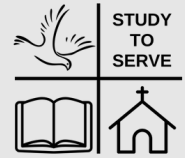


ISSUE 02

DEC 2023

MTSC BULLETIN



TO ENLIGHTEN- TO EQUIP- TO EMPOWER



NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



The Madras Theological Seminary and College equips the students to serve the community in all the possible ways, and in this academic year, the MTSC Bulletin made its way for the theological community to bring out their views in writing and made it to be published as a Quarterly magazine. We were delighted to bring out the first edition of the MTSC Quarterly Bulletin in the month of August. Now we are happy to deliver the second issue of the MTSC Bulletin, which has much more detailed works by the community. This issue contains more information with the theological basis, from the faculty devotion, to the student and alumni articles. This issue is also made to showcase all the activities of the Madras Theological Seminary and College to all the readers, which would lead this esteemed institution to be the model for many to carry on the dynamic thoughts and visions of the founding Fathers of this great institution. This Bulletin is focused more and more to equip and empower the readers to look beyond in a more extensive way.



- REV. L. R. ARUL SAM



Be Physically and Mentally Pertinent

Be Pertinent before God

It is difficult to remain spiritually living in a world where God's law and values are under constant attack. We need a plan to lead a successful life. That plan is to stay fit physically, mentally, and spiritually in God. Nowadays context in which people are living is challenged as we are living in and amongst ungodly culture, which God hates. Indeed, it is difficult to be a Christian in this world as we are surrounded by many evil practices. Without God's help and a plan of action, it is difficult for us to live spiritually, physically and mentally fit in this world.

Need to Stay fit and be Pertinent physically and mentally in God

One may wonder and raise a question, how does being physically fit have anything to do with being spiritually strong? We are told to bring "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5). Maintaining the body and brain with a proper amount of exercise, good nutrition and sleep keeps a person from becoming run-down physically and mentally. The Bible tells us that our "body is the temple of the Holy Spirit" and we are to "glorify God" in our "body" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). If we are weak physically and mentally, our ability to be "on guard" against the spiritual dangers that surround us will be compromised.

Health is indeed an essential wealth to acquire. We can earn money, live a lavish lifestyle, own properties, and build houses, and yet cannot enjoy any of them if we are deprived of health. Staying healthy physically and mentally is a huge deal as the ideal balance between both will encourage us to work hard. To ensure physical fitness, we need to exercise daily and remain active. Nowadays, School children and adults should walk more instead of being driven to a destination within walking distance.

Use stairs more often instead of elevators. Indulge in outdoor games than watching TV or scrolling through social media, and lead an active lifestyle. On top of that, we should strictly avoid junk food and eat fresh fruits and vegetables daily to maintain fitness. We must also drink the right amount of water, which is essential in order to maintain good health. All of these habits boost our immunity and make us physically fit. 7-8 hours of sleep every night is beneficial for health. Taking good care of our bodies and minds will help us build a pleasant future. So, we need to follow all those things to stay fit in God as physically and mentally to reach Gods plan in our life easily. Many people might say that exercise, diet and sleep are important, but they are not enough.

The most important thing we need to stay fit spiritually in God.

Ways to be Pertinent and be Mentally Fit Before God

Prayer

Prayer keeps our relationship with God from decaying, just like physical exercise keeps our physical bodies and brains from decay. Many things can happen that can affect the mind, attitude and body; but God tells us to “be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6). Prayer is important when facing the challenges of the day. It is wise to follow David’s example of praying in the morning, afternoon and evening (Psalm 55:17). Without prayer we cannot do properly so we should pray every to stay fit and in God and also prayer will bring victories and solutions in our difficult life. It will help us to share our Burden and get relaxation from God in all problems.

Bible Study

Bible study is a way to keep our minds in tune with God’s mind. In order to have effective Bible study, we must discipline ourselves to regularly take time away from worldly influences and focus on reading God’s Word. Once peace and quietness are obtained, we can study properly to show ourselves “approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). Bible study provides the proper spiritual nutrition we need to face the world on a daily basis. King David wrote in Psalm 119:11, “Your word I have hidden in my

heart, that I might not sin against You.” Having God’s Word in us helps keep our minds focused on God and His ways.

Meditation

Bible study alone is not enough. We have to think deeply on what we read and how to apply it to our lives. This is called meditation. Joshua recorded God’s instruction to him and to us today: “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Joshua 1:8). Meditation takes what has been studied and converts it into a more permanent part of the mind, memory and character. Life can be overwhelming without a plan. God’s people need to be alert physically and spiritually to survive the many negative influences of this world. For further insight into the disciplines that make us stronger Christians, read the word of God, spend time in Prayer and Fasting. When we follow all these things we will be strong and staying fit in God and world to achieve so many things in our life to establish the kingdom of God.



-Rev. Gladwin Vicky, Alumni, MTSC

Nehiloth

-Rev. Dr. T. Aaron Martin

נְחִילוֹת

In the theological studies, we are taught something called “hapax legomenon.” Hapax legomenon is a term that is used in a technical way to identify words that appear only once. There are several words both in the Hebrew and Greek Bible that appears only once. One such word in the Hebrew Bible is “Nehiloth.” Nehiloth appears in the title of Psalm 5. The term Nehiloth is a hymnic or musical term and it is associated with the singers as well as with the flute players and with all kinds of wind instruments.



According to Genesis 4:21 Jubal was the ancestor/father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. Prior to David, many of the professional musicians' names were not given. During the time of David, court musicians were appointed. Furthermore, it was regular practice that the musicians were playing their musical instruments to celebrate the victories that were gained from the battlefield. Commentators have opined that Israel's neighbors like Assyria and Egypt also had professional musicians. Even though God commanded, still the Israelites were very much influenced by these neighboring nations that are reflected in their religious practices.

The same pattern could be witnessed in the present-day context. Church music is highly influenced by secular music.

It is not to prohibit the advancements of the technological usage of musical instruments, but the concern is not to lose the originality of church music, which had lots of meaning in the words of those hymns. In the name of the modernization, and creativity in composing the music, let us not lose the content of Christian music. It is not meant to say that we should adapt only the hymns that were part of the Church of England way back in 1800s, but rather balance should be made with the present-day music that is used by the young generation people. Ultimately, all the music that are used in the church or in the lives of the Christian should bring glory to God and contribute for the spiritual growth of the believers.

Christians – Fishers of Men and Women

-Rev. L.R.Arul Sam



Christ is the focus of the Gospels while Cross is the focus of the rest of the New Testament. Cross find an irreplaceable place in the hearts of the Christians then and now. It stands as the symbol of the true spirituality of the contemporary Christianity. But Fish is the oldest symbol of Christianity. It represents Jesus and his followers. During the time of persecution, it was not easy to say for the early Christians, 'I am a Christian'.



Think over: As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He said to Peter and his brother Andrew, the Fishers, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." (Matthew 4:19)

At this time, they invented a secret code to convey them as Christians. It is Ἰχθους the Greek word for fish. It became an acrostic to refer to the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. These five letters are the beginning of the five Greek words which forms the early Christians' kerygma, "Jesus (Ἰησοῦς) Christ (Χριστός), the Son (υἱός) of God (θεός), the Saviour (σωτήρ)"





Chapel Happenings

Live a Testimonial Life

The Chapel services for the month of August began with the Promise Word by MTSC Registrar, Rev. Salome, where she brought God's word from 1 Samuel 16:7 and brought out the need to understand the unfading inner beauty which God gave us. This service made students to re-think themselves being a product of God's unfading beauty. On 04/08/2023, Rev. Anbalagan, Pastoring in Evangelical Church of India, Gandhi Nagar church shared God's word, that he brought out the necessity to live a testimonial life in front of this world, and it made the students to re-think their present life and his testimony brought the ablaze fire in the hearts of the students to know about the God's call in their life.

Counsel Others

On 08/08/2023, Rev. Dr. Bennet Lawrence, Regional Secretary of Asian Theological Association was the guest preacher who brought devotion to students mainly focusing on the mental and emotional health of the students and he even brought out the ways,

that a person can overcome their emotional trauma, and this session was meaningful for the students not only for their mental health but also to counsel others who are going in the same path. On 18/08/2023, Rev. Kingslee Libin Joel, Professor of History brought God's Word in the chapel service from Luke 15, and it brought the reviving change in the hearts of students towards God.

Accept God's Call

On 22/08/2023, Rev. Solomon Charles, MTSC Chaplain delivered God's word from Jonah 2, and the sermon brought a change in the perspective of the students, that they must not be lethargic and slow to respond to God's call in their life. On 29/08/2023, Rev. Dr. Manoharan, Regional Director for South Asia, Community Bible Study International, was the guest preacher brought God's Word based on the academic theme of the college, that is Envisioning Harmony.



Don't Go Astray

On 01/09/2023, New month started with the Promise Word by Rev. Dr. Babu Jeyaraj, Principal of MTSC, on Jeremiah 4:1, that no one will go astray. This word brought the hope in the mind of the students about their future ministry. On 15/09/2023, Rev. Solomon Charles, MTSC Chaplain, brought God's word to the students from Jonah 4, where he challenged the students to leave out all the frustration which they are facing in their day-to-day life and serve God wholeheartedly. On 26/09/2023, Rev. Arul Sam, Professor of New Testament shared God's Word on the significant element for a successful mission in our context, which made the students to evaluate their view on mission and helped them to transform their practical ministry in the way which the scripture instructs.

On 29/09/2023, Rev. Helena Samuel, Professor of Women Studies, delivered Word of God from Genesis chapter 13, on the perspective to walk in peace and harmony and she shared the ways to resolve the conflicts in our society.

This service rebuilt the views of the students, in a view to resolve the problems which they endure in their ministerial formation.

Be Dependent on God

The month of October started with Promise service, where on 03/10/2023, Rev. Dr. Selvindurai, Professor of Missiology and the Director of Laymen Bible Training shared promise word in the chapel service from Revelation 3:8 and said that God has given us an open door and it made the students to be more dependent on God. On 10/10/2023, Rev. Honson Jose, from Korean Evangelical Holiness Church (KEHC) came to our chapel service and shared God's Word. He shared the Word on the basis for the need of the prayer in the life of God's minister. This worship service, brought a blazing heart for the students to spend more time in prayer which will lead one's life to be a successful minister of God.



SPECIAL EVENTS

INDEPENDENCE DAY

The pride of Independence from the colonial rule celebrated throughout our country on 15th August. The MTSC Community too celebrated the 77th Independence Day by hoisting the national flag in the campus. The Most Rt. Rev. Dr. David Onesimu, Bishop President of Evangelical Church of India hoisted the national flag and delivered the independence day address.

First Bulletin Published

MTSC Bulletin, a quarterly magazine's first ever edition was published on this auspicious day and it was released by Bishop President and the first copies of the bulletin was received by Rev. Dr. Babu Jeyaraj, Principal, MTSC and Rev. Dr. Jayakumar A, Director, MTSC. A short introduction about the Bulletin was shared by Rev. Arul Sam, Professor of New Testament and Faculty Advisor of MTSC Bulletin.





ALPHA WORKSHOP

On 21st of August, a special workshop was conducted by Alpha for the students in order to enlighten them to evangelize the non-Christian world. Bro. Thomas, A Representative from the Alpha was the leader of that workshop and he trained the students to propagate gospel in an easier way to the non-Christian world.

They introduced a method to the theological community, where they initiated the students to unite their friends who did not accept God's Word in an environment to discuss more about God in a common places like hotels and then, they instructed the students to have a fellowship like lunch, and promote Christ by sharing a small video about Christ for some period of time usually lasts up to 12 weeks.



Bro. Thomas had shared that, this method has been successful in taking Christ to non-Christian world. The leader of this workshop had also suggested the community to conduct sports and games to attract a wider audience from the non-Christian world.

SCMI INAUGURATION

Student Christian Movement of India (SCMI) had its one more wing through MTSC, where the new unit was officially formed on 30 August 2023. The ceremony began by lighting the traditional lamp as a sign for the inauguration of the new unit.

Officials of SCMI Unit

Then the officials of the SCMI-MTSC Unit was introduced by Rev. Dr. Babu Jeyaraj, Principal, MTSC. Bro. Joseph Shane Andrews, BD Final year was appointed as the President and Bro. Joseph Hudson Dass was appointed as the Vice-President,



Bro. Letminthang, BD Third year was appointed as the Secretary and Sis. Jesi Priya was appointed as the Joint Secretary of the unit. Sis. Sneha, BD Second year was appointed as the Treasurer of the SCMI-MTSC unit for the academic year 2023-24. Rev. Helena Samuel was appointed as the Faculty Advisor of this unit.

Arise! Unit! Wrestle!

The SCMI Theme of the academic year was introduced by the President and the Vice-President of the unit led the community to make a pledge to act as a SCMI Unit person. Then the Chief Guest, Mrs. Gnanamani, Regional Secretary of North Chennai SCMI Wing, gave the Presidential address to the SCMI Unit members. She introduced the ways in which SCMI unit will function in the year which was inspiring for all the members and the students of MTSC. The Inauguration ceremony concluded with the Theme song of SCMI-MTSC Unit and the closing prayer.





TEACHER'S DAY

The Teacher's Day is celebrated on 5th September every year at national level. There would be events and party in educational institutions, which are organized by students to honor the teachers. The student body of MTSC has organized a special event to honor the faculty and non-teaching staff.

The celebration started with a prayer followed by a traditional song by MTSC girls. Then the community had number of programs such as songs, dances, skits and others. Then the MTSC Tamil choir conducted the Tamil traditional program called Villu Paattu to entertain the community. A Special game was conducted by the students for the faculty, it was a time of fun and fellowship.

A small devotion was shared by Bro. Emmanuel Titus, BD Final Year, which made the students to re-evaluate their thoughts towards the teachers. Then, all teachers were honored by giving a gift as a token of love of the student body for the teachers. The program came to an end with the faculty response and cake cutting followed by prayer and benediction by Rev. Dr. Jayakumar, Director of MTSC. This event made the student teacher relationship even stronger.





Day of Prayer

As a part of the spiritual growth of the MTSC community, we have organized a day of prayer on 13/10/2023. In that day, student community was asked to observe chain of prayer session throughout the day from morning 6 am till night 8 pm.

The Day of Prayer is organized with four important sessions. The theme of the first session was Be a Steward in which Rev. Dr. Duraiswamy, Bishop Commissary of Evangelical Church of India had challenged the community to be served the Lord by being a steward.

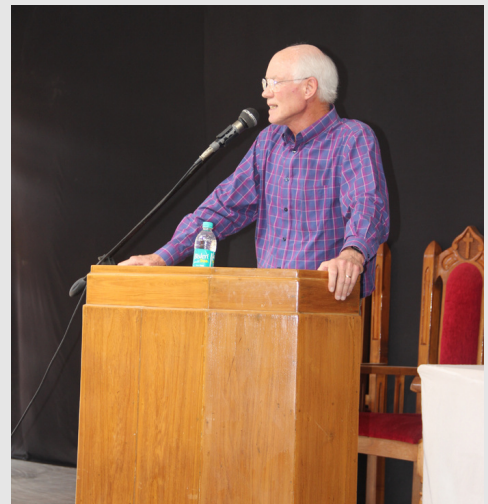
The theme of second session was Be a Faithful Servant, in which Rev. Dr. Sunil Singh, President of Gilgal Mission has challenged the community to serve the Lord with a servant heart. The theme of the third session was Living a testified life. In this session, many were asked to share the testimony. Many students had shared their testimony which God had done in their personal life as well as in their weekend ministry. In the last session the emphasis was given on a prayerful life. In this session, Rev. Dr. Babu Jeyaraj had challenged the community to be prayer warriors.

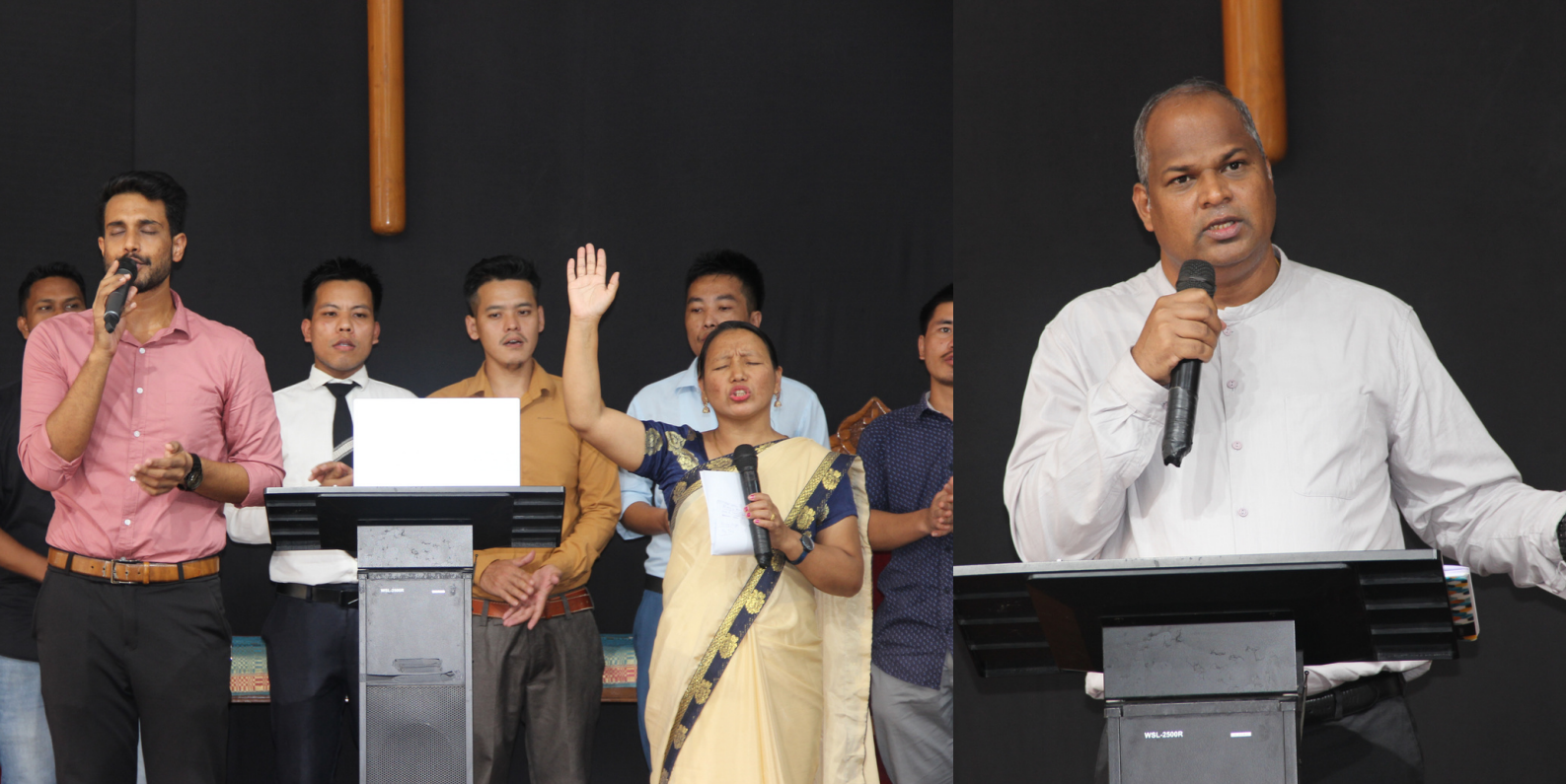




Special Worship Service with Rev. Roger Cruz

On 18th October 2023, the MTSC had its special day, as the community hoisted a special worship service at 10.30 am. Rev. Roger Cruz is the field director of One Mission Society (OMS). He was also Professor Emeritus of MTSC. He was accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Clenda Cruz who is also a Resource Person of One Mission Society's Dynamic Program. In this service, Rev. Roger Cruz delivered God's Word. He challenged the community to be an instrument of God in the mission field.





SEMESTER CLOSING SERVICE

It is a tradition of Madras Theological Seminary and College, that each semester classes will end with a communion service. So, this semester came to end on 18/10/2023 with Holy Communion service. This Communion service was moderated by Rev. Solomon Charles, Chaplain of MTSC.

In this worship service, Rev. Helena Samuel, Professor of Women Studies, who was recently ordained by Lutheran Churches, was honored and felicitated by the MTSC Community. In this service, the MTSC Community was also thankful for the students who came from Allahabad Bible Seminary for the student exchange program was also honored as they are returning to their parent college.

In this worship service, Rev. Dr. Jayakumar, Director of MTSC had challenged the community to have Jesus Christ as the corner stone in their life and ministry. This worship service ended with the Holy communion, where the Holy Communion service was conducted Rev. Dr. Babu Jeyaraj, Principal, MTSC and Rev. Helena Samuel, Professor of Women Studies.



ACADEMIC ENDEAVORS

Rev. Dr. Moses Manoharan

On 16/08/2023, MTSC and ECI jointly hosted a special seminar for the current students as well as Alumni's. This Seminar was moderated by Rev. Dr. Jayakumar, Director of MTSC. In this seminar Rev. Dr. Moses Manoharan, the executive Director of Inter Church Service Association has presented a Paper, titled, 'Political Theology – A Rearticulation of Faith in India Today'.

This paper discussed the intersection of politics and theology specially in the context of India. This paper presented various theological and political concepts and their historical significance, making it relevant for students in theology, political science, history, and the intersection of religion and politics. The presenter had focused on the bridging the gap between the secular politics and the theology. This paper explained the ways of the biblical concepts that shapes the political theories and have contributed to the development of political structures.

Faculty Student Seminar

- Rev. Dr. Selvindurai

On 21/09/2023, Rev. Dr. Selvin Durai, Asst. Professor of Missional Studies and Director of Laymen Bible Studies (LBT), presented a paper on Envisioning Peace and Harmony with the Vision of One God and One Humanity: A Missiological Perspective.

This session was moderated by Rev. Dr. Vijayan, Asst. Professor of Missional Studies.

The paper explained the view from New Testament, which Jesus and His disciples were envisioning harmony and peace. The paper gave more detailed explanation about the article which was written by Martyn Lloyd-Jones on the basis of Romans 10:15, where the presenter stresses that God not only provides a way for all to be redeemed from their sins, but also to restore their relationship with God.

Then the presenter explained about the nature of Christian faith, which is to promote peace, harmony and justice. The main focus of the paper was that the mission of God through Jesus, is to bring peace to the whole universe. This session challenged the community to work for peace, harmony and justice.

Faculty Student Seminar

- Rev. Solomon

On 19th of October 2023, Rev. Solomon, Asst. Professor in Religious study, presented a paper, titled, 'The Importance of Sruti (Scripture) in the Advaitic Understanding of God'.

This session was moderated by Rev. Dr. Babu Jeyaraj, Professor of Religious studies. This paper brought out the extensive understanding about the importance of scripture in the religious circle.

The research paper had explored the importance of Sruti or Sabda as the only valid source of understanding of God among all the Pramaṇas as Advaita Vedanta believes in gradual understanding of truth through stages of spiritual progress, with three levels of growth.

At the first level, the world alone is real, at the second, both the world and God, and at the last, only God. This paper has motivated the community to explore the scriptures of other religion and to appropriate other faith.





Ministry Report

Study to serve is the motto of our seminary. To Fulfill this motto, our students are sent to various mission fields on the weekends to serve the Lord, outside the seminary wall. The weekend ministry of our seminary was a vision of The Most Rt. Rev. Dr. Ezra Sargunam, Father Bishop of the Evangelical Church of India. He translated this vision into action long ago, we still happy to carry out his vision through this weekend ministry to take away the fear of the students and strengthens them in the field ministry beside their academic pursue in the seminary campus.

For this magazine, Bro. Thirunavukarasu, BD third year and Bro. Dheena, BD Orientation's mission place of Kulandai Colony, Cuddalore, is being explored. Initially, a group of students were sent to Kulandai Colony to do ministry during the month of May and started the children ministry. From the month of June, under the guidance of Pastor. Shaji Solomon, Bro. Thirunavukarasu and Bro. Dheena have been doing ministry in Kulandai Colony, and their mission has made a huge impact. Today, after six months, more than 70 children are regularly participating in the children's ministry every Saturday. They even visited many people's houses and introduced Christ to them as the Savior of world. It turned out as a fruitful ministry for eight families have accepted Christ as their personal Savior. Now, three families have confessed their salvation experience through baptism.





BD 4 Exposure

On 16/10/2023, BD Final year students went for the theological exposure for Dalit theology. Rev. Haniel Jefferson, Asst. Professor of Social Analysis led the Final year students to Chengalpattu for the Dalit exposure. The exposure started in the church located in Hope City, which is built with the nature. The students, made different presentation in the stone benches which is located in the church campus. There were different interactions made by the student community on Dalit theology. This exposure program was a great success in such a way that the final year students to know more about Dalit theology in theory and in field.



ESCHATOLOGICAL CLAIMS



- PRINCY.J, BD- I

A so-called prophet, Kyle Idleman, deliberately appeared in a YouTube channel claiming that Jesus Christ himself revealed the date, month and the year of his coming. He also adds that all those details perfectly fit the phonetical value of the Hebrew alphabets and when the derivation of the numerical values is done correctly,

, it perfectly matches the date, month and year that was revealed to him by Christ. He claimed that Jesus Christ's will come back on 15 October 2023. Many people fell for his eschatological statement. But the sad reality was that Jesus never came on 15 October 2023.

Let us remember what the scripture says:

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare” (2 Peter 3:10).

As a theological community, we will look back to the roots of these claims. The Greek word ἔσχατος is closely associated with eschatology which again means the study of the last days. Now a days, we often hear people speak about the end of the world and the coming of Jesus Christ. But, there is a mystery attached to it, where no one knows the real end of this world and the arrival of Christ for the second time.

It is highly blasphemous when people make use of this mystery to their own benefits and try to manipulate people on the second coming of Christ as it is not revealed to anybody. We lately experience the rise of many fake prophets who claim themselves to be the special or chosen ones who are chosen by God to reveal the second coming of Christ.

They become so bold because many a times people fall for such false predictions. It is necessary for us to trust the Bible before jumping to conclusion or fall for so-called prophetic words.

As one can clearly see the bible saying,

“But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”

– Mark: 13:32.



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