

ST. PAUL'S MAR THOMA CHURCH
2425 GUS THOMASSON RD.
MESQUITE, TX 75150

Phone: 972 613 9080

PARSONAGE ADDRESS

5906 BLUE OAK DRIVE
GARLAND, TX 75043
972 226 0976

ARTICLES NEEDED!

If you would like to submit any articles in English or Malayalam,
please send it to: Jacobkab@hotmail.com

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Published by Sub-committee for Communications of St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church, Dallas

St. Paul's Mar Thoma Church
2425 Gus Thomasson Rd.
Mesquite, TX 75150

THE EPISTLE

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION



November 2009





MESSAGE FROM VICAR

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

November 1st Sunday is World Sunday School day. Due to the industrial revolution in 18th century, many children were used in factories for unskilled works. The children of the street who didn't have their school education got money on daily wage and started living for worldly pleasures. A man named Robert Reiks gathered these children and started Bible classes in 1780 and it was the beginning of the Sunday School movement. It helped so many children to find out the meaning and purpose of their life. The Mar Thoma Sunday School Samajam was started in 1905 as part of World Sunday School Movement, with the motto come to Jesus and bring every child to Jesus. Christian ministry among the children is to help the children to have a transformed life through Jesus Christ based on the values of the kingdom of God.

At present we live in such a world where youth and children are influenced by materialism and consumerism. The world put forth certain business rules which can be called success syndrome. But God's principles is honest syndrome and it versus the rules of the world.

Unwritten Rules of the World

1. Achieve results
2. What can I get?
3. Success = Dollars
4. Work to Please people
5. Fear of the unknown
6. Take charge; surrender means defeat
7. Leadership is being first
8. The end Justifies the means.
9. Get to the outcome. Regardless of how you accomplish it
10. Short term Gain
11. Slave to the urgent
12. You can never produce enough

God's Principles

1. Serve a Purpose
2. How can I give?
3. Significance = people
4. Work to please God
5. Living with Hope
6. Let Go ;surrender means victory.
7. Leadership is being last
8. The means justifies the end
9. Do the right thing regardless of the outcome
10. Long-Term Legacy
11. Freedom of Choice
12. Unconditional Love.

Prayer Meetings

AGAPE

LEADER: VINOD CHERIYAN

TBD

EBENEZER

LEADER: LIZY JOHN

November 7, 2009 at 7:00 pm—Residence of Mr. & Mrs. K. J. Thomas

EMMANUEL

LEADER: VIJU VARGHESE

TBD

MANNA

LEADER: SAJI P. GEORGE

TBD

SHALOM

LEADER: ABRAHAM KOSHY

November 15, 2009 at 6:30 pm—Residence of Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Kurien

He does want relationship. He does not care for tradition, but He does want our hearts. He does not care for human law, but He does honor our loyalty to Him. If you understand one thing from this article, may it be that “Christianity is not a religion – it is a relationship!”

Quiz
By Miriam Chacko

1. The Devil Promised Eve that _____.
2. God clothed our first parents _____.
3. Meaning of the name Cain is _____.
4. Adam died at the age of _____.
5. Noah had children when he was _____ old.
6. _____ shut the door of the Ark.
7. Abraham’s father’s name was _____.
8. Abraham’s nephew was _____.
9. First son of Abram was _____.
10. _____ age when Abraham had his first son.

Answers on earlier page

We have choice. We have to select any one of the sides. What we select decide our life and destiny.
As Christians we, have to live for God’s principles. Our Sunday School has a main role in helping children to distinguish between what is good and what is evil. Parents and Sunday School teachers have to work together to achieve this goal.
May God bless and guide us with his grace and wisdom.

Yours in Christ
Noble Achen

Diocesan Bishop’s Visit

Our Diocesan bishop, Rt. Rev. Dr. Geevarghese Mar Theodosius will be visiting our parish on November 27-29.

Congratulations to New Arrivals

Congrats to the following couples on their birth of their baby:

Rajith and Leena

Sheena P. John

Jacob and Elizabeth

The study about the Bible

What is the greatness of the bible?

- i.) It is the first written and printed book in the world.
- ii.) It is the most translated book in almost all languages.
- iii.) It inspires and influences the thoughts and imagination of the largest number of people in the world.
- iv.) It is not a single book, but is a collection of books. The word Bible comes from the word "Biblia", which means "books".
- v.) The books in the Bible were written by 40 writers within a long period of 1600 years at different contexts, it is written by the faith community who experienced God in their lives.
- vi.) It is the book of unity and diversity. It contains almost all types of literature such as history, stories, epics, myths, novels, genealogy, songs, letters, proverbs etc.
- vii.) It is called the word of God because it speaks about God's world, God's people and God's deeds. It was written by people who were inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Tim 3:16)

Which are the symbols used for the bible?

- i.) Food (Pss 119:103)
- ii.) Lamp to feet and light for path (Pss 119:105)
- iii.) Fire and hammer (Jer 23:29)
- iv.) Double edged sword (Heb 6:12; Eph 6:17; Rev 2:12)
- v.) Seed to be sown (Mat 13:23)
- vi.) Mirror (1 Cor 13:12)
- vii.) Jesus Christ is the incarnated word of God (Jn 1:1-3)

How to study the Bible?

- i.) Since the bible was written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we can understand it only with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- ii.) The total message of the Bible is to be understood. Faith formation based on any single verse or any part of the Bible is dangerous. The whole message of the Bible is Human sin and God's redemption; so all interpretation should lead us to the salvation through Jesus Christ.
- iii.) The symbolic use of language is to be taken seriously.
- iv.) The written context is to be understood. Author, reader, period of writing, place of

Spiritual vs. Religious

By: Chuck Babu

By the title alone, many of you may jolt or react in a confused manner with a perplex look on your face – "Are you telling me that being spiritual is not the same as being religious?" When facing such a question, one must first thoroughly self-examine what connotations are meant by these two words; the word spiritual may indicate a being's sense of one's own soul and spirit as religious infers the customs, culture, and practices of one's faith and beliefs. As we explore the two concepts, I hope I can put a new light into this dark corner that is rarely tampered with.

When one claims to be "spiritual", they indicate that their soul is in essence, one with, or at peace with *the Spirit*. When someone claims him or herself to be spiritual, he or she may be indicating that their beliefs and doctrines are ruled outside the church and only from the one source that can be trusted – The Living and Holy Bible. What is this Spirit that we speak of? In the Gospel of John, it clearly states that once Jesus resurrected from the dead and appeared to His disciples, He "breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'" (John 20:22-23) As we remember in the earlier stories of Jesus in the Gospel, He claimed the authority to "forgive sins." As Jesus is the Son of God (and is in essence God Himself), the previous passage simply reiterates the position and power of the Holy Spirit as its rightful authority – a part of the Trinity Himself. Spiritual people believe the Holy Spirit to be their only judge and authority in their relationship with God.

However, when one claims to be "religious", a whole new concept is at foot. When one states that "my religion is Christianity," they lower the authority of their Christian identity in their lives to a simple nonchalant proclamation. When Christianity is called a "religion", it becomes just like any other religion (such as Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Scientology, etc.). The key principle to appreciating our Lord and Savior is recognizing that Christianity is *not* a religion – but instead it is a relationship. No other religion emphasizes nor provides the opportunity of a personal relationship with God. Unfortunately, the term religious indicates practicing a set code of rituals ruled by tradition and culture. If the practices or beliefs contradict the truth of the Bible, the religion itself is *not* true to the very stone foundation it is based on.

If someone was to ask me how I define myself, I will without hesitation claim "spiritual." Why? Because the Bible is the unfathomable word of God; the only book that I can look to learn more about my Creator; the only Gospel that I explore to be touched by [my] God's love; the only word that rules my life as I learn about regular humans (like us) and their experiences with a not-so regular, supernatural God. In Mathew 10:30, Jesus says that "Your Father (God) knows how many hairs are on your head!" The man after God's own heart states in Psalm 139 that "you have knit me together in my mother's womb."

This is the God I worship. Not a God that is ruled by what any human being says, but instead by God's unfathomable word and the Holy Spirit. I would like to encourage all of you to seek a *relationship* with God instead of practicing a *religion*. Just remember that God has no *religion*, but

Lord, why can't I see myself a good person
But only a sinful human?
How is it that even tho' my life is hard,
I can still smile with a warm heart?

Why is it that even if I had a bad day, lately,
One small thing can shift my view a complete 180?
From where does all this love originate?
Is that just how my nature is by God's grace?

But above all, Lord, why am I like no other
That You chose to be forsaken by the Father
To forgive my sins
So that I may live again?

Why did You do such a thing?
Why did You do it for me?
Was it because I was falling?
Is it I You are calling?

So be it, Lord so be it.
Just say the word, and I will fulfill it.
With You at my side, not even Heaven is my limit!

Even with all these questions going thru my mind,
I am Yours forever, my Lord, my Savior; my Christ,
To the very end of my life
For I am reborn; baptized

writing and purpose of writing of each book is to be studied.

v.)The bible is written for religious purpose. It cannot be used as reference book for science, history, or language. It is written for meditation. It does not give answer to the question "When and how everything was created?", but the bible does answer the question "Why was everything created?".

vi.) Study the Bible continuously and regularly with prayer and with the decision to obey it.

Why should we study the Bible?

i.)To be born again and to be redeemed (1 Pet 1:23)

ii.)To teach, rebuke, correct, and train in righteousness (2 Tim 3:16)

iii.) To overcome temptations of the devil (Mt 6:4)

iv.)To be blessed by Go (Pss 1:1-2; Rev 1:3)

v.) To get eternal life (Jn 6:63; 15:10)

How can we divide the books of the Bible?

Old Testament contains 39 books and they were written in Hebrew language. New Testament contains 27 books and they are written in Greek language. The Old Testament books are divided into three:

i.)Five books of the Law (Torah) contains Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

ii.)Twenty one books of prophecy (Nebim).They are again divided into two: former prophets before Babylonian exile such as Joshua, Judges, 1st Samuel, 2nd Samuel, 1st Kings and 2nd Kings. b. Later prophets after exile such as Isaiah,Jeremiah,Ezekiel,Hosea,Joel,Amos,Obediah,Jonah,Micah,Nahum,Habakuk,Zephaniah,Haggai,Zechariah and Malachi.

iii.)Writings (Kethubim) that contains thirteen books such as Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, 1st Chronicles, 2nd chronicles, Nehemiah and Ezra.

The New Testament books are divided into three:

i.)History (5 books) such as four gospels and Acts of Apostles

ii.) The Epistles (21 books) including epistles of St.Paul, James, Peter, John and the epistle to the Hebrews.

iii.) Prophecy that is the Revelation. Canonisation of the Old Testament books and the New Testament books was done in A.D.90 and A.D.367 respectively.

Next issue: The Bible and the science

Youth Chaplain's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,



"I HATE TO COME IN TO WORK THIS EARLY, BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY I CAN CHECK ON WHICH EMPLOYEES ARE COMING IN LATE."

What is hypocrisy? Do you think you are a hypocrite? Why? How do you know?

Hypocrisy is derived from the Greek word *hypokrisis* which basically means "acting" or to be an "actor". It is a type of lie where one pretends to have certain beliefs, standards, values, qualities, opinions, etc. that they don't actually have. As it would a professional actor, it serves to effectively hide the true identity of the person and portray only a false reality. So, imagine this: a world, a community, a family, a person living in hypocrisy. Why it would simply an act or play that we watch and participate in?

I am reminded of the hit movie, *The Truman Show* starring Jim Carrey, wherein Truman is on the set of a reality show about him and his life without his knowledge. His so-called friends, family, neighbors all are simply acting out their part. Perhaps the most interesting element of the movie is that Truman is real and honest despite the fact that all those around him were fake. How about us? Where do we find ourselves? Among the acting crew or with Truman?

Hypocrisy was one the vices that Jesus Christ preached so powerfully against during his public ministry. On numerous occasions to the disciples, the crowd that followed him and the religious leaders of the day Jesus strictly warned against hypocritical living (Matt 6:2, 5, 16). In hypocrisy, an individual denies the truth and dissatisfies God by exalting and elevating the primacy of a false reality or a "fake lifestyle". It corrupts the spiritual, mental and physical nature and destroys a person, a family, a community and world from the inside out.

The Christian faith must never be a "part" you play on Sunday morning or at Church events. Beware. Overcome. Take a look at the following 3 attitudes that every hypocrite has and work to avoid it:

Being careless. "Who cares what people think about what I do in my per-

"Questions of My Heart"

By Joel Mathew

To: Anyone who has asked the same questions.

For: My God, My Lord; My Christ, who has been my exact same position.

Lord, why am I like no other?

Why do I see life as a mere hour?

Why do I see infinity as a grain of sand,

Not even big enough for the palm of my hand?

Why do I view things so simply,

Instead of seeing it as a complexity?

Why do I take things in life as a simple whim,

As if, at any moment, my life can come to end?

What makes me care for the stranger of a person?

Is it because we are both human?

Why is it that when I see others in pain, my heart throbs?

Is it because I could easily be in their spot?

Why is it that I always care for my friends and family?

Why is loving them as simple as my need to breathe?

Why is it that even tho' we are so dysfunctional

Our love for each other is so unconditional?

Why do others see me as intelligent and smart,

Even tho', God, You know I am not?

Why do people see me so wise.

When all I am is a man who just sees thing simply thru Your eyes?

Why do my writings captivate the reader's heart?

Is it because they and I aren't very far apart?

Why is it that I call myself a man

When I can only barely comprehend

What the image of God really is?

Why is it that I can truly judge no one

But can only know to love everyone?

Why do I consider myself of no culture, no race, no nation

But only as Christian; as a human?

What part of me

Makes me believe

That I can change the world

Even if it is thru one, single individual?

Lectinary/Worship Information

Sunday, November 1, 2009 - (Holy Qurbana - English) World Sunday School Day Christian Education to Grow in Wisdom and Grace	
Lesson 1: Deut 6:1-9	Epistle: Rom 12:1-11
Lesson 2: Eph 5:1-10	Gospel: Luke 2:42-52
Sunday, November 8, 2009 - (Holy Qurbana - Malayalam) CSI-CNI-Mar Thoma Churches' Unity Day: Unity for Mission	
Lesson 1: Micah 6:1-8	Epistle: 2 Cor 4:7-15
Lesson 2: Eph 2:11-22	Gospel: Luke 10:1-9
Sunday, November 15, 2009 - (Holy Qurbana - Malayalam) Annunciation to Zechariah: Preparing for the coming of the Lord	
Lesson 1: 1 Cor 24:1-19	Epistle: Heb 5:1-10
Lesson 2: Rev 8:1-8	Gospel: Luke 1:5-23
Sunday, November 22, 2009 - (Holy Qurbana - English) Annunciation to Virgin Mary: Taking Risk for the Kingdom of God	
Lesson 1: Zech 2:10-13	Epistle: Eph 1:3-14
Lesson 2: Gal 4:21-31	Gospel: Luke 1:26-38
Sunday, November 29, 2009 - (Holy Qurbana - Malayalam) Visitation of Mary Towards Elizabeth : Celebrating the Good News	
Lesson 1: Zech 2:10-13	Epistle: Eph 1:3-14
Lesson 2: Gal 4:21-31	Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

Laity Duties

	Worship Service Assistant	1st Lesson	2nd Lesson	Prayer
Nov 8 <i>Shalom</i>				
Nov 15 <i>Agape</i>				
Nov 22 <i>Ebenezer</i>				
Nov 29 <i>Immanuel</i>				

sonal life? It's none of their business." If you don't care about how your actions affects others, you are on your way to hypocrisy.

Being unteachable. "Don't try to tell me what to do or how to live. I will make up my own mind independent of others." This kind of thinking puts you on a dangerous road to ruin. God puts people around us to help guide and protect us. Don't despise their counsel.

Comparing. "Well, I'm not as bad as a lot of people I see in the church." This attitude was prevalent in the Pharisees in Jesus' time. These religious hypocrites were always comparing themselves to others who they felt were less spiritual. Their appearances to people were more important than how they appeared to God.

May God lead us forward in Truth and may we be empowered to keep from the temptation of falsehood!

Your brother in Christ,
Jaisen Achen
214-604-6678
972-495-5393
revjathomas@yahoo.com

Answers for Bible Quiz

1. Devil told Eve that she will not die surely. (Gen 3:5)
2. God made of coats of skin and clothed them. (Gen 3:21)
3. Got or obtained. (Gen 4:1)
4. 930 yrs (Gen 5:5)
5. 500 yrs (Gen 5:32)
6. God shut the door of the Ark. (Gen 7:16)
7. Terah (Gen 11:27)
8. Lot (Gen 11:27)
9. Ismael (Gen 16:1)
10. 86 yrs (Gen 16:16)

Church Organizational Activities

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Regular classes at 8.45am.
November 7 from 7-9pm —Hallelujah Night

SEVIKA SANGHAM:

November 7—Fasting Prayer at the Parsonage

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP:

Tuesdays - Bible Study with Rev. Jaisen Thomas
Thursdays - Prayer Call
Fridays - Prayer Fellowship -
Sundays at 7-8:30pm - Open Gym at Sunnyvale First Baptist Church

YUVAJANA SAKHYAM:

TBD

PARISH MISSION:

Fridays at 7pm - Bible Study/Prayer fellowships at the Church.
Sundays at 9-9:30am - Intercessory Prayer

CHOIR:

Sundays - Practice sessions after Holy Qurbana.

SPECIAL PRAYER:

Fridays from 9.30 to 11.30am - The residence of Mrs. & Mr. Jaisy & Raju George, 922 Dandelion Dr, Mesquite, TX.

BIRTHDAYS

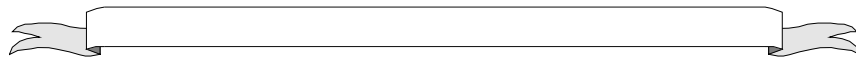
1-Nov	Annama P. Philip	Greenville	14-Nov	Jeffrey Alexander	Fate
1-Nov	Dylan Thomas	Mesquite	14-Nov	Marykutty Skariah	Garland
2-Nov	Anish M.Varghese	Mesquite	15-Nov	Susamma Varghese	Mesquite
3-Nov	Cherian P.P.	Sunnyvale	16-Nov	Christina S Raju	Rowlett
3-Nov	Deny John	Mesquite	16-Nov	Ribu Thomas	Mesquite
4-Nov	George Ipe	Garland	16-Nov	Samuel Kurian	Mesquite
4-Nov	Skariah P.M.	Garland	17-Nov	Chandy Jacob K	Mesquite
6-Nov	Sherwin Thomas	Rockwall	18-Nov	Samkunju K.O.	Sunnyvale
7-Nov	Joshua Thomas	Sunnyvale	19-Nov	Abraham Oommen	Sunnyvale
7-Nov	Kevin Thomas	Garland	19-Nov	Beji Pappachan	Mesquite
7-Nov	Mariamamma Mathew	Mesquite	20-Nov	Mathewkutty Geevarghese	Mesquite
8-Nov	Susan Chacko	Garland	25-Nov	Bincent Jacob	Garland
8-Nov	Varghese K. Mathew	Mesquite	26-Nov	Zachariah Thomas	Sunnyvale
10-Nov	Jiby Thomas	Plano	27-Nov	Bennet B.Jacob	Garland
10-Nov	Thomas K.J	Mesquite	28-Nov	Bindu Koshy	Garland
12-Nov	Albin Thomas	Mesquite	30-Nov	Annamma Chacko	Garland
12-Nov	Faeba Varghese	Mesquite	30-Nov	Rajan Mathew	Mesquite
12-Nov	Jennie Mathew	Mesquite			
12-Nov	John Mathew	Garland			

Address Change

Mr. & Mrs. Ashish Thomas
 321 Keswick Ln,
 Mesquite, TX 75150

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

6-Nov	Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Kurian	Mesquite
9-Nov	Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Philip	Garland
24-Nov	Mr. & Mrs. Koshy Thomas	Mesquite
25-Nov	Mr. & Mrs. Mathew Mathai	Mesquite
27-Nov	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Koshy	Garland
30-Nov	Mr. & Mrs. Philipose M.V.	Dallas



Thanksgiving Service

November 26, 2009

Holy Qurbana at 9 AM

