



FAR & NEAR

FOURTH QUARTER 2020

OUR VISION
CHRIST'S TRANSFORMING PRESENCE IN HEALTHCARE AND THE NATION THROUGH CHRIST CENTERED MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

THE MOST DECISIVE BATTLE IN HISTORY

Christmas trees, Christmas fathers and jingle bells tell us Christmas is near. We sit through countless plays mostly consisting of the same theme: the manger, the angels, sheep and the stars. And several songs that evoke a feeling of calm and peace. It all feels idyllic and heart-warming with the spirit of celebration, great food, holidays, shopping and the rest.

An Unusual Christmas Story

But the actual Christmas story was anything but calm and peace. Angels announced to the shepherds and others that Advent was good news of great joy. At that very moment, the most decisive war in all the universe, a battle of epic proportions, is fought.

The dragon (Satan) arraigned all the evil forces of the visible and invisible world against the baby that is to be born. It was an event of unimaginable consequence for the evil one. God was dismantling the very foundations and structures of the evil one. It was an event on which the future of humanity was at stake.

Revelation Chapter 12 gives us a glimpse of this reality. John is offered the privilege to go behind the curtain of existential reality and see a different reality. He gets to view the cosmic dimensions of the Christ event.

As baby Jesus is about to be born, a dragon (serpent) appears to devour the child. God protects the woman and child. But the dragon is persistent and does all it can to destroy the child.

A war takes place in heaven between Michael and his angels. It is the only war in the Bible that Michael fights. It must have been the most critical and decisive fight since the creation of the world.

The Decisiveness of Advent

The reason for Satan's fierceness in responding to the Christ event is twofold:

Firstly, salvation, the power and the Kingdom of God have come to earth. It is the inauguration of a new era, much like the week of creation. It is the most tangible expression of the limitless love of God for humanity. It is a new dawn of hope for hopeless humanity.

Secondly, Satan is decisively defeated and hurled down from heaven. The one who could walk into the presence of God (refer Job 1 & 2) is now thrown out of heaven forever. Christ alluded to this in Luke 10: 18, 'I saw Satan fall like a lightning from heaven'. Satan's final destruction is yet to come. But for now, his power is curtailed. His is a lost cause. His time is short. The more we realise this truth, the more courageously we live.

Satan embarks on a mission to deflect the hearts of people from God through oppression and the threat of death or destroy people by tempting them to compromise.

Battle Within

The Sunday School drama of nativity hardly gives us a clue to the enormity of the cosmic battle that is fought for the ownership of the hearts of men and women.

It is a war that is mirrored within each human heart. The choice before us is clear - surrender to God or the ancient 'father of lies'.

Varghese Philip

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE STAFF

ISAAC CHANDY - Associate Staff - Karnataka

After much deliberation, postponement and uncertainty the Karnataka state conference 'UPLIFT 2020' was conducted on the virtual platform - Zoom over two weekends in October. The participants had a blessed time listening to the word and also a very lively question and answer time. Chandy writes, "The very apt theme of Personal Protection Equipment was powerfully presented by Dr. Arul Ankitell. Dr. Kuruvilla Varkey gave us the story of how Medical Missions has brought much blessing to the people not just in and around Oddanchatram, Tamil Nadu, but also to other distant parts of our country. He elaborated on the dynamics of a Mission, which involves- 'Chosenness, Givenness, Sentness and Belovedness, all of which come out of the immeasurable love of God for all mankind. After these two phases, we had a follow-up session with Dr. Sony Mathew's teaching on 'Purity or Parity' which provided a sound scriptural basis for a healthy understanding of relationships and the influence of technology. The ADC Fellowship has evolved into the Bangalore Fellowship so as to include members from those parts of the state that are without fellowship. The Bible studies which are led by Drs Spurgeon, Mathew Abraham, Oliver and Grace. The series of 4 Bible studies from the gospels of Matthew and Mark, conducted by Dr M C Mathew for our staff team has been enriching since it helped us to relate these carefully chosen themes to our own personal walk with God and the specific ministry He has called us to be in.

GEORGE SUCHINAG: Field Partner – North East of India

George has been trying to engage the students with virtual bible studies. Though the interns are mostly busy with work/duty, he is trying to find a feasible time for them so that they will be able to attend the studies on a regular basis. In one of the groups they are covering the Gospel of Mark and in yet another group he is leading a study on 'The Lords Prayer'. The response from the students has been good and encouraging though the numbers attending the fellowships have been showing a decline.

LINU ZACHARIAH: Field Partner – Tamil Nadu

Linu is able to engage the students through virtual platforms like Zoom, Google Meet and Teams. But his most effective and sought-after mode of communication he feels in the personal calls he makes to the students and few graduates. With travel not being a possibility in this time phone calls are the next best thing to developing close relationships and staying in touch.

Due to the pandemic our staff are unable to travel but are involved with students and graduates lives and fellowship groups through phone calls and virtual meetings. Pray for wisdom as they plan their travels in the coming months.

PRAISE GOD FOR

- The many innovative Christmas programs that have been conducted over the virtual platform all over the country by the college fellowships.
- The many students who could attend the Missions Follow-up meetings conducted for the students of Tamil Nadu and AP-TS states.
- The TN State Christmas program for doctors conducted over Zoom on the 13th December. Around 50 doctors attended the meeting and had a blessed time.



*Broken and bruised in caring for them
Caught in the scourge, lost in the mayhem
Let us come to him, whose wounds do heal
And look beyond ourselves, again to 'feel'
A cry so faint from the margin sounds
If we do not listen the routine drowns
We need each other, every one of us
Grad and student, private and public
To follow together Him on whom
The Spirit did rest, good news to the poor*

ANNOUNCING

THE EMFI NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021

5 - 7 FEBRUARY 2021

On a virtual platform

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Luke 4: 18, 19

BLOCK THE DATES....ATTEND....BE BLESSED

SION

SION is a beautiful villa on the ECR Road between Chennai and Mahpalipuram. A relative of our good friends Deepak and Ashitha has offered this fine place to us on a very small rent. He wanted this place to be put to use for His children. He is also related to Dr Tirumalai, a pioneer in Medical Missionaries of our nation.

SION is situated at a walking distance to the beach in a quiet locality. It has 6 rooms one of which can be used as an office. It has a large hall and a dining area. There is also a small swimming pool and a small lawn.

After much discussion we have lined up the following areas where it can be of service

- For rest and refreshment of missionary doctor families.

Most of the Doctors in mission are overworked and find little time for rest with the family. SION is a good place for families like this to rest and refresh themselves. There are theme parks nearby and places for boating nearby. There is always the closeness of the beach which is just a few hundred meters away. There are good eateries not far away.

- A place where marriages can be repaired and refreshed

Many families of our doctor friends are under strain. We felt that they can come and rest here away from the usual situation which often aggravates the strain. We could put them in touch with friends of ours around who are good in counselling partners in these situations. In addition, we could have Marriage enrichment seminars here for 5 couples at a time.

- A place for small retreats

This could be for students, graduates, staff, Official meeting of EMFI etc.

We will not be charging a fee for those who come broken for rest and renewal in the Lord here. Those blessed are welcome to be involved with us in His purposes in the many ways.

We are in the process of furnishing the place with cots, mattresses and other pieces of furniture.

There are two care takers involved in the upkeep and one of our staff will be overseeing the work in the place with help from the EMFI Central office.

We would like many to be blessed in this endeavor and would like your prayers and involvement.

For further information please contact:

Dr Elliot (9840720013) and any of us in Central Office



THE CHOICE

When the Father chose things for His only begotten son on the first 'Christmas' and the following period of his childhood, he did so in a way that makes us pause and reflect, even as we celebrate.

A conquered people

Politically his son was sent to be born among a conquered people. They were under subjugation and under taxation by the powerful rulers who brought in many restrictions upon their lives including the internal displacement necessary to register their names.

A 'tainted' lineage'?

Tamar, Rahab and Ruth were not the of 'pure blooded' tribe of Abraham.

Simple parents

It is not mentioned that Mary rode a donkey, though the Christmas cards portray it so. While we may assume it was so, we know at least that they did not have this means of transport later in their life. They walked three days to Jerusalem for the feast.

A manger for a bed

When His son had to come into this world, he didn't have a proper place to be born. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

Shepherds as the visitors

To the simple was revealed the glorious good news. They were his visitors.

..and when the rich and the wise came...

Their gifts may have given the family much needed help in the days to come. And their visit did make a statement about the seekers among the wise coming into the knowledge of the 'King of the Jews'. But their visit resulted in a terrible bloodshed, with 'Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted'. And the family had to leave.

A refugee

The Father allows his son to be a refugee in a strange land. They had to be immigrants, displaced people and expectedly must have faced the difficulties of such a life.

Can anything good come out of Nazareth?

It was considered a spiritually poor place'. This was the choice for his childhood.

Galilee of the gentiles?

The land of Zebulun and Naphtali where people sat in the darkness. 'No prophet comes from Galilee' was the estimate of the Sanhedrin

Is the choice of these events a statement? Is the Father telling us something this Christmas in the narrative of the infancy and childhood of His Son? Why did he not choose a different set of situations for His Son? We could answer that it was a fulfillment of prophecy? But why did he plan those words in the mouth of the prophets? Why this choice? The coming of the Son was a major plan. Should we reflect on the Father's series of choices for His Son?

Sam Sidharth



TREASURER'S NOTE

Giving - which means "freely set aside or devote for a purpose", is not easy in a world that has different kinds of benchmarks and standards, where each resource is supposed to be aimed at achieving the world standards. Every resource, we spend is expected to yield tangible and intangible returns or benefits. Each one of us needs to make a choice between the world and the divine purposes while planning and utilizing our resources, which have temporal and eternal impacts respectively. Making a choice will not be that easy unless one is truly convinced and convicted of himself/herself about the purpose and consequences of his action. In the majority of instances, the giver expects a return in one form or the other but selfless giving where nothing is expected in return is the profound way of giving. Whether it's out of abundance or sacrificial, giving is not easy unless the giver loves the purpose or the person to the core.

Giving is part of Christmas, and Christmas without giving is incomplete, The Lord came down to us (John 3:16) so that we should not perish. Love for mankind which was lost, made the creator himself to become one among us and die for us, to redeem us from eternal condemnation and death. What greater sacrifice than this can a person offer than to offer himself for his loved ones. In spite of all the challenges, you have been a great support in the Lord's work by giving your time, resources, and your prayers for EMFI, which helped us to reach out to the unreached, to share the love of the Lord and He is the true rewarder in his time.

The year 2020 has brought in a new paradigm shift in all dimensions of human life which is the new normal. However, the Lord's mercy and grace helped us to thrive thus far. As we come to the end of the year 2020, Let's thank the Lord for his faithfulness, and continue to be the voice while reaching out to the unreached in the year to come as the Lord himself is our provider. May the Lord continue to bless you so that you will be a blessing to many in the year to come.

Season's greetings and Happy new year to you and your family.

Dr. Sukumar Chitturi

FINANCIAL UPDATE

MONTH	INCOME	EXPENSE
SEPTEMBER	618509	783218
OCTOBER	890328	849096
NOVEMBER	713592	716758

*Happy Christmas
&
A Blessed New
Year*

FROM THE EMFI FAMILY

Those wishing to contribute can send your cheques/DDs/MOs in favour of 'Evangelical Medical Fellowship of India' to the address given below or make an electronic/Bank transfer to:

State Bank of India

Current A/c No: 35465591006

(Branch Code: 2288, IFSC: SBIN0002288)

HDFC Bank A/c No: 04921000009885

(Branch Code: 492, IFSC: HDFC0000492)

You can also make direct online payment by visiting our website www.emfi.in and clicking on the DONATE in the Top menu.

(EMFI is charged 2.5% service charge for every transaction)

Please note that we are not allowed to receive contributions from people who hold a foreign passport

Please call/Text/Email us after you make the transaction.
09176215489/90, emfihq@gmail.com