

HI !AGAIN

Dear Friends in Christ,

Many of you would have read my first booklet, Tithing —God's Money (10% plus), which deals with giving a tenth of one's income for God's work. Those who haven't read this booklet, may write for a free copy-10,000 of which by God's Grace alone, are in circulation. A Sunday announcement, in the local church, appealing for a 1% voluntary contribution to the community fund, therefore surprised me. There is no need to be apologetic when asking money —after all it was to help one's own fellow Christians.

Besides, don't we contribute to lesser causes or to as donations to clubs /gymkhanas or for festivals.. . Here the church was asking for a fellow Christian brother or sister in need — for Christians who were poor & deserving. Or for medical or education expenses in the community.

On reflection, it struck me that most Christians have experienced collections from cradle to grave, and sometimes, the family even after that ! It is therefore understandable that the priests find it difficult to collect money.

My bigger concern though was how could one expect Christians to tithe (10%), when it was expected that a community fund (1%) would be difficult to come by. Praise the Lord ! I was

soon to meet many Catholics who tithe, as

well as contribute to the Community fund\_ & other such Christian charity -They made Giving their lifestyle -professional sowers, regularly planting seed in the Lord's Kingdom.

I also decided to scan the Internet &other sources to see what the Bible had to say about giving to the poor, needy, hungry, thirsty, unfortunate ... I tried to limit my search, as far as possible to contributing / supporting Christians only, and kept general donations to good causes out. This booklet is a result of my sketchy findings.

What I found in the Bible, was enough to compel me to write &join in the church's appeal. I also' discovered that unlike, the average Christian, who had second thoughts on such matters, for a Jew, giving as much as over 20% came quite naturally. It is perhaps for this reason that the nation of Israel, small though it is &surrounded by powerful enemies on all sides, is still one of the most developed nation of the world —caring for its own citizens &others too. It seems to be a result of a people worshipping God in true Spirit.

The idea behind this booklet is three-fold –

To show that giving is a Christian obligation, but

Not Tithing' is a serious lapse on the part of

any Christian. Tithing is a compulsory offering, while any other form of giving is purely voluntary &optional, Tithing is scriptural —featuring both in the old &new testaments — and though not well known in the Catholic Church, is widely practiced among Christians, the world over. It is the very essence of being Christian.

Tithing specifically &Christian giving in general is worshipping & sharing a close -loving relation with God. It would be similar to praying in church or receiving the sacraments — bringing blessings & graces to those who follow it. You cannot be a Christian, if you are not a giver - The Father gave his son, Jesus gave us himself, The Holy Spirit gives us help, gifts, fruits ...Our God is all about giving.

God is not far away, to be met when we die, but becomes an integral part of a tither's or giver's daily living here, until God welcomes the GOOD & FAITHFUL SERVANT, to life eternal.

Tithing or Christian Giving works & I believe my personal testimony to be a witness to this. would confidently challenge atither /giver to do so &wait on the Lord for concrete & abundant blessings to flow.

His word in the Bible, in so many places promises prosperity —not just in the worldly sense, but also in the life hereafter —and His word is true.

Tithing has been dealt with in my first booklet, so won't go into it here. The emphasis here will be on how it is important to LIVE, by giving generously, rather than EXIST, as a Christian.

For many of us, myself included, Christianity meant 'going to mass on Sunday', off & on receiving communion &sacraments, getting admission into &joining Christian/Church institutions / organizations, feeling great about helping the church .. .

Is this what being a Christian is all about ? NO

learnt it the hard way and I thank God for teaching it to me that way. For now, I fear the Lord & try my best to walk in His way, obediently following His word in true Spirit & as far as possible, being faithful member of His body —the Catholic Church. But it has always been my heart's desires that other Christians benefit & get started through reading of this service of love. It's easy, if God gives you the grace & the mental attitude to be a GENUINE CHRISTIAN —His Child.

He has different ways of reaching out to His Children & this seems to be one way, He is using, as the response/ testimonies to my first booklet has been overwhelming. It has placed on me a burden, to speak out on such matters and so please pray to the Good Lord for us, as we will certainly be interceding for you.

In this booklet too, I have tried to limit my notes to the minimum, for the Bible has so much to say on this subject. And as Catholics, we blindly follow the Bible & the Church. So even the version — Good News (Today's English Version), being published by St Paul's is the most common one found in most Catholic homes.

Finally, I am inspired to conclude with these verses that Jesus said in Luke 17:7 —10

Suppose one of you has a servant . . . When he comes in . . . do you tell him to hurry & eat his meal ? Of course not ! In stead you say to him, 'Get my supper ready, then put on your apron & wait on me while I eat & drink; after that you may have your meal'.

The servant does not deserve thanks for obeying orders, does he ? It is the same with you; when you have done all you have been told to do, say 'We are ordinary servants; we have only done our duty'.

We are in the Lord Jesus,

Your Servants of God

Joe Dias

& Others

who have helped & made this service of love possible

THE END IS NEAR

is dead.

Put your name above & spend a few moments imagining. What kind of a life you have spent so far ? What kind of a person have you been ?

Kind, Helpful, Generous, Grumpy . . .

Who are all those who have come for your funeral ? What have they to say about you now ?

What would you like them to say or think about you ? Would you like to redo or avoid some things, if you had a chance to do so once again -

Well then the time to change could be now, as God is speaking to you -

NOW, while you are still alive. & can save for eternity.

Most of us get so caught up in the rush of life; we tend to forget that someday all this will all end - Work, School, College, Business, etc. Whatever we are doing will one day come to a standstill.

Death comes like a thief ` at an hour, you do not expect. It could be today or may take a few days more -weeks, months or years more.

But it will come for sure. Yet, we would like to forget about the only most certain thing in our life. We bury ourselves in the jobs of the day, planning for a tomorrow that may never come.

Very few of us have the time or the interest to read of the End Time —when the world will end. We don't believe it will happen in our lifetime or even in the life times of our children & grandchildren. So why bother about it.

We leave what the Bible tells us, for film-makers to produce hit movies on the antichrist, like Omen —I, II, III —which we love watching. It will never happen, so why bother ourselves with it 666

The beast forced all the people; small & great, rich & poor, slave & free, to have a mark placed on their right hands or on their foreheads. No one could buy or sell unless he had this mark; that is, the beast's name or the number ...666

Revelation 13:16 —18

The Bible tell us that before The End comes, the hearts of people will grow cold. Revelation 18:1-24, speaks of the destruction of Babylon —the city of the rich, sinful, heartless, hard-hearted ... Speaking judgement on His people in Jerusalem, God also says —

As sure as I am the living God ', the Sovereign LORD says, 'your sister Sodom & her villages never did the evil that you & your villages have done. She & her daughters were proud because

they had plenty to eat & lived in peace & quiet, but they did not take care of the poor & the underprivileged.

They were proud & stubborn ... so I destroyed them ... Your sins are so much worse than those of your sisters that they look innocent beside you. Ezekiel 16:48 — 51

The Funeral

This might not concern us as it was either in the distant past or future. But death is something certain. Surely, we don't believe that we will live forever. Sooner or later, we will all die. How, when & in what state we do not know — Old, Sick, Hurt, Alone, Away, Young, Accident ... After Ronald Reagan's death, most of the living past presidents of America, the rich & famous, have all made great plans for their departure. But let us now look at ourselves in a regular normal funeral, many of us may have attended.

Let us think of the —

Sickness we may die of or will it be just old age.

- Coffin — picture yourself in smiling or frightened .
- People — do they speak well of you & will you be missed. Will some be happy that you are gone ?
- Some of the good things you could have done, when alive, but did not. Relatives or friends you could have appreciated or helped.

The good news is that you are not dead or you wouldn't be reading this booklet.. So with the power of Jesus, who rose from the dead, rise now & change.

Repent & undo the wrong done. Forgive those who may have hurt you & do the good you did not do so far.

Then, no matter whenever or however The End comes, you can be sure of your loving Father, your brother-Jesus and God-the-Holy Spirit, being there to receive you, welcoming you to a life for all eternity with words —

Come Home, Good & Faithful Servant, you have run the race well & can rest with an eternal life of fellowship with us; your mother Mary, the saints & others who have done well & come in before you.

It's not difficult

It is so easy to avoid hell & punishment after death. You need to rise in Christ, by dying first to yourself — your sins of greed, jealousy, selfishness... and reach out. All it takes is having a RELATIONSHIP with whom we claim to be our God.

Many of us Christians are just namesake — because we have Christian names or have been born/adopted in Christian homes.

If we say we have a Father. — God; how much time daily, do we spend talking to him ?

If we say we have a friend — Jesus; how do we thank him for what he has done for us

If we say we are helped by a comforting God — the Holy Spirit; do we praise & worship him ?

Or are we guilty of being so busy, that we are busier than God wants us to be. If we are so close to God, how often do we read what he has to say — in his holy word, The Bible and do what he tells us or wants us to do ?

In this booklet, we will take just one instance Our concern for our very own sisters & brothers in Christ — Christians who are poor, sick, needy & hungry.

Let us see what God has to say about this part of our life.

A part which we so easily miss out on because we are busy, getting for ourselves things that we cannot carry with us, after we die.

**RICHES IN HEAVEN**

Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the Kingdom. Sell all your belongings & give the money to the poor. Provide for yourselves purses that don't wear out & save your riches in heaven, where they can never decrease, because no thief can get to them & no moth can destroy them. For your heart will always be where your riches are.

Luke 12 : 32 - 34

**CHRISTMAS 8 PARTY TIMES**

Soon it will be Christmas. Let's calculate how much we spend on clothes, sweets, presents, decorations, greetings, food & drink, entertainment, etc.

Let us put the figure down as Rs.

And how much do we give to the Church or to our fellow Christians, who are also celebrating the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

How was the first Christmas celebrated ? Christ, the poor, homeless babe.

What does Christ (on whose birth we have an excuse to celebrate) mean to us today.

Is there Christian love & forgiveness in the family & the community around us ? Celebrate Christmas as a Christian would & as Christ would approve.

Christmas, thanks to you, can be the birth of joy in the hearts & homes of Christian poor, sick, needy & hungry ... or it could be like yet another party time. The choice is yours. And if you have brought the birth of Jesus to an unfortunate Christian brother or sister, please let us know !

- That we too may rejoice & praise God, with angels in heaven at YOU - a Child of God come home.

Celebrations

How old are you ? In so many years, no matter whether you are rich or poor, you have given parties & invited near or dear ones over. We sometimes take loans to celebrate our baptisms, communions, confirmations, ordinations, weddings, engagements, anniversaries, etc.

Every year, we party at our feasts, success, birthdays, promotions, Christmas, New Year, Easter ...

Celebrations are so much part of our life.

So let us see how Jesus would like us to celebrate.

Then Jesus said to his host, when you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbours —for they will invite you back, and in this way, you will be paid for what you did. When you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind; and you will be blessed, because they are not able to pay you back. God will repay you on the day the good people rise from the death '.

Luke 14:12 — 14

What a difference. It's not just the rich & the poor who are guilty, but even the religious, who fast & pray, but do not do the equally important.

It was a tradition to call the poor over at home, in memory of the death of a loved one or before a marriage or any ceremony in the house. Now is it gone ?

There was practise to bring the orphans home at the time of a celebration or even to visit the orphanages at such time. Today, even the old, sick, poor, needy or unfortunate, even in our families are left uncared for, leading the Lord God to say —

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Tell my people, about their sins ! They worship me everyday, claiming that they are eager to know my ways ... The Lord says to them, `The truth is that at the same time you fast, you pursue your own interests ... Your fasting makes you violent, and you quarrel & fight. Do you think this kind of fasting will make me listen to your prayers... The kind of fasting I want is this : Remove the chains of oppression & the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry & open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear & do not refuse to help your own relatives.

Isaiah 58:1 — 7

Be humane

Often we are guilty of being just too busy. Our sin many times is not did something wrong, but it is that we did not do the good that we could have done. This parable of the rich man & poor Lazarus told by Jesus illustrates the story of the rich who suffer pain for eternity, because of their lack of concern for the poor —

There was once a rich man ... There was also a poor man named Lazarus, who used to be brought to the rich man's door, hoping to eat the bits of food that fell from the rich man's table.

Even the dogs would come & lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to sit beside Abraham at he feast in heaven. The rich man died & was buried ... where he was in great pain. So he called out, `Father Abraham! Take pity on me & send Lazarus to dip his finger in some water & cool my tongue, because I am in great pain in this fire!

But Abraham said, Remember, my son, that in your lifetime you were given all the good things, while Lazarus got all the bad things. But now he is enjoying himself here ...The rich man said, Then I beg you, father Abraham, send Lazarus to my father's house, where I have 5 brothers. Let him go & warn them so that they, at least, will not come to this place of pain' Luke 16:19 — 28

#### JESUS FELT IT —HUNGER & NEED

Don't Give Much - 1

The Law of Tithes in the Holy Bible says 1/10 to be given to God's work. The Catholic Church in Mumbai has suggested just 1% of your gross income for the poor & needy. Ask yourself, How much is your monthly income ? How much is 1043/0

How much is 1

Are you prepared to invest this much of what God has given you ? Do you think God is after your money ? No He is after you ! All the money in the world is His and He can choose to give it away to whom he chooses.

Picture an unfortunate person.

Does your heart melt ? Do you feel sorry & feel like reaching out ? Your God loves the poor, sick & needy, much more than you do. He uses you to pass on His love & money to them. He gives you an opportunity to play a kind of God & that is why perhaps, He made you in His very own image & likeness.

Let us see what the Bible has to say about the concern that Jesus & God, the Father has for the poor, sick, hungry, orphans, widows .. .

your very own Christian sisters & brothers in need -His Children.

#### JESUS HAS A HEART

In the story of Jesus feeding 5,000 men, not counting women & children, the Bible tells us – Jesus got out of the boat, and when he saw the large crowd, his heart was filled with pity for them, and he healed those who were ill. They don't have to leave, answered Jesus - 'You give them something to eat P

Mathew 14:14 / 16

Jesus was human & God at the same time, he felt sorry & sad when he saw people in trouble, as in the following cases too –

'Jesus healed people with every kind of disease & sickness. As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried & helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. So he said to his disciples, Thy harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers 'to gather in his harvest.

Mathew 9:35 – 38

'When someone asks you for something, give it to him; when someone wants to borrow something, lend it to him.

The people asked John, 'What are we to do then ?' He answered, whoever has two shirts, must give one to the man who has none, and whoever has food must share it.

Mathew 5:42 / Luke 3:10 –11

Jesus did the best he could while he was physically on earth, now he expects you to be his hands & feet –His Heart –and if nothing else, to pray that the Lord God sends workers, to work for the betterment of His people.

Jesus knows what hunger is

Have you fasted or even missed a meal ? Muslims fast to feel hunger, besides other reasons during Ramzan. The Roza makes them experience, in a small way what those who are hungry feel. It is for this reason that you see hundreds of poor, lined up outside hotels & restaurants for a bare meal. Those who can afford to feed these, sponsor minimum food, so that by feeding their lesser fortunate brethren, they might fulfill the will of God. Jesus, the good shepherd also felt hunger in his lifetime, and so in the same way, he must want you to feed his sheep –

Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the Devil. After spending forty days & nights without food, Jesus was hungry. Then the Devil came to him .. .

Mathew 4 : 2

\* On his way back to the city early next morning, Jesus was hungry. He saw a fig-tree by the side of the road & went to it, but found nothing on it except leaves. So he said to the tree, 'You will never again bear fruit !' At once the fig-tree deeded up Mathew 21:18 –19 / Mark 11:12 -14

'Jesus called his disciples to him & said, 'I feel sorry for these people, because they have been with me for three days & now have nothing to eat. I don't want to send them away without feeding them, for they might faint on their way home. Mathew 15:32

Jesus was tempted by the Devil & so are you. Often we have more than enough, and yet do not attend to Jesus in the form of the sick & hungry. Will Jesus find us fighting the temptation to accumulate & hoard or bear fruit, when we know that the least of his brethren is going hungry. Will we bear fruit & feed Jesus' sheep.

In fact, Jesus went to the extent of defending his disciples who were eating on the Sabbath, since they were hungry, thus breaking an important Jewish law—

\* His disciples were hungry so they began to pick ears of corn & eat the grain. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to Jesus, 'Look, it is against our Law for your disciples to do this

on the Sabbath!' Jesus answered, 'Have you never read what David did that time when he & his men were hungry? He went into the house of God, and he & his men ate the bread offered to God... The scripture says, it is kindness that I want, not animal sacrifices...'

Mathew 12:1 — 8

Jesus preferred the poor

It has been a tradition since ages to feed & care for the needy on occasions like —birthdays, weddings & death anniversaries. But Jesus, the radical that he was & knowing his concern for the poor says —

Once a rich young Jewish leader asked Jesus, 'Good Teacher, what must I do to receive eternal life?' —Jesus gives him the commandments—The man replied, 'Ever since I was young, have obeyed all these commandments'. When Jesus heard this, he said to him (note that he did not contradict the rich young man) — 'There is still one more thing you need to do. Sell all you have & give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come & follow me'. But when the man heard this, he became very sad, because he was very rich.

Luke 19:18 — 23

"Then Jesus said to the host, 'When you give a lunch or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or your rich neighbours —for they will invite you back, and in this way you will be paid for what you did. When, you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame & the blind; and you will be blessed, because they are not able to pay you back. God will repay you on the day, the good people rise from death.

Luke 14:12 —14

While this might be the ideal thing to do, how many Christians would do this. But, we are now talking about, just 1% for the poor, sick & needy, amongst our own Christian brethren. Is it asking for too much?

## THE APOSTLES' LIFESTYLE

Love =Charity

It is recently that the Church has made the word love, as used in the Bible, a much broader term & now to include in a big way, Charity as one of its major aspects. In the days of the early Christian, love meant largely charity & was often used in the Bible.

Some Biblical versions use the word Charity, itself. It was therefore very important to the apostles that the community grew in love, mostly reflected in charitable works. Thus Charity or Love was the most significant quality for a Christian as Paul writes (speaking to possibly the religious in the community) in the book of I Corinthians —

\* I may be able to speak the languages of men & even of angels, but if I have no love, my speech is no more than a noisy gong or a clanging bell. I may have the gift of inspired preaching; I may have all knowledge & understand all secrets; I may have all the faith needed to move mountains —but if I have no love, I am nothing. I may give everything I have, and even give up my body to be burnt —but if I have no love, this does me no good... For our gifts of knowledge & of inspired messages are only partial...Meanwhile, these three remain

faith, hope & love; and the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:1 —13

Peter writes in his letter to the Christians in Asia Minor about the importance of love, which will help wash away our sins, when we die or —

The end of all things is near. You must be self-controlled & alert to be able to pray. Above everything, love one another, earnestly because love covers over many sins. Open your homes

to each other, without complaining. Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others, special gifts he has received from God. 1 Peter 4 : 7 —10

`You are the people of God; he loved you & chose you for his own. So then, you must clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, gentleness & patience. Be tolerant with one another whenever one of you has a complaint against someone else. You must forgive one another just as the Lord has forgiven you.

And to all these qualities, add love, which binds all things together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:12 —14

True Religion is . . .

James in his letter to `all God's people scattered over the whole world' expresses what religion ought to be & how it must be reflected in works.

\* Does anyone think he is religious ? If he does not control his tongue, his religion is worthless & he deceives himself. What God considers to be pure & genuine religion is this : to take care of orphans & widows in their suffering & to keep oneself from being corrupted by the world. James 1:26 - 27

My brothers what good is it for someone to say that he has faith, if his actions do not prove it ? Can that faith save him ? Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes & don't have enough to eat. What good is there in your saying to them, `God bless you ! Keep warm & eat well !' - if you don't give them the necessities of life ? So it is with faith : If it is alone & includes no actions, it is dead.

James 2:14 -17

Acts -The Christian Lifestyle

The early Christians followed the Lord instructions well in their concern for the poor. Jesus himself made it a habit to talk about caring for the poor. He watched people giving to God's work as when he was in the temple as in Mark 12:43. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.

Again in John 13:29, Since Judas had charge of the money, some thought Jesus was telling him to buy what was needed for the Feast, or to give some-

thing to the poor. Jesus also said in John 13:35 -If you love each other, everyone will know that you are my disciples. This was how it was supposed to be. Is that how it is with us today. ?

Few know the Acts was actually the Acts of the Holy Spirit & was thus named so. Let us study some more of how the early Christians lived —

" They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship & sharing in the fellowship meals & the prayers. All believers continued together in close fellowship & shared their belongings with one another. They would sell their property & possessions, & distribute the money among all, according to what each one needed. Day after day they met as a group in the Temple, and they had their meals together in their homes, eating with glad & humble hearts, praising God & enjoying the good will of all people. And everyday, the Lord added to their group those who were being saved. Acts 2:42 — 47

\*The group of believers was one in mind & heart. No one said that any of his belongings was his own, but they all shared with one another everything they had. With great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of Lord Jesus & God poured rich blessings on them all

There was no one in the group who was in need. Those who owned fields or houses would sell them, bring the money received from the sale & hand it over to the apostles; and the money was distributed to each one according to his need. And so it was that Joseph, a Levite born in Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means `one who encourages') sold a field he owned, brought the money & handed it over to the apostles.

Acts 4:32 – 37

" In Joppa there was a woman named Tabitha (her name means deer) she spent all her time doing good & helping the poor. At that time she became ill & died... So Peter got ready & went with them. When he arrived, he was taken to the room upstairs, where all the widows crowded round him, crying & showing him all the all the shirts & coats that she had made while she was alive.

Peter put them all out of the room, knelt down & prayed; then he turned to the body & said, 'Tabitha, get up!' She opened her eyes & when she saw Peter, she sat up.

Acts 9:36 – 40

'There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius. He was a religious man; he and his whole family worshipped God. He did much to help the Jewish poor people & was constantly praying to God.

It was about three o'clock, one afternoon when he had a vision, in which he clearly saw an angel of the God come in & say to him, Cornelius! ...God is pleased with your prayers & works of charity and is ready to answer you.. . Acts 10:1 - 4

\*May the Lord show mercy to the family of Onesiphorus, because he cheered me up many times. He was not ashamed that I was in prison, but as soon as he arrived in Rome, he started looking for me until he found me. May the Lord grant him his mercy on that Day! And you know very well how much he did for me in Ephesus.

2 Timothy 1:16 -18

In the above passages, we see how men & women of God, helped build the Church, as we know it today. We shall now see how the disciples of Jesus trained the early Christians to give generously & particularly to the family of believers - our very own Christian brothers & sisters in need.

" I, Paul am going to Jerusalem in the service of God's people there. For the churches in Macedonia & Achaia have freely decided to give an offering to help the poor among God's people in Jerusalem. That decision was their own, but as a matter of fact, they have an obligation to help them. Since the Jews shared their spiritual blessings with the Gentiles, the Gentiles ought to use their material blessings to help the Jews.

Romans 15:25 - 27

We agreed that Barnabas & I, Paul would work among the Gentiles & they among the Jews. All they asked was that we remember the needy in their group, which is the very thing we have been eager to do.

Galatians 2 : 9 -10

Help to carry one another's burdens & in this way you will obey the law of Christ.. . The man who is being taught the Christian message should share all the good things he has with his teacher. Do not deceive yourselves; no one makes a fool of God. A person will reap exactly what he sows... So let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up, the time will come when we will reap the harvest. So then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone & especially those who belong to our family in the faith.

Galatians 6 : 2 -10

#### THE OLD TESTAMENT POOR

No friends ?The Lord provides

The Lord God, it would seem, knows poverty as well or better than He know riches. The Old Testament describes how the poor we treated.

To give 3 examples from the book of Proverbs —

\* No one, not even his neighbours, likes a poor man, but the rich have many friends. Proverbs 14:20

'Rich people are always finding new friends, but the poor cannot keep the few they have. Proverbs 19 : 4

\*Even the brothers of a poor man have no use for him; no wonder he has no friends. No matter how hard he tries, he cannot win any. Proverbs 19 : 7

The Lord God made elaborate provisions for the poor, as we have seen in the Bible. He called for care & concern of the poor. He instructed sacrifices & offerings be made for the poor, particularly those in the family & the neighbourhood.

A few quotes once again from books that deal with God's law —

' Keep on loving one another as Christian brothers. Remember to welcome strangers in your homes. There were some who did that & welcomed angels without knowing it.

Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them. Remember those who are suffering, as though you were suffering as they are.

Hebrews 13:1 — 3

'Paul writes to Timothy —Give them these instructions, so that no one will find fault with them. But, if anyone does not take care of his own family, he has denied the faith & is worse than an unbeliever. Do not add any widow to the list of widows, unless she ... has a reputation for good deeds : a woman who brought up her children well, received strangers in her home, performed humble duties for fellow-Christians, helped people in trouble & devoted herself to doing good.

1 Timothy 5 : 7 —10

\*And so there is no division in the body, but all its different parts have the same concern for one another. If one part of the body suffers, all other parts suffer with it; If one part is praised, all the other parts share its happiness. All of you are Christ's body & each one is a part of it.

1 Corinthians 12:25 — 27

\* If ...there is a fellow in need, then do not be selfish & refuse to help him. Instead be generous & lend him as much as he needs ... If you refuse to make the loan, he will cry out to the Lord against you, and you will be held guilty. Give to him freely & the Lord will bless you in everything you do. There will always be some who are poor & in need; and so I command you to be generous to them.

Deuteronomy 15:7 —11

"Every third year give the tithe (10% of your income) to the Levites (priests), foreigners (strangers), orphans & widows; so that in every community they will have all they need to eat.. Deuteronomy 26:12

'For 6 years sow your field & gather in what it produces. But in the 7<sup>th</sup> year let it rest, and do not harvest anything that grows on it. The poor may eat what grows there ... Do the same with your vineyards & your olive trees. Work 6 days a week but do no work on the 7<sup>th</sup> day ..

Exodus 23 :11 —12

\* Do not go back through your vineyard to gather the grapes that were missed or to pick up the grapes that have fallen; leave them for the poor people & the foreigners (hungry strangers); I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 19 :10

If a fellow living near you becomes poor & cannot support himself, you must provide for him, as you would for a hired man, so that he can continue to live near you. Do not charge him any interest, but obey God ...and do not make a profit on the food you sell him. This is the command of the Lord your God ...

Leviticus 25:35 — 38

'Defend the rights of the poor & the orphans; be fair to the needy & the helpless. Rescue them from the power of evil men.

Psalms 82:3 — 4

Speak up for the people who cannot speak for themselves. Protect the rights of all who are helpless. Speak for them & be a righteous judge. Protect the rights of the poor & needy.

Proverbs 31:8 — 9

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Blessings for Helping -Refer Pg # 35

- God will guide you
- God will heal you
- God will protect you
- God will listen to you
- God will give you good health
- God's favour will shine on you
- You will know the Lord intimately God will satisfy you with good things

WORSHIP & ITS REWARDS A rich God

We have a great big wonderful God. One who owns all that is there in the world. One who created everything. So there is nothing we can give Him, but OBEDIENCE to His word. He is pleased, as is said in His word, the Bible, if we -

Whoever welcomes you welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes God's messenger, will share in his reward. And whoever welcomes a good man because he is good, will share in his reward. You can be sure that whoever gives even a drink of cold water, to one of the least of these my followers, because he is my follower, will certainly receive a reward.

Mathew 10:40 - 42

'The kind of fasting I want is this :Remove the chains of oppression &the yoke of injustice, and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry &open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear & do not refuse to help your own relatives.

Then my favour will shine on you ...and

your wounds will be quickly healed. I will always be with you to save you; my presence will protect you on every side. When you pray

will answer you. When you call to me, I will respond ... And I will always guide you &satisfy you with good things. I will keep you strong &well ...

Isaiah 58:6 - 11

If you oppress poor people; you insult the God who made them; but kindness shown to the poor is an act of worship.

Proverbs 14:31

\* If you want to be happy, be kind to the poor; it is a sin to despise anyone.

Proverbs 14:21

'When you give to the poor, it is like lending to the Lord &the Lord will pay you back. Proverbs 19.:17

\* Be generous &share your food with the poor. You will be blessed for it.

Proverbs 22 : 9

\* He gave the poor a fair trial &all went well with him. This is what it means to know the Lord.

Jeremiah 22:16

'Remember the person who sows a few seeds will have a small crop; the one who sows many seeds will have a large crop. Each one should give, then, as he has decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need, for yourselves & more than enough for every good cause. As scripture says, 'He gives generously to the needy; his kindness last forever':

And God who supplies seed to sow & bread to eat, will also supply you with all the seed you need & will make it grow & produce a rich harvest from your generosity. He will always make you rich enough to be generous at all times, so that many will thank God for your gifts which they receive from us.

For this service you perform not only meets the needs of God's people, but also produces an outpouring of gratitude to God. And because of the proof which this service of yours brings, many will give glory to God for your loyalty to the gospel of Christ, which you profess, and for your generosity in sharing with them & everyone else. And so with deep affection they will pray for you, because of the extraordinary grace God has shown you.

Let us thank God for his priceless gift ! 2 Corinthians 9 : 6 –15

**PUNISHMENT FOR NEGLECT**

Warning the rich

Time & again the Lord cautions His people that those who hurt the deserving will not be spared.

As in Amos 8 : 4, He says, 'Listen to this you that trample the needy & try to destroy the poor...

He then goes on to describe the punishment that will befall them. In other cases, the Lord has much to say to the rich, whom He has blessed, but to those who do not acknowledge that riches come from Him to be used for others.

\* Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, but to place their hope not in such an uncertain thing as riches, but in God who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment.

Command them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous & ready to share with others. In this way, they will store up for themselves, a treasure which will be a solid foundation for the future.

And then, they will be able to win the life, which is true life.

1 Timothy 6 : 17 – 20

\* As sure as I am the living God, the Sovereign Lord says your sister Sodom & her villages never did the evil that you & your villages have done.

She & her daughters were proud because they had plenty to eat & lived in peace & quiet, but they did not take care of the poor & the underprivileged. They were proud & stubborn and did the very things I hate, so I destroyed them, as you well know.

Ezekiel 16:48 — 50

\* Jesus looked at his disciples and said, 'Happy are you poor; the Kingdom of God is yours! Happy are you who are hungry now; you will be filled! Happy are you who weep now; you will laugh! ... But how terrible for you who are rich now; you have had your easy life! How terrible for you who are full now; you will go hungry! How terrible for you who laugh now; you will mourn & weep'.

Luke 6:20 — 26

\* Do not cheat a poor & hired needy servant... Each day before sunset pay him for that day's work; he needs the money & has counted on getting it. If you do not pay him, he will cry out against you to the Lord & you will be guilty of sin.

Deuteronomy 24:14 — 15

\* If you refuse to listen to the cry of the poor, your own cry for help will not be heard. Proverbs 21:13

If you make gifts to rich people or oppress the poor to get rich, you will become poor yourself. Proverbs 22:16

\* Don't take advantage of the poor just because you can ... Thy Lord will argue their case for them & threaten the life of anyone who threatens theirs.

Proverbs 22:22

• Mary said, My head praises the Lord... He has stretched out his mighty arm & scattered the proud with all their plans.

He has brought down mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things & sent the rich away with empty hands.

Luke 1:46 - 53

REFER PAGE # 45

Read of the MIRACLES that have ~. happened to me & my family. j

To God be all the glory, honour & praises

THE POOR CRY OUT

He hears their cry

The poor often find refuge in the Lord. They appeal to Him & the Bible tells us he listens to their plea & answers their prayers –

When my people in their need look for water, when their throats are dry with thirst, then I, the Lord, will answer their prayer; I the God of Israel will never abandon them.

Isaiah 41:17

'They forced the poor to cry out to God & He heard their calls for help.

Job 34:28

Lord I know that you defend the cause of the poor & the rights of the needy.

Psalms 140:12

am weak & poor O Lord, but you have not forgotten me.

Psalms 40:17

prayed to the Lord & he answered me; he freed me from all my fears. The oppressed look to him & are glad; they will never be disappointed. The helpless call to him & he answers; he saves them from all their troubles.

Psalms 34:4 – 6 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER

Very often, we are so taken up with the world & get so involved with work or ourselves that we forget that there is life after death – and that life lasts for eternity, much longer.

Yet, we are over ambitious or so busy that we often lose out on the essence of living this life itself & get lost or confused in the world. God made the money & gave us talents too, not to continue working aimlessly for years nor to retire and spend time relaxing.

Most do just that, saving up money for children or grandchildren, whom they may never see enjoying it. Such idly deposited money or selfishly used talents, when released into God's Kingdom and for His lesser fortunate other children, will bear the fruit that it was meant to –

THANKS TO YOU.

If we are shortsighted & lucky, we might manage to `enjoy' ourselves for some years. But is that all life is about.

Often, we claim to be Christian & children of God, our Father, when we repeatedly say the OUR FATHER –the prayer that Jesus himself taught us. And then, how do we treat our fellow brothers or sisters in need. We pray to God as Our Father, but do not consider his other children, as our brothers or sisters.

Giving to our fellows in need attracts God to us. It draws us closer to His heart. It makes us a favourite child of God, the father. Giving proves to God that we want to have a close & warm relationship with Him.

It tells God that we are interested in helping out with his work, as a good son or daughter would be interested in his father's business. Would God then refuse to entertain our prayers or desires, when we ask him. Of course not. In fact, he knows all that we want & will give all that is good to us in abundance. It will be the start of a great loving relationship of God & you.

The one relationship\_ that matters.

No Cash. Invest Talents.

Many times giving needn't be in cash, for some might have idle resources or talents in kind.

Sometimes a fellow Christian might not need money, but a good word of influence to get a job or deal. Wherever

Those with resources, can also partner with those who have talents or some cash, to mutual benefit. After all, if you can trust a non-Christian, surely your fellow Christian cannot be all that bad.

There is true happiness & benefit that comes

from giving. It not only helps the person in need, but also provides you with the resources to give more. For once, God lets you help the needy, He cannot let you go empty or without giving you more to continue giving & have enough left over.

Its like a farmer, who plants a crop in the fields. Not only does he have a great harvest to earn manifold, but he also gets more than enough seed, to plant again.

The cycle of sowing & reaping can continue till eternity, if the farmer lives that long. The rewards do not stop in the case of a Christian who gives & gives cheerfully. It is an investment that continues even in the life hereafter, until eternity – the heavenly insurance, with low premiums & a bountiful bonus, besides blessings right here below !

WHENEVER

you meet a Christian or are in a position to help or support a Christian at home (begin with your relatives, who may need you) at work, get a job, make a sale, in school/college, in business, in the , parish/neighbourhood .. .

11 ANYWHERE !JUST D4 IT |

GOOD NEWS PIE

We have often heard the word GOOD NEWS used in the New Testament, particularly by Jesus.

What does this mean ? Of course we have been told that it means SALVATION —freedom from Sin & Satan. But could Jesus be meaning only Eternal Life after death, and nothing else —like telling children, pie in the sky when you die.'

Can Christians expect nothing in this world. Knowing the practical person that Jesus was & his concern with worldly matters, when he was here on earth, this will be difficult to accept.

Let us look at some of the places, the words the Good

News is used and draw our conclusions —

'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives & recovery of sight to the blind; to set free the oppressed & to announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people'.

Luke 4:18-19

'The blind can see, the lame can walk, those who suffer from dreaded skin-disease are made clean, the deaf can hear, the dead are raised to life and the Good News is preached to the poor.

Luke 7:22MIRACLES GALORE

1 can never forget how

— Our great big wonderful, marvelous, glorious God — reached out and met me in my hour of need. I became not just poor. I was in the red. Steeped in debt to the tune of lakhs of rupees. I mean many lakhs of rupees, when the good Lord picked me up.

But that was not the way it always was or is now. Praise The Lord. In fact by the world's standards, I was an above average businessman. I will be brief on this part, as it would be repetitive to thousands of readers who read my booklet, TITHING —GOD'S MONEY (10% PLUS), and move on to give just one more example of how believe, God helped me when, I was in need and obeyed his command to tithe and give to his work.

However more than the money that the Lord supplied us, we were happy to have found a family & more important blessings, like peace & joy.

As mentioned, we were doing really well & growing rapidly. It was not that I was away from God either. I fulfilled my religious obligations, but did not know God personally. I knew a lot about him, but did not know of him or experience him.

I was however, happy that I was not doing much wrong & did as much good as I could.

Until, within months, we had one great fall after another. We couldn't fall any further.

And it was not just all about money. It was more about people & sickness —physical & mental.

My family stood by me like a rock, along with a few friends, whom I now believe, the Lord sent to help me.

But it was not going to last long, as the pressure & stress began to break us down.

Those whom we owed money and used to enjoy credit from, refused to budge from the door, even as high interest rates mounted. We were caught between the devil & the deep sea.

It would have been a matter of days, before the worst would come. Only, I did not know how.

I had only one untried option praying to God. But I did not know him well & did not know how to start. So I thought let me see what God's word, The Bible has to say.

It would do me no harm, so why not check it out. I had spent sleepless nights, until I could take it no more. I fumbled for the Bible and opened it at random - as I did not know where to find what.

To my surprise, it opened to the book of MALACHI one I did not know even existed.

I had no choice but to read on. The message that came through was LOUD & CLEAR TITHE. I prayed like a man facing death & made a beginning by giving 10% of the very little left. My family, encouraging my new-found spirituality said, they would hold fort, until I went to Divine Retreat Centre, Potta, Kerala and Our Lady of Health, Velankani.

I was giving it all I had, as there was no further hope.

And our great God

Abba, a loving Father by now to me, strengthened me. He got close to me & drew me closer to him. His Spirit comforted me guided & helped me through. In the precious name & blood of his son, Jesus, victory became ours small, slowly & steadily.

But it was clear that God was present in our lives. More than the money, we collected to pay back, God saved the family that was splitting apart.

He healed & fed us, so that we needed to spend less, on such things. He gave us peace of mind, which can come only from him. We started building business back from scratch from the bottom, towards the top and the Lord blessed our efforts, until now, when we are almost half way to succeed.

God put into us a confidence to go through any crisis, by just surrendering it all to him.

I credit my success to tithing faithfully, apart from the fact, that no matter how difficult the situation, I praised & thanked God for it. And trusted in him.

I read the Bible, even if it was a few lines daily & meditated on what God was trying to tell me.

God became a father.. & friend to me. About the same time, I also gave to Christian charity & to Christians in need. The amount was not much, as I did not have much either !But that did not matter, as the intention to give more, when I got more was always there. My giving was regular & on behalf of the entire emended family.

This was so that all might be blessed, as all in the family & friends had played their role in getting in the money -some directly, others indirectly, by taking care of other important things in the house or at work.

When I heard in church that, as a follow-up of the Archdiocesan Synod, Catholics were urged to voluntarily contribute a meager 1% of their income and even this some Catholics were cribbing about, I decided to help.

Our parish priest encouraged the community fund committee (of which I am a part) efforts, as ours was a large, but poor parish. But, the Lord was at it again: -His miracles will never cease.

He blessed our efforts & moved, even the poor parishners to contribute -the best they could ever do & over the last few months, unbelievable collections were made, thanks to those who generously contributed - LAKHS.

Even the parish priest was pleasantly surprised at this success story ! Truly, St Anthony's parish can be a model on the challenges that face a church with the community fund. We had our share of challenges, like when some volunteers had a problem collecting the envelopes, but the Lord ensured the collections did not fall.

The latest miracles from the Lord

Our company is in the event management business – organizing trade & technology exhibitions. Last month, we did an exhibition in Hyderabad. As usual, we were extremely tight on cash, with interests & loans, still to be paid. These days, it is as if we never have money !

And we always need lakhs of rupees – to match the scale. At the -same time, competition is such & business demands, that we don't cut corners. On one' Fund we just did not have that kind of money & on the other, we were in a new place, where credit was out of question:

It was there two `angels' stepped in -Arun & Sajid -the decorator & the supplier of the generator - both non Christians, that the Lord used.

Arun saved almost a lakh of rupees by introducing us to an influential advertising agency, who arranged for the best positions for our advertisements, which would normally have to be paid for. In a land we knew no one !!

Sajid on the other hand, seeing that we needed credit, not only volunteered to take his dues after the event, but did something even more unheard of - he arranged a substantial amount of money, when we needed it most !

And both of these gentlemen, we had met just a couple of days earlier on reaching Hyderabad.

It must be mentioned that before both these occasions, we were just praising & thanking the Lord, while interceding for help, we desperately needed.

Never in the last 10 years of business

Finally, the Lord blessed us with yet another miracle. Something that rarely, if at all ever happens - at least in the last over 10 years that we have been in this business, we have never seen something like this.

One of our clients owed us a few thousand rupees & we were following up with him for some time. We had assumed that he would let us down & we would have to write it off, as a bad debt.

This was an outstation company, so follow-up was even more difficult & we had almost given up.

As usual, we left it to the Lord, as worrying about it would not help. It was then, again when we needed the money most urgently (as someone we had promised to pay-up was at the door), that we received a call. It was from our outstation client.

He said that he had used a little more space than he had paid for & also fared well at the

exhibition. So he felt like paying us a little more ! Would you believe it - he paid us

3 times more money than he owed us ! And

he had already deposited the money in our bank & we could withdraw it, anytime the need

arose ! And there could'nt have been a

better time, as we needed money desperately.

JOIN THE BCS & other such organisations

There are a number of organizations, which protect the community's interest and need to be strengthened, even though we may not agree with the views of some of their leaders. While, we might stand up against a few such lay leaders' and correct them in a Christian manner, we need to join these organizations & help build a strong voice for the community -The Bombay Catholic Sabha is such a church association.

SAINTS' TODAY SVP, Nuns, Youth, S/BCC, Legion ...

We have come to believe that saints are only those who have done great things to qualify for ST to be placed before their names.

NOT TRUE. Today, we have so many among us, in the church & among Christians, would have achieved as much, but by doing the little things well

You needn't be a Mother Theresa.. Take for example, the active parishners in the various Irish associations - SVP, Legion, Sodalties and particularly the youth groups. Or more importantly, our nuns, priests, sisters or brothers & the Small Christian Community animators or co-ordinators.

Of course we also have odd persons out, in these groups too, who might make a fuss to do church work, not realizing the opportunity provided by God, to share in his work.

These 'saints' of God need to know that we are grateful to God for gifting us with such fine servants of God. Oops! Saints of God. And I mean it.

A St Vincent de Paul Brother

Over 25 years ago, when I was in the SVP, we had a brother volunteer who was poor & whose family was possibly more in need of help, than many of the other SVP adopted families in our parish.

He was jobless, his wife got money from tuitions, his daughter did stitching, a son was Mentally challenged and the other was studying.

And yet, this great servant of God, worked for years with the SVP, distributing food to families, visiting & caring for the sick, with a big smile on his face, perhaps to hide his tears.

Praise God for such Lazaruses. We could'n't do much for him or the family then, as he never asked for help. Besides, our SVP unit in the parish itself was in great need of funds & Brother knew well about it.

Today, when perhaps we can do a little to help, we can't find his family. The last I heard of this UNCLE was that the Lord had called him to himself & an eternal life of peaceful rest. Jesus must have said -WELCOME, good & faithful servant of the Lord, you were faithful in small things ...Come enjoy the banquet I have prepared for you. Come stay in the mansion, I have prepared for you.

Community Service

The SVP has in the Catholic Church always stood

out for its yeoman's service to the community, though complaints that the SVP is strict will always remain.

In our parish (St Anthony's), where the SVP is celebrating its SILVER JUBILEE, the following experiences of SVP adopted widows, published in our Parish Bulletin deserves repeating here—

1) When my husband died five years ago, I was completely helpless. I had a 5 year old son, was pregnant with my second child & unemployed. It was during this time that the SVP members visited me, helped me & my child, whose full fees were paid by them: They gave us rations, clothes and regularly visited us & consoled me during my pregnancy. Today, I am still being helped by the SVP. I have a job as a housemaid, my son is in boarding school & my daughter is in junior kindergarten (Jr Kg); Today, am happy & thankful to the SVP for all that they are doing for my family, even as my own family has deserted me. Thank you SVP & God bless the members

2) In 1991, I lost my husband in an accident. I was left helpless, with three children (aged 14, 11 & 5 years) to look after. At that time, just as a mother consoles her child, so did the members of the SVP come to my aid. They consoled me & instilled back the courage needed to bring up my children. They helped me financially (eg. children's studies) and were always by my side whenever the need arose.

It is only because of their excellent & timely help, that today my son who has a hearing impairment is a graduate & is employed in a private firm. My daughter is a nurse who has graduated from a

reputed institution & is working in a reputable hospital. My youngest daughter is in her last year of studies. This was possible only because my dear brothers & sisters of the SVP & other well-wishers. I can never forget what they have done & I thank God for them.

#### WORRIES

Worrying about money will make you lose weight & lose sleep. Worrying about business will keep you from sleeping just as surely as a serious illness does ... No one who loves money can be judged innocent; his efforts to get rich have led him into sin ... Money is a trap for those who are fascinated by it, a trap that every fool falls into.

Sirach 31:1 - 7

This is why I tell you not to be worried about food & drink you need in order to stay alive or about clothes ... Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. Instead be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God & with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things. So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is now need to add to the troubles each day brings.

Mathew 6:24 - 34

#### SOME MISCONCEPTIONS

- The deserving need to work harder. There are enough opportunities around for them.
- The problem will take care of itself. I needn't do anything. There are enough of people too.
- The poor are not actually poor. They are fakes.
- The amount is too much. I have expenses too.

Many times we are of the false impression that people are not in need because, we see them well dressed or we see the poor having electronic appliances at home & we judge 'they are not deserving'.

have seen hundreds of cases, where this is not true. The poor don't eat well & most of their income goes into keeping themselves alive. Their expenses often include in major part, medicines & fees.

They have no insurance or savings to fall back on. Even their rich relatives desert them. They are steeped in loans & at high interests. These are your very brothers & sisters, whom you need to deliver from bondage, in the name of Jesus Christ and by the Lord's power & Spirit, given to you. Would you refuse God, if he were to ask of you this? Well, He is asking this of you NOW. Answer him.

I have also seen people give much more to their pet dog, than they would give the poor needy. And am talking of Christians.

When we talk of giving, just how much are we talking about — if your income is Rs. 4,000 monthly, your contribution would be Rs. 40 to the community fund & Rs. 400 as tithing towards God's work.

Is that really too much, considering the good it would bring you?

#### SEE LAST PAGE

Here are a few practical steps to help you tithe or give to God faithfully. Often some criticize the Church for asking money, while being rich. However, if we are sincere in giving to God's Kingdom & his work, there would be no need to ask. Imagine what the world would be like, IF EVERY CHRISTIAN GAVE, AS GOD COMMANDED ...

The Church would have to ask you to stop donating or contributing, as no one would be in need.

#### CONCLUSION

Picture yourself in an orphanage, a hospital, an old age home, a community center ...

Place yourself in the place of an unfortunate brother or sister there. Imagine yourself as a struggling unemployed or a poor person, striving to make ends meet. It could well have been you there, if God had not been good to you.

Often, even while we know of the situation, our senses are so dulled that we let it pass away. Don't let this happen to you, as it means you are becoming inhuman. The harvest is plenty, even in the Christian community and the labourers are few. So pray & give to the Lord of the harvest

You might not be able to go & visit these brothers & sisters, but there are others who can & will. If only you send them. You can make a difference, by donating — in cash or kind - Your tithes & charity can send the Good News.

I hope, I have not made you sad or pitiful about the poor, needy, hungry or deserving. My intention is to make you reach out & act in Christian love.

To show you one more opportunity that God has provided you, to prove that you love him, care for him and are available to him.

Giving should be with the right attitude, as Jesus himself said, 'let not the right hand know what the left hand does. And the Father, who sees all that

you do in secret, will reward you'. Once you give, think nothing about it. Only believe that you have received your reward. And you will receive it.

Finally, I am sure you are now better convinced to tithe or give to the community fund. If you have decided to begin, avoid the pitfalls and you will not be left feeling guilty, that you are not doing it right. Here are a few practical suggestions to make it easy. After all, few of us are used to being generous or thinking about others, before self. I, myself encountered difficulties too, with all my good intentions. So here is some thing that might help you

1) Regularly take the 10% or 10% or whatever you choose out first & not from what is left of your income. This will show God, that he is your priority, that you give him the first fruits, as Able did.

2) If you have a Christian employer/partner, whom you can trust and if you have decided the church or Christian Charity, you would like to contribute to, he can deduct the tithe or gift, along with his own, from the salary/business income at the start.

3) Open a separate savings account & put the tithing or gifting amount regularly in it. This will give you time to decide properly on where to contribute & also leave behind a little, if you find an unexpected Christian person or institution, qualifying for your tithe or offering.

4) You may also sign up with your bank, for an automatic debit to the tithing account, so that on a fixed day, after your salary/ income is deposited, a fixed percentage or amount can be transferred to the tithing/gifting account.

5) Tithe or gift your time or talents or even donate in kind. Are you not working or is it that you have talents or resources or time that you can spare for God's work. Welcome aboard ! Use it for the Kingdom. Volunteer at your local church or help a needy Christian, living close by to you. Your time, talent or gift in kind is always worth something & you can combine it with your money offering too. Give as & when the Lord leads you to.

6) Don't use the tithing or amount collected for God's Kingdom or Christian Charity for other purposes. Once set aside, it is to be used for that purpose only. Remember, one who sets his hand to the plough & looks behind is not fit for the Kingdom. However, even if you slip & fall, get up and start all over again, as Jesus did thrice on the road to Calvary. The Lord understands you.

7) Seek advice on tithing & giving generously, preferably according to the Bible. This booklet is only meant to get you started. Feel free to contact us or any of your priests/pastors for details. Circulate this booklet, after you have finished.

IF YOU HAVE NOT AS YET STARTED GIVING,  
EVEN THOUGH THE LORD IS WISPERING TO YOU TO,  
its time you start now. A small beginning is good enough.

The beginning of good things is good. The faithful continuation is better & the completion is the best. We are praying for your needs. We are also looking forward to publishers, who can print these booklets & distribute them. If you are one such person, volunteer to do so. Or else, await my next booklet on another similar aspect of practical Christian living. And pray for us too. GOD BLESS.

The Capable Wife

One of the sayings, I came across in the Bible, related to the qualities desired in a wife. And while I have to find some references for husbands, by the time the next booklet comes through, I am printing this with NO COMMENTS -

How hard it is to find a capable wife ! She is worth far more than jewels. Her husband puts his confidence in her & he will never be sorry. As long as she lives, she does him good & never harm. She keeps herself busy making wool & linen

cloth. She brings home food from out-of-the-way places, as merchant ships do. She gets up before daylight to prepare food for her family. She looks at land & bus it, and with the money she has earned, she plants a vineyard. She is a hard worker, strop & industrious. She knows the value of everything she makes & works late into the night. She spins her own thread & weaves her own cloth. She is generous to the poor & the needy. She doesn't worry when it snows, because her family has warm clothing. She makes bedspreads & wears clothes of fineur le linen ... She is strop & respected and not afraid of the future. She speaks with a gentle wisdom. She is always bus & looks after her family's needs. Her children show their appreciation & her husband raises her. He says, 'Man women are good wives, but you are the best of them all.' Charm is deceptive & beauty disappears, but a woman who honours the Lord should be praised, praised.

Give her credit for all she does. She deserves the respect of everyone.

Proverbs 31 :10 - 31

Story of one who buried his talents

Speaking about the End Times, Jesus concluded, " Be on our guard, then, because you do not know the day or the hour. At that time the Kingdom of heaven will be like this. Once there was a man who was about to go on a journey; he called his servants & put them in charge of his property. He gave to each one according to his ability : to one he gave 5,000 gold coins, to another he gave 2,000 and to another he gave one thousand. Then he left on his journey. After a long time the master of those servants came back ... Y The servant who received 5,000 coins said ... 'You gave me 5,000 coins sir, Look ! Here are another 5,000 that I have earned'. 'Well done, you good & faithful servant' ! said his master. 'You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in & share my happiness' !

Then the servant who had been given 2,000 coins came in & said, 'You gave me 2,000 coins sir. Look ! Here are another 2,000 that I have earned'. 'Well done, you good & faithful servant' ! said his master. 'You have been faithful in managing small amounts, so I will put you in charge of large amounts. Come on in & share my happiness' !

Then the servant who had received 1,000 coins came in & said, 'Sir I know you are a hard man ... I was afraid, so I hid your money in the ground. Look ! here is what belongs to you'. 'You bad & lazy servant' ! his master said ... Well then, you should have deposited the money in the bank & I would have received it all back with interest when I returned. Now take the money away from him & give it to the one who has 10,000 coins. For to every person who has ever , even more will be given & he will have more than enough; but the person who has nothing, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. As for this useless servant - throw him outside in the darkness; there he will cry & grind his teeth'. cry

Mathew 25 :14 - 30 Moral of the story

- Use the talents / riches, the master has given you for his work in the Kingdom
  - Return to him the best, invest in his work & more will be given back to you
  - The master punishes those who bury his gifts - Use it & he will bless you
- STOP PRESS

As we were going into printing this booklet, the LORD stepped in yet again to deliver the family & many others who have begun tithing & giving to HIS work or HIS children.

The booklet on tithing is bearing rich fruit with testimonies coming in from various parts of India & also abroad -USA (Hannah), Dubai (Ann), Australia (Efma), etc.

A few of the other Cheerful Givers, he has blessed in abundance are -Noel, Anthony, Andrew, Joseph, Simpson, James, Navin, Flavia, Mineno, Leena, Joy, John, Cheryl, Samson, Neville, Robert, Dulcine

HIS miracles never cease. Check it out. First, in small amounts or services, if you please. I am sure the Lord will bless you & it will be proved that GIVING ENSURES RECEIVING MUCH MORE

GOD worked through some of our loving neighbours, who have, like little Elizabeth's little Elizabeth's, yet and Dr Abraham Mathai.

pray that God continues to bless them, if you will, He meets the needs of those who stand by them in times of need

HE has no hands, but yours . . .

HE has no feet, but yours . . .

If you would like to volunteer & be part of this service of love, send us your name, address & phone contacts. We will stand in faith with you!