapore, the Bible Witness magazine was one important resource we had used during our online family devotion (as a couple being physically separated miles apart). We would sing hymns and then download a certain issue of Bible Witness magazine in the Gethsemane website, from which we would both read simultaneously during video call. We praise God for this avenue of spreading the Gospel and edifying the saints through the printed page, both locally and in faraway lands. Incidentally, the first ever Bible Witness magazine I've read was the issue on "Biblical Women of Faith", highlighting stories of women from the Scriptures who lived and fulfilled their God-given roles with unflinching faith in God. Their stories have greatly

stirred me to grow in the knowledge of God's Word, and encouraged me in my role as a wife, especially now that God has granted us a gift within my womb.

By God's grace, the BW magazine is still in production as it reaches its 20th anniversary. Our heartfelt thanks for the publication team's endless effort and labour. May God strengthen all His servants (Pastor Koshy and Bible Witness staff) to publish biblical articles for our spiritual nourishment, that our faith be fortified.

Isabel Ng, Gethsemane B-P Church

Regardless of whether one is new or matured in the faith, the Bible Witness magazine is easy to read, yet rich in soul-nourishing content. Each written article is akin to a miniature sermon, where God's truth is carefully searched and expounded. I thank the Lord for His special grace on Pastor

Koshy, Pr Ho Kee How and others to stay the course in producing such biblical material regularly, with themes very relevant to our times. Allow me to mention a few which have encouraged me in my Christian walk.

1. Nurturing of Godly Children (Jan–Feb 2018)

- I learnt that parents are ultimately responsible for the children's spiritual lives, rather than the church. While Sunday school and fellowship meetings are important for children to learn how to worship God in a formal setting, the daily family worship is key to nurturing their love for God and His truth as they observe how God's Word is really practised in their homes.
- The Lord welcomes children to worship Him, even though they may not be converted yet. Though young children may lack attentiveness during the worship proceedings, it is biblical to have them join their parents in all worship gatherings, wherever the opportunity avails, just like in the Old Testament times.

2. Heavenly-Mindedness (Jan–Feb 2019 & Mar–Apr 2019)

- Considering our heavenly calling after being made a new man in Christ, everything we do on this earth ought to be heavenly-centred. Our Christian journey should be constantly upward and

forward to heaven, and not set back to worldly ways.

- Reading the articles adapted from Pastor Koshy's sermons preached during the 14th BW Retreat (in 2018) was a joy and great spiritual feasting for me.

3. Out of Darkness into God's Marvellous Light (May–Jun 2020)

- Through the articles, the Gospel is presented in its entirety—from the fall of man to the glorious heaven awaiting all true believers. The admonitions from the articles prompted me to search my own heart against the Scriptures to see if I am truly reborn in Christ.
- Realising that this issue also served as a "Gospel tract", the Lord gave me courage to give copies to my neighbours and friends, who might need to hear (or read) the good news of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

4. Living with the End in View (Jul–Aug 2020)

- Praise God for Pr Ho's wonderful expositions on selected themes from the Book of Ecclesiastes, especially considering that we are now living in (Covid-19) pandemic times.
- I find the article, "Finding Meaning amid Life's Anomalies", most enlightening. By not vexing our spirits in attempting to understand everything in life that happened

Bible Witness Magazine Design History



ARTISTIC CHANGES

The next change to the design of Bible Witness Magazine was seen in Volume 12 Issue 4.

Prior to this issue, the magazine had a traditional newsletter layout. Starting with this issue, we started using more innovative layout designs and integrated artworks with the article text.

(Read more about the history of the BW Magazine on page 47.)

to us, we must “learn to be content having to live with life’s paradoxes”, and submit to God’s sovereignty in “the secret things” (Deuteronomy 29:29) pertaining to His workings in our lives. Such godly submission will stand us in good stead in our Christian walk with God during difficult times.

May the Lord abundantly bless the publication team’s labour and grant His servants courage to propagate His truth in these last days.

**Charlene Mae Abrena,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

I am greatly thankful to the Lord for providentially bringing me to Gethsemane B-P Church, where there is rich spiritual feeding of God’s Word. Pastor Koshy’s commitment and devotion to spreading the Gospel, teaching the truth and exposing errors, are not only evident in his preachings, but also in his written articles. This is particularly so of the Bible Witness magazine. Thank God for the burden He had put in Pastor’s heart to pen down articles that edify readers near and far.

This magazine provides immensely helpful material for my spiritual growth, building me up that I may stand firm against every wind of doctrine, especially in these end times. Praise the Lord for all those who have contributed in the writing of the articles, which hold out many valuable lessons (essential to a life of faith) gleaned from God’s perfect Word, as well as for all the brothers

and sisters faithfully working behind the scenes in proofreading, layout, illustrations and various other areas. May this reading resource continue to help and exhort Christians far and wide. All glory be to God!

Titus Ho, Gethsemane B-P Church

From a young age, the children’s segment of the Bible Witness magazine has always held out inspiring lessons for me. One of the most gripping stories about faithful men who toiled laboriously for the furtherance of the Gospel was the case of Jim Elliot. “He is no fool” aptly described him. His decision to give up the world’s desires and opportunities to serve as a missionary in a dangerous, heathen land demonstrates unwavering courage and purposefulness in following God’s will to the end.

The Bible Witness magazine has been a means of edification and empowerment in my life. The biblical truths and insights imbibed remind me of the need to “walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise” (Ephesians 5:15) in fulfilling God’s plan for my life. May the Bible Witness continue to be a channel of blessing to others, as it has been for me.

**Parousia Chan,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

I have been greatly edified by the stories on the lives of different missionaries in the children’s segment of the Bible Witness issues. I’ve learned many lessons, such as the importance of trusting God when

faced with difficult situations, and keeping the sabbath holy and free from worldly commitments. The stories have been retold in a way that is easy for children to understand, and the illustrations tie in well too. Praise the Lord for the Bible Witness team, who have persevered for these 20 years in publishing godly articles to benefit Christians all over the world!

**Valencia Hutagalung,
Gethsemane B-P Church**

I thank the Lord for the inclusion of the children’s segment in the Bible Witness magazine, where the retelling of missionaries’ lives has helped me to better understand the stories and their teachings. This is all the more so, since I was quite young when I first started reading them. I remember reading the stories about the great men of God in the Bible, as well as of missionaries in the recent past. Their dedicated work for the Lord had made me more interested to learn about God’s Word. I thank God for all the brethren who have contributed to the writing and publishing of these stories. All glory and praise be to God!

Grace Ho, Gethsemane B-P Church

I thank the Lord for the Bible Witness magazine, especially the children’s segment. Having grown up in Gethsemane B-P Church, with ready access to each issue, I would always look forward to flipping through the pages all the way to the “Children’s Page”, and get engrossed in reading the various stories and trying out the Bible Trivia quizzes.

The stories were what attracted me the most—from the life of Jonathan Goforth (the first Canadian Presbyterian missionary to China) to those of various missionaries and church fathers, such as Eric Liddell, Martin Luther and so on. Through these condensed life stories, I have learnt many spiritual lessons and values, which have helped to shape my spiritual life from young. As a teenager, I still enjoy reading the children’s stories as they teach me important spiritual truths. Thank God for all the 100 issues of Bible Witness magazine that have been published thus far. I pray that this work will continue with much faithfulness and prayerfulness. All glory be to God! ✨

Bible Witness Magazine Design History



A MODERN REFRESH

The latest change to Bible Witness Magazine’s design took place with Volume 20 Issue 1. With this issue, we redesigned the magazine from the ground up.

The most obvious change is seen in the magazine cover. Moving away from the ‘letterbox’ design, we have started using a full-page cover design. We have also standardised the fonts of the magazine, modified the layout of the internals slightly, and ensured that the magazine has good visual hierarchy throughout.



BIBLE TRIVIA—NUMBERS 26

SARAH YONG

After years of wilderness wandering, it was finally time to make preparations to enter the Promised Land. The LORD told Moses and Eleazar the priest to “take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward”, i.e. men “that are able to go to war in Israel” (v. 2).

A. Read the Scripture verses shown on the right column, and then complete the table by filling in the missing tribe or number of men respectively.

	Tribe	Number of Men ≥20 years	Scripture Reference
1)	Reuben	43, _ _ _	vv. 5–7
2)	S _ _ _ _	22,200	vv. 12–14
3)	Gad	_ _ , _ _ _	vv. 15–18
4)	Judah	_ _ ,500	vv. 19–22
5)	Issachar	_ _ ,300	vv. 23–25
6)	Z _ _ _ _	60,500	vv. 26–27
7)	Manasseh	_ _ , _ _ _	vv. 28–34
8)	E _ _ _ _	32,500	vv. 35–37
9)	Benjamin	_ _ ,600	vv. 38–41
10)	D _ _ _ _	64,400	vv. 42–43
11)	Asher	_ _ , _ _ _	vv. 44–47
12)	N _ _ _ _	45,400	vv. 48–50
Total in Israel		_ _ _ ,730	v. 51

B. Fill in the blanks with suitable vowels (A, E, I, O, U) to reveal the names of only three men who remained since the first census (vv. 63-65).

1) M _ S _ S

2) J _ S H _ _

3) C _ L _ B

HUDSON TAYLOR

(1832-1905)

PART VIII

Retold by Jenny Lok
Illustrated by Andronicus Koshy

Retold from:

- "To China With Love" by Hudson Taylor, published by Dimension Books, Bethany Fellowship, Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota, the United States
- "Hudson Taylor—God's Man in China" by Dr & Mrs Howard Taylor, published by Moody Press, Chicago, Illinois, the United States
- "Hudson Taylor and Maria, Pioneers in China" by J. C. Pollock, published by Kingsway Publications Ltd, the United Kingdom
- "God's Adventurer" by Phyllis Thompson, published by Overseas Missionary Fellowship (IHQ) Ltd, Singapore

Soon, Edkins and Hudson were back on the streets. They were so surprised to see crowds of people waiting for them. As they moved towards their boat, the people swarmed around them. Without delay, both of them reached for their tracts and started distributing to the curious onlookers. They continued doing so until the crowds began to disperse. Within minutes, silence filled the air. In the distance, they could see the sun disappearing amid bold splashes of orange, red and gold.

"A splendid sight indeed!" both young men chorused. In the dim light, they could see a pagoda with winding stairs. Very much in need of a break, both Edkins and Hudson made their way to the top. As they gazed at the scene before them, Hudson could not help but exclaimed in wonder, "What a vast beautiful land! Look at the endless number of villages stretched beyond the horizon! See the countless little houses with their ancestral tablets, incense sticks, idols and paper gods! So much to be explored and many souls to be won!"

"Go for me to China"—Hudson understood fully the burden and tremendous task God had placed on him, as he surveyed the miles and miles of inland China in the distance. He thought to himself, "Whatever the price, however tough the way, I am determined that the people of China must hear of the One who can rescue them from eternal hell fire!"

Come spring in 1855, and Hudson was blessed with yet another evangelistic opportunity. This time, it was to Tungchow, an important city with a teeming population. Co-labouring with another missionary worker, John Burdon, of the Church Missionary Society, Hudson was looking forward to distributing more tracts and books to the locals. However, their native teachers, frantic with worry and fear, pulled them aside and whispered, "Did you not hear that it can be dangerous to enter the city of Tungchow? We have heard terrifying reports of the local militia. They may arrest you or put you into prison. The worst nightmare is, you may even be killed!" Both Burdon and Hudson were stunned by their words and, for a moment, they remained speechless.



Finally, Hudson spoke, "We have committed ourselves to our Heavenly Father. His Spirit has guided us to reach out to lost souls in Tungchow. Nothing is going to deter us from our goal. We do take note of your warning and will try to stay out of trouble. Romans 8:31 tells us, 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' So, please do not worry, God will take care of us."

Burdon nodded in agreement and with that, the two missionaries set out, each carrying a bag of books and tracts, to begin their journey of about 7 miles. As wheelbarrows are a cheap source of transport, both decided to engage coolies to transport them in the wheelbarrows to their destination. Along the way, they had to hire new wheelbarrow men because the first two were so frightened by rumours of violent treatment by the Tungchow militia that they refused to go all the way into the city. On top of that, they also met a gentleman who warned them, saying,

"Please do not go further. The Tungchow militia are merciless and you would be sorry for not listening to my advice!"

Hudson patiently replied, "Sir, thank you for your advice. You are most kind but we know in our hearts that God has called us to do the work of spreading the Gospel. By the grace of God, we will not leave Tungchow until we have distributed our Scriptures and tracts. Our lives are in God's hands." Thereafter, both missionaries continued on their way.

As they journeyed on, Burdon and Hudson passed by a very small town with a population of about one thousand people. Standing before a group of the locals, Hudson preached in the Mandarin dialect. How thankful he was for the many hours he had spent learning to master the Chinese language. His efforts certainly paid off, for it had come in so handy! Great joy filled his heart as he freely shared about God's love and how Christ had died on the cross to save mankind from their sins. A while later, Hudson overheard a conversation between two locals. One of them, who had earlier listened to the Gospel message, was speaking to his fellow countryman, "You should have come earlier. I have heard the Good News! God loves us and has sent Jesus Christ, His Son, to die for our sins. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt. If we believe in Jesus and trust Him as our Lord and Saviour, we will be saved!" The other man, looking amazed, replied, "Really, this is something new to me. I must learn more of this Good News!" Hudson rejoiced to hear of such interest in the Gospel. This is worth all the trials that God's servants often go through for the Gospel's sake! Shortly after distributing some books and tracts, both missionaries left the town, their bags visibly lighter.

As they were fast approaching the city of Tungchow, Hudson uttered a silent prayer to the Lord: "Oh Lord, grant Thy servants boldness to speak Thy Word. Let not any threatening cause fear in our hearts that may stop us from reaching out to the people in Tungchow. In Christ's precious name, Amen!" Immediately after this, they instructed the wheelbarrow men to wait at an agreed place so as to spare them of any possible trouble that might occur in the city. Both Burdon and Hudson then proceeded to the west gate of the city.

For a while, they walked along the main street, and were taken aback when some locals began nudging one another and pointing at them, calling out “heh-kwei-tsi” (meaning “black devils” in Chinese)! Burdon and Hudson looked at them



with amusement, not knowing why and what they were saying. Only later did they realise that their clothes were the reason for the name-calling. Undisturbed, both walked on until they suddenly saw several soldiers ahead of them. With pounding hearts, Burdon and Hudson quickened their pace, hoping that the soldiers would leave them alone. To their great joy and relief, they were allowed to progress without any harm. After some time, both young men slowed down and continued at a more leisurely pace. They were chatting happily when, out of the blue, a pair of huge and strong hands gripped Burdon by the shoulders. With all his might, Burdon tried to shake off the seemingly drunken man, but without success. Hudson turned swiftly to see what was happening. Just then, many more tough and evil-looking men appeared and surrounded both missionaries. Before long, they found themselves being prodded and pushed along as the ruffians hurried them towards the city!

Poor Hudson! Beads of perspiration began to trickle down the sides of his face. He staggered beneath the weight of the bag he was carrying. “How I wish I could ride in a sedan chair! My legs are getting wobbly. Oh, for a cup of tea to quench my parched lips!” Pictures of himself sipping fragrant tea from a China teacup and savouring warm sweet buns started to form in his mind.

“Hey, you dreamer! Do not slow down, or else by the time we reach our destination, it will be pitch-dark!”

Before he could respond, Hudson felt a sudden jerk of his head. Instantly, he looked up, only to see the cold, merciless eyes of one of the ruffians glaring at him. The burly man caught hold of Hudson by the collar and spoke menacingly, “Move on, brother, we know where to bring you both. Soon, you’ll have your rest!” Hudson was startled by the words and stared across at Burdon. His fellow missionary was grim-faced but calm.

“Oh, Heavenly Father, our lives are in Thy hands. Surely ‘all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose’, as Thou has promised in Romans 8:28. Be Thou our present help in trouble, Oh Lord!” Hudson prayed silently in his heart, casting all their troubles at the feet of Christ. Despite the hustling and shouting, Hudson felt a deep peace, and so did Burdon. Undoubtedly, both young men were more determined than ever to give away their books and tracts along the way. They tried their best to do so, but were stopped by their unruly captors.

What a long and weary journey! Hudson found it hard to keep pace with his tormentors and started to slow down again. Then, a sudden thought came to him—“Where is my name card?” He managed to reach into his pocket and pull out a large red paper with his name (in Chinese characters) on it.

“Sir, this is my Chinese card. Please bring us to the chief official of Tungchow.”

“Oh, so you are visitors to our great land! Our apologies. We’ll be arriving soon.”

From then on, both missionaries were treated with much courtesy and respect. “Praise God for His amazing grace! This is a great relief indeed!” Hudson smiled to himself.

Finally, the journey came to an end at the doorway of the mandarin’s residence. They were not alone, for there were many of the locals standing around, laughing and gesturing at them.

“Sirs, this is where our senior official lives. Please wait while we consult him. Moving swiftly, representatives from among their captors went in, taking Burdon’s and Hudson’s cards, as well as their books, along with them. While waiting, Burdon nodded to Hudson, saying, “See, we have a ready audience here. I shall start preaching to them!” Hudson could not have agreed more to the God-given opportunity.

After some time, the men came out and announced, “We’ve to move on to the magistrate’s office. The mandarin is one of low rank. He cannot help us. Let’s get going!”

“Please pardon us. We simply cannot walk another mile. Do get us chairs, otherwise we are not going to follow you,” Burdon tried to reason with the men.

After some hesitation, two chairs were brought, and both missionaries were carried off immediately once they were seated. How glad they were for some rest at last! Along the way, they heard people whispering, “Look, they do not seem like bad men. Poor fellows, to be caught by those militias is most unfortunate for them!” Such words, unexpectedly, brought a tinge of comfort to their weary hearts...

(To be continued)



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