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BIBLICAL MORALITY IN JEOPARDY



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TOWARDS A BIBLICAL MORALITY

II Kings 22 records how young King Josiah ascended the throne following years of idolatry, a time of darkness when even Solomon's temple, once dedicated to God's glory, became filled with pagan idols. One day, Hilkiah the high priest found the sacred scriptures in the temple, forgotten and neglected over many years. This discovery sparked a revival, a forsaking of idolatry and return to the true and living God.

How does this story apply to us today?

Most of us have little doubt that **our culture is in trouble**. Like those Israelites of old, our own society is increasingly bowing to modern idols of money, sex and

WHEN
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power. Within our society, we see the growing temptations of the internet, Bollywood and sports arenas. **Even within the church, young people are captured by multiple temptations.** The teachings of the Bible are forgotten and unknown by many people who do what is right in their own eyes.

Today, many Christians yearn for a society based upon “biblical values.” Older generations may even wonder: Is the younger generation hardening its heart against Jesus Christ?

I sympathize with the desire of fellow believers for “biblical values,” but when we regularly emphasize “biblical values,” we really preach a return to law. Paul warns us in Romans that overemphasis on the law arouses our sinful passions (Romans 7:5), so we should expect a negative response of the general culture to “biblical values.”

No one, including church people, is comfortable with God portrayed first and foremost as a judge upon those who do wrong. At some level, we all know we are sinners before a holy God, that we deserve hell. **But if all we hear** from Christian preachers is moral law, it will only raise a dread of God and confirm non-Christian belief in Christians as “judgmental” people.

So what is the answer? How do we achieve a society based upon biblical values? Do we launch a great moral movement? Do we march in the streets to call the nation to biblical morality?

As American pastor and author Mark Galli has said, the Bible is “not so much about living right as about being right with God.” In other words, how do we become right with a holy God without becoming bogged down with a list of rules and regulations? Such things always lead to legalism and hypocrisy. If the first word that people think about Christians is “judgmental,” we must ask ourselves whether the non-Christian world is really hearing the gospel, even from evangelical believers.

The gospel that Paul and the apostles preached won people to Christ right and left because they saw the power of God transform lives of even “impossible” people. Within thirty years, the gospel had spread from a handful of Jesus’ followers in Jerusalem throughout Asia Minor and the European continent. Jesus was born and lived in Asia, so why has He not been generally received in India and Asia as a fellow Asian?

There are complex reasons for this, but I believe an overlooked reason is that many evangelical churches dilute the original biblical gospel that changes lives.

In what ways do we dilute the gospel? In this article, we can only hint at this, but I am hoping it will cause all of us to examine ourselves honestly before the Lord, that He might reveal to us forgotten and neglected truths.

In his book, *The Jesus Mission*, Steven K. Scott has carefully isolated and studied 1,900 sayings of Jesus and discovered 27 impossible missions He undertook and accomplished in His time on earth.

All these 27 impossible and accomplished missions of Jesus make up the Good News. All these 27 impossible and accomplished missions enable us to become Christians and to live the Christian life with power to change our own lives, the lives of our families and the life of our society as a whole.

All these 27 impossible missions were accomplished through Jesus’ life, and at the cross and were confirmed by Jesus’ resurrection. The power to live out these accomplishments of Jesus is already available to each of us who follow Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit—that is, if we know what these accomplishments are and desire to see God help us work them into our lives.

When the world around us sees God working in us, they will want what we have, not because we are good but because God is good and gracious to help us live good lives.

This possibility terrifies Satan who works overtime to blind the eyes of God’s children to the true possibilities of faith in Jesus Christ. He does this by focusing our eyes upon lesser things, stirring up controversies, tempting Christians into sin—anything to obscure the full gospel from our sight and everyone else. All of these lesser things keep us from the full gospel.

How many evangelical churches know and regularly preach all these 27 impossible missions of Jesus? How many of these 27 impossible missions make up your own understanding and daily practice of the gospel in your own life?

A diluted gospel is a powerless gospel. A powerless gospel renders the church ineffective to transform lives and influence society. A powerless gospel impresses no one—not even Christians—not enough to tell anyone about it.

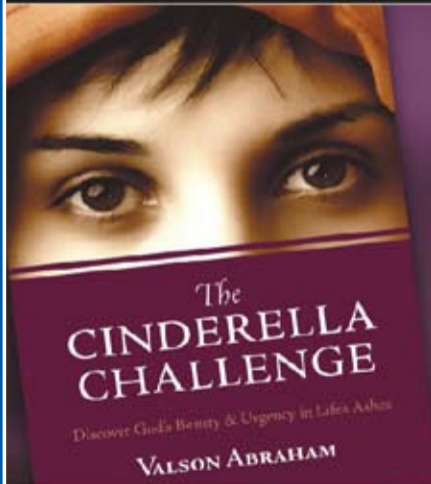
Paul sacrificed himself for the sake of the gospel. He said, “I am not ashamed of the gospel.” What about the gospel moved him to give his life for it? Why do such words ring foreign to so many Christians in our generation?

In addition to mourning our need for biblical morality in these confused times, let us learn how and why we as believers have lost so much of the gospel within the doors of our own churches. May we mourn the loss, repent before God and return to forgotten and neglected truths obscured by the enemy.

When we seek and preach the whole gospel as taught by Jesus Christ Himself, we will experience revival. Once again, we will influence society as Paul’s generation of believers did. The gospel will spread to the whole of India and beyond—and biblical values will quickly follow.

Father God, forgive me, forgive all of us for not living as you intended as effective ambassadors for your Son, Jesus Christ, and the full gospel. Help me to know and live out the gospel as you meant it to be known and lived, that I will become an effective influence upon the world and among the people with whom I live, work and study. **In Jesus’ Name. Amen.**

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 by Valson Abraham

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For over 40 years, Valson Abraham’s ministry has blessed thousands. He is the founder/president of India Gospel Outreach (IGO) and gives leadership to thousands of churches and several Bible colleges.

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 — John Dawson
 President, Youth with a Mission International

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 — Thompson K. Mathew, D. Min., Ed.D.
 Dean, School of Theology and Missions, Oral Roberts University

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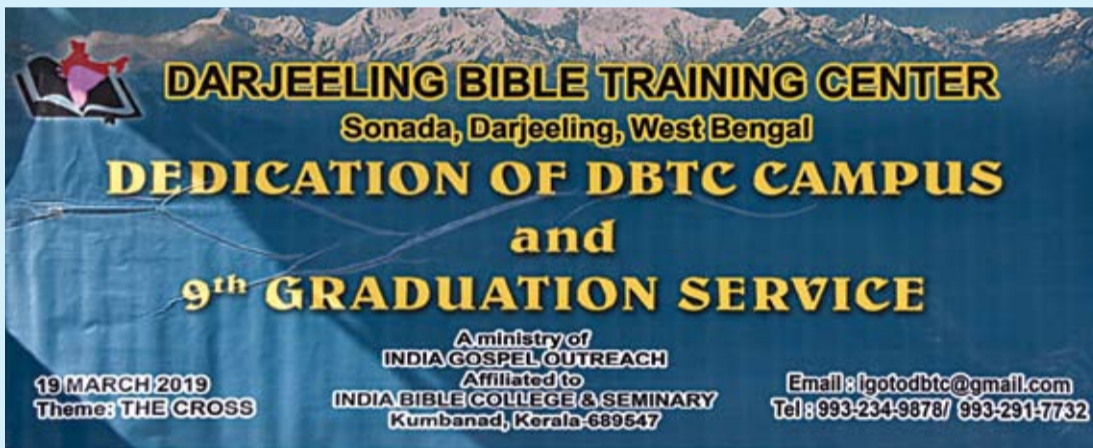
DARJEELING BIBLE TRAINING CENTER JOREKHOLA, SONADA, DARJEELING

Pradeep Kumar and Mhontsen Lotha, knew God called them to work among the peoples of NE India especially among Nepali speaking people, before they graduated from India Bible College & Seminary in 2006.

Upon their graduation, Pradeep (from Kerala) and Mhonsten (from Nagaland) were sent to work among the Nepali speaking people in Ludhiana, Punjab for one year under the supervision of Pastor K. Koshy.

In April 2007, they were sent to Darjeeling to pioneer a new work among the Nepali people. Strangers to the land, people, language and culture, they built relationships and shared the love of Christ. This led to the founding of the Darjeeling Christian Assembly (DCA). On 8th August 2008, the church was officially inaugurated and dedicated by Rev. Dr. T. Valson Abraham.

The need for biblical training for the Nepali speaking people was felt very strongly as many new believers, deacons, youth and women expressed their desire to systematically study the Word





of God. Pradeep and Mhontsen shared their vision with Rev. Dr. T. Valson Abraham, President, India Gospel Outreach and India Bible College and Seminary.

In 2010, Darjeeling Bible Training Center (DBTC) was established by IGO with 29 students. In the past 9 years, God blessed, enlarged, enabled and DBTC to train and send 162 men and women to the unreached places around Darjeeling, and Sikkim, and neighbouring countries of Nepal and Bhutan.

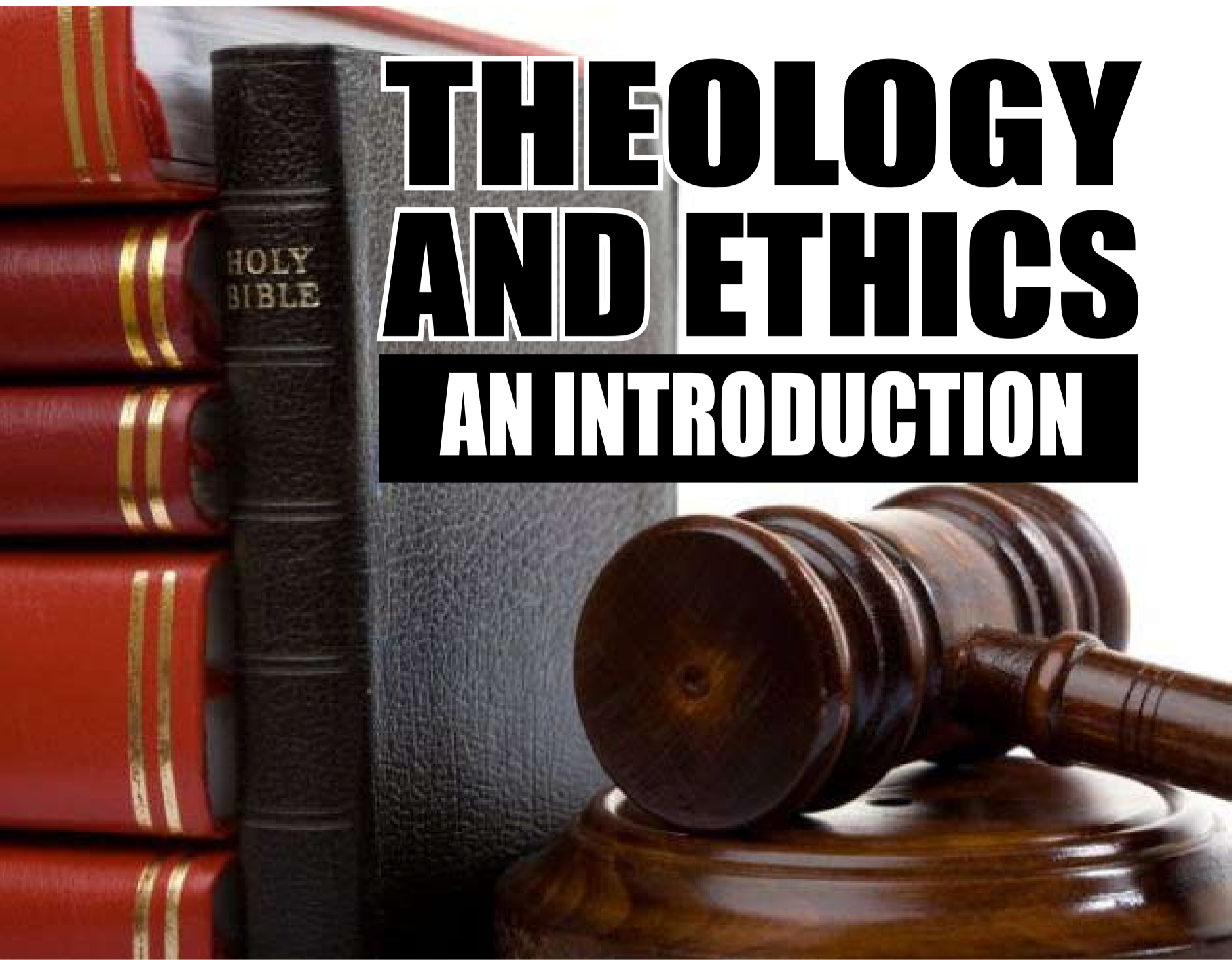
The need for permanent facilities became evident. Rev. Dr. T. Valson Abraham informed IGO prayer partners to pray and God used Pastor Dennis Gallaher, Freedom Fellowship to build the beautiful facilities.

The dedication of the new building of Darjeeling Bible Training Center took place on 19th March 2019 at Sonada- the ribbon cutting and prayer of dedication was offered by Pastor Dennis Gallaher and the dedication message by Rev. Dr. T. Valson Abraham.



FELICITATIONS





THEOLOGY AND ETHICS

AN INTRODUCTION



Dr. Domenic Marbaniang

Christian Minister and Provost at Central India Theological Seminary. He is also author of several books on Amazon, Lulu, and Google Playstore. He prolifically blogs at Marbaniang.com

ALL SCRIPTURE IS
given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for [c]instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Christian ethics is based on biblical revelation and the essential principle of divine love (agape). Paul clearly states this in Romans 13:8-10:

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

The Christian view of love as the essence of ethics is known as Christian agapism (from the Greek agape, love). Love is listed as the greatest among the three virtues listed in 1 Corinthians 13:13

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

ETHICS IN SCHOLASTIC THEOLOGY TO REFORMATION THEOLOGY

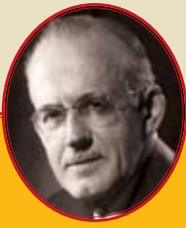
Medieval scholastic theology regarded faith, hope, and love as theological virtues in distinction from the four cardinal virtues (viz., wisdom, justice, temperance, courage). It was Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225-1274) who first listed the theological virtues in contrast to the cardinal ones that had been borrowed from Greek philosophy, listed in deuterocanonical and apocryphal books, and recognized by early church fathers such as Ambrose and Augustine (4th c) A.D.

Theological (Supernatural Virtues)

- Love - virtue of spiritual affection
- Hope - virtue of spiritual anticipation
- Faith - virtue of spiritual knowledge

Cardinal or Human Virtues

- Wisdom (prudence) - virtue of the practical reason or intellect
- Justice - virtue of the conscience
- Temperance (restraint, self-control)- virtue of the will and passion
- Courage (fortitude, manliness) - virtue of the emotion



“
*We have learned to
 live with unholiness
 and have come
 to look upon it as
 the natural and
 expected thing.*
 ”

A.W. Tozer

While Aquinas believed that the cardinal virtues could be formed by habitual practice, i.e. could be acquired by rigorous human efforts, he regarded the supernatural ones as only possible through supernatural grace. This was part of his bifurcation of nature and grace that attempted to reconcile faith with philosophy. He thought that there are certain things (like knowledge of God’s existence and the cardinal virtues) that could be worked out by human efforts alone; whereas, the higher truths and virtues such as knowledge of Christ and love could only be possible by divine grace. The cardinal virtues were originally borrowed from Plato while the idea of virtuosity through habitual practice was borrowed from his disciple Aristotle.

It must be noted that such bifurcation is absent from the Bible. Jesus did not bifurcate between faith and justice; on the other hand, He juxtaposed them together.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected **the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith.** These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.” (Matthew 23:23, emphatics mine)

“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by **justice and the love of God.** ..” (Luke 11:42, emphatics mine)

After the Reformation, however, all hope in sole human efforts crashed as solo grace, solo faith, and solo scripture rose as the call and conviction of the church. Human depravity and inherent sinfulness were ubiquitously acknowledged in the evangelical community and virtuosity was only looked upon as selflessly possible through the work of the Holy Spirit. In his Lectures on Romans, Martin Luther opposed the Scholastic concept of virtuosity through habitual practice (human efforts) that was based on Aristotelian ethics. He wrote: "the Scholastics follow the method of Aristotle in his Ethics, and he bases sinfulness and righteousness and likewise the extent of their actualization on what a person does..."

"The righteousness of God must be distinguished from the righteousness of men which comes from works- as Aristotle in the third chapter of his Ethics clearly indicates. According to him, righteousness follows upon and flows from actions. But, according to God, righteousness precedes works and works result from it.

Christian theology teaches that unless the heart and conscience are first cleansed and purified, no genuine ethical understanding and action is possible. The heart must first be cleansed, for good acts can only overflow from a good heart.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things which defile a man (Matthew 15:19,20).

The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:14)

ETHICAL EXTREMES: LEGALISM Vs. LIBERTINISM

Both evangelical and pentecostal theologies, however, attempt to guard against two extremes that attempt to destroy the true meaning of grace in Christian ethics. The two extremes are legalism and libertinism. Legalism exalts the letter of the law above the spirit of law and makes observance of the commandments compulsory for salvation. Legalism praises people who demonstrate virtuous actions and condemns those who are caught in violation of the same. It highly exalts human capability, moral nature, and efforts, and idolizes the moral code above the person of God; thus, undermining the essentiality of divine grace. Legalism usually breeds hypocrisy since those who raise the standard of morality are themselves incapable of following it. Jesus came strongly against such hypocritical legalism:

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.”





“
*Nothing has stolen
 more dreams,
 dashed more hopes,
 broken up more
 families, and messed
 up more people
 psychologically
 than our propensity
 to disregard
 God's commands
 regarding sexual
 purity.*”

”
Andy Stanley

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.” (Matthew 23:1-4, 27-28)

It is important for church leadership to make sure that they do not overburden believers with anything beyond that which is required by the Gospel and is in keeping with justice, mercy, love, and faith. One must learn from the Apostles who placed no legalistic burdens on the gentile converts except requiring them to stay away from idolatry, from sexual immorality, and from blood and strangled meat; the food laws mainly because of the prevalence

of the Law of Moses in the Jewish synagogues (Acts 15:19-21). Christian ethics does not emphasize on the letter of the law, but on the spirit of the law; therefore, love becomes the determining principle in all ethical conduct.

If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died (Romans 14:15)

The other extreme is libertinism that takes God’s mercy and grace for granted and ignores the importance of God’s law. God’s grace is not lawless. Jesus never told His disciples to forsake the law. In the passage quoted above, He, in fact, teaches to be “careful to do everything” that the scribes and Pharisees teach. He taught His disciples that unless their righteousness surpassed that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, they would certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20). It is important to know that the moral demands of grace are higher than that of the law. A quick reading of the Sermon on the Mount will make this clear. Without any doubt, it is impossible for anyone to fully practice Christ’s moral teachings without the very help of Christ Himself. But, following the Reformation emphasis on grace, however, there did come a period when Christianity seemed to undermine the high morality of Christ by promoting a cheap salvation (as it continues to be done by some quantity-oriented churches today). It had not only forgotten the cost of our salvation but also forgotten the cost of discipleship. The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer observed this straying event and raised a banner of return to costly grace. In his *The Cost of Discipleship*, he wrote:

Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our Church. We are fighting to-day for costly grace.

Cheap grace means grace sold on the market like cheap jack's wares. The sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, and the consolations of religion are thrown away at cut prices. Grace is represented as the Church's inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits. Grace without price; grace without cost!

Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner.

Nothing is more disastrous than a theology bereft of morality. Libertinism turns the grace of our God into lewdness and denies the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ (Jude 1:4). Confession of God amounts to nothing when actions deny Him.

They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. (Titus 1:16)

The goal of all Christian instruction is a life that overflows with love and works of love.

Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith (1 Timothy 1:5)

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for [c]instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, **thoroughly equipped for every good work.** (2 Timothy 3:16,17 emphatics mine)

For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus **to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10 emphatics mine)

HOLY SPIRIT ETHICS

There are three important facts about Christian ethics that must be unders-cored.

1. The foundation of Christian ethics is the very moral nature of God who is love.
2. True love is revealed to us in the sending of His Son.
3. This love is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit of our adoption.

Jesus taught that the greatest commandment was to love God with our entire being and to love our fellow humans as ourselves:



THE
 distinction of the new commandment from the old is that the new is revealed in the very living presence and practice of Christ: “as I have loved you”. John declares in his first epistle that God is love, that this love was manifested to us in God’s sending of His Son so that we might live through Him, and therefore, since God so loved us, we OUGHT to love one another (1 John 4:7-11).

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 22:35-40)

Then, He told His disciples: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (John 13:34)

The distinction of the new commandment from the old is that the new is revealed in the very living presence and practice of Christ: “as I have loved you”. John declares in his first epistle that God is love, that this love was manifested to us in God’s sending of His Son so that we might live through Him, and therefore, since God so loved us, we OUGHT to love one another (1 John 4:7-11). Paul tells us that God not only demonstrated His love by sending His Son to die for us, but this love has also been poured out into hearts by the Holy Spirit that He has given unto us (Romans 5:5,8). Therefore, those who walk in the Spirit will not obey the lust of the flesh but will demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit, viz., **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control** (Galatians 5:22-23).

Many Christian teachers understand the nine virtues as one fruit of the Spirit, love. The demonstration of the fruit of the Spirit in a Christian’s life gives evidence of spiritual maturity and edification. Speaking in tongues, prophesying, and having great faith are not the marks of spiritual maturity (1 Corinthians 13:1-3). The Corinthian church was filled with the gifts of the Spirit but was bereft of the fruit of the Spirit. It was carnal.

Christian ethics is Christ-centred and Spirit-outworked. The virtues such as love, joy, peace, and gentleness are not the mere consequences of human efforts, but flow from the living presence of Christ in us through His Spirit so that we walk as He walked. Our moral obligation to love (ought-ness) proceeds from the revelation of love in Christ. Our standard of morality is the life of Christ - “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:6). This walk requires humility without which one cannot experience the grace of the Lord through the communion of the Holy Spirit to live a life that is pleasing unto Him.

Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” (James 4:5-6)

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Romans 8:13,14)

In application, the Great Commandment of love to God and love to neighbor unfolds in acts of charity that do not just flow from a burden of duty but a cheerful generosity of love.

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (James 1:27)

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. (James 2:8,9)

The evidence of salvation is **faith that works through love** (Galatians 5:6):

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (James 2:15-17). ●

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MORALITY AND CHURCHES



Pastor P. J. Daniel

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THE FOREMOST
purpose of Christianity is to reflect God's character in and through us, which should shine as light in the darkened world. This present world is murky with full of immorality and wickedness, depravity and corruption, dissoluteness and debauchery.

Morality and Church are virtually two sides of a coin. Without the one the other is nil. Morality is the virtuous behavior, which every church member should practice in every day life. It is the principles concerning the distinction between right and wrong or good and bad behavior. Morality is derived from the Latin word 'moralis' literally means 'manner', 'character', or proper behavior. It is the "differentiation of intentions, decisions and actions between those that are distinguished as proper and those that are improper". It is a set of personal or social standards for good or bad behavior and character.

Church is a called out group, separated from the world for a particular purpose. Though Church is in the world, it is not of the world. Apostle Paul entreats the believers not to be conformed to the world, but be transformed day by day by renewing the mind. At this juncture Christian ethics has its significance. It teaches how to live. It is important to learn Christian ethics, so that we can better know God's will, and so that each day we can walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him (Colossians 1: 10).

The ultimate basis for Christian ethics is the moral character of God. God delights in His own moral character, which is supremely good, unchanging and eternal. His moral standards for human being flow from His moral character, and therefore they apply to all people in all cultures for all history. God is love, so He commands us to love each other (1 John 4: 19). God is holy, so He commands us to be holy (1 Peter 1:15). He is merciful, so we should demonstrate mercy in our life (Luke 6: 36). Our God is truthful, so we should not bear false witness (Exodus 20: 16, Titus 1: 2) Christian ethics is the character of God, which should be reflected in the lives of a believer.

The goal of morality is to lead a life that glorifies God. "Do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10: 31), such a life will have Christ-like character. Such a life results in glorifying God, or it bears abundant fruit, which glorifies God. Such believer's behavior glorifies God - they lead a life of obedience to God. They always retain a personal relationship with God.

The foremost purpose of Christianity is to reflect God's character in and through us, which should shine as light in the darkened world. This present world is murky with full of immorality and wickedness, depravity and corruption, dissoluteness and debauchery.

As we know about morality, we confront with certain immoral and evil activities, which are prevalent in our society. The question is: can a believer practice such things? What



“
*The very idea
of freedom
presupposes some
objective moral law
which overarches
rulers and ruled
alike. Unless we
return to the crude
and nursery-like
belief in objective
values, we perish.*
”

C. S. Lewis

does the Bible teaches about such activities. Some of such activities are dealt here with, whether a Christian can practice such things in their life or not.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The Bible clearly forbids drunkenness and it contains frequent warnings against the danger of Alcohol. Though, certain people point out some references for positive use of alcohol, which are noted out of context. It is a definite command that no drunkard will inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Corinthians 6: 10)

PORNOGRAPHY/ADULTERY

God’s moral standard in Scripture requires us to avoid longing for physical relationship

with someone apart from being married to that person. Therefore, it is morally wrong, according to the Scripture, to create, acquire and view pornography, whose primary purpose is to arouse in people sexual desires that are contrary to God’s moral standards. It brings harmful results to people’s spiritual lives, their marriage and other relationships, and their community.

HOMOSEXUALITY

God’s original design is for human sexual conduct occurs only within the context of marriage between one man and one woman. Homosexual conduct is one of the several kinds of sexual relations outside of marriage that are prohibited in the Scripture. Apostle Paul vehemently commands that such kinds of sexual passions are shameful and contrary to the original plan of God (Romans 1: 26-27).

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

All human beings are made in the image of God and all have descended from Adam. The Bible provides no basis for the favoring or discrimination against any group of people on the basis of their racial backgrounds. All human beings are worthy of honor and respect. There are certain negative examples found in the Old Testament. But all such curses are remedied through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Those who are born in the family of God through Jesus Christ from any race or tribe have become the member of same family. “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3: 27, 28)

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

God’s original plan is for lifelong, monogamous marriage. Divorce commonly brings many harmful consequences. In some situation God tolerated and regulated polygamy and divorce in the Old Testament. Jesus replied to them who have interrogated him “it was because of your hard heart Moses permitted you to divorce. But it was not this way from the beginning” (Matthew 19: 8). The New Testament never sanctions divorce unless on the account of adultery (Mathew 19: 9). Paul added “there is no irrevocable desertion as a second legitimate reason for divorce” (1 Corinthians 7: 12, 15) He affirms the teachings of Jesus on divorce in Romans 7: 2, 3. As long as the partners are alive, they cannot marry another one, which will be considered as adultery. If one of them dies, the other one is no longer bound to the covenant. So while one partner is alive remarriage is illegal and unbiblical and it is considered as adultery.

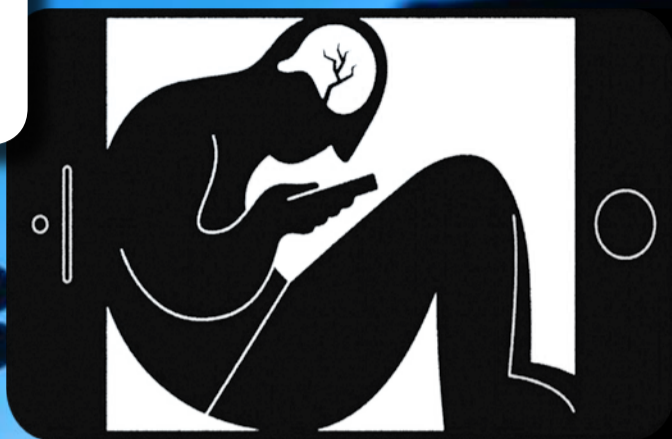
ABORTION

It is an unbiblical practice, and it is our duty to abolish abortion. Abortion is a practice of terminating pregnancy, but causes of miscarriage can be considered as natural. Any human skill used for terminating pregnancy is illegal and punishable before God. We know an embryo or fetus is a human with a right of life. So abortion is a type of murder. Every life is originated from God so we have no right to obliterate such Life. “Know that the Lord, He is God! It is he who made us, we are His people” (Psalms 100: 3). Throughout God’s Word it is clear that human life is precious to Him. So it is our duty and responsibility to protect life.

There are so many other such issues relevant in the present situation, but that will consume a lot of pages. A Christian is obliged to keep the Word of God, and practice such morale in their life. We should show the light that we have received demonstrated to the murky world, which is full of immoralities. The church is the lamp-stand that should hold the lamp Jesus Christ to the World. ●



COUNSELLING CORNER



TikTok ADDICTION



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CYBER

bullying is very common in such platforms which is very dangerous in developing a healthy self. Predators can easily track young boys and girls and defile their identity.

Sir: I am addicted to TikTok. I want to become viral. But my parents are concerned whenever I upload videos in TikTok. They do not understand these trends and sometimes fight over it. What should I do?

Dear friend, I understand the seriousness of this question. You said that you are addicted to TikTok videos in social media, which in turn affects your life.

TikTok is a leading short video platform in social media. This application allows users to create short music or videos of 3-60 seconds. TikTok users use the app largely to create, share, and view content based around lip syncing, dancing, comedy skits, and other physical movements. Clearly, this is something that appeals to young people (and quite a few older ones) around the world. There are globally 500 million TikTok monthly active users as of June 2018. TikTok users spend an average 52 minutes per day on the app.

Everybody seeks attention as we live in an “attention economy”. Psychologically, appreciations and acknowledgements from others motivate people to engage in their interest areas. Tiktok suddenly became the sensational trend of young kids & teenagers for the past one year. Since TikTok can become addictive, users may find it hard to stop using the app. As a youth worker many students have confessed that they spend time till 3 am in TikTok. TikTokers or internet users have a negative sense of achievement which significantly depends on their virtual followers, likes and comments etc. So they naturally focus their creativity, time and thought process for popularity and appreciation from others.

I can highlight some of the negative consequences and few remedies. Cyber bullying is very common in such platforms which is very dangerous in developing a healthy self. Predators can easily track young boys and girls and defile their identity. Double meaning words are radically used in such videos. Kids and younger Children are exposed to these words, pictures and videos at their immature age. Sexually instigating dances and actions are common. Adventurous attempts in shooting TikTok videos leads to accidents and deaths. Many such cases are reported even in Kerala.

Parents must update them selves and realize the pros and consequences of latest trends in Social Medias. Parents and teens should have open communication with each other in the family context. Churches must take initiatives to conduct awareness classes to inform the perils associated with the use of Social media and internet. Individual as well as group counseling should be provided on a regular basis.

As a young person, you should always know the fact that your activities reflect your character. Bible says, Know that the Lord has set apart his faithful servant for himself. (Pslams 4:3) So be a faithful student/ teenager / youngster. Paul says , “I have right to do anything “but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything, but I will not be mastered by anything.

Let Jesus reflect in your profile status and actions in your social media platforms. Contribute your creativity and time in a unique way for the purpose of sharing the truth and extending the divine peace. ●