

Dear Friends of HIMserve,

Greetings and Jai Masih to you all! Over the last months several of our team members have been to conferences or trainings. So in this newsletter we would like to share some of the things we've learnt, hoping that it will be of encouragement to you too.

WALKING HUMBLY WITH GOD

Micah 6:8:

"But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women. It's quite simple. Do what is fair and just to our neighbor (act justly), be compassionate and loyal in your love (love mercy), and don't take yourself too seriously – take God seriously (walk humbly with your God)."

– The Message

Micah 6:8, talks about the kind of worship that God likes. It is not that he is displeased with our rituals & forms, but rather he is more concerned with the authenticity of what we do. Micah reiterates what God calls true fasting in Isaiah 58:1-12. In this newsletter we would like to take a closer look at what it means for us when Micah says we should walk humbly with our God. We shall look at three ways in which humility is expressed in the Bible.

Humility: The focus of a life of faith should not be just the "destination" but also "the walk". We often become so focused on the destination that we forget that the walk of faith is a journey. We are not saved to be "departure lounge" Christians, but rather we are called to do in the present what is faithful before God.

In Isaiah 66:2b we see that the pre-qualification for this walk with God is humility. In Micah 6:8, the meaning of the Hebrew word "Sana" used for humility, means "to choose to make oneself humble or modest". Proverbs 11:2 uses the same meaning for humility and also conveys the idea that it is a wise way to live.

So the question for us is – is humility a default characteristic of mine?

Meekness: What does Mathew 5:5 mean when it says the meek are blessed? Meekness can be defined as strength under control. It is like the differ-

ence between a wild horse versus a broken in horse. The difference between the two is not strength versus weakness but of uncontrolled strength versus strength under control. Despite my power, social position, authority, high education, leadership position, etc., do I choose to be controlled by the knowledge that I too am equally a sinner saved by God's mercy & grace? Do I then allow this understanding to influence my dealings with others? Jesus did not consider equality with God something to be used to his advantage (Philippians 2:6).

Lowliness of mind: Jesus is our biggest example of what it means to live humbly before God. Being lowly of mind is not demeaning ourselves. But rather it is the decision to value another greater than myself.



John 13:3-4 is a good example of how Jesus exemplified lowliness of mind. It is the paradox of Christian humility. Philippians 2:3-8 is another passage that compliments this. The challenge for us as individuals and organisations is, can we consider other individuals and organisations better than ourselves and be willing to work with them in humility? Are we servants to the people we claim to be helping?

"Humility does not mean that we think less of ourselves. Humility means that we think of ourselves less."
(Micah Network, Asia Regional Consultation)

ARE WE LOOSING OUR CHILDREN?

Many of us think that our children will learn and experience God in Sunday School and so we believe that our responsibility is over once we send our child to Sunday School. This then gives us the freedom to continue on with the busyness of our lives and for many of us that includes evangelizing others. But what about our children? Where are they? Are they truly experiencing God in their lives?

The Bible says that children are a heritage and a reward from God (Psalm 127:3). We need to think about how we are handling our reward. How much do we really invest in the lives of our children? How would God feel if we don't take care of HIS gifts to us?

We see in Ephesians 6:4b God has entrusted us parents with the responsibility of training and instructing

our children in God's ways. Proverbs 22:6 tells us that if we want to see our children reflect godly character when they are older, it is our responsibility as their parents to train them. This has to happen when they are young and with us.



Sunday school is not enough for our children to experience God. Our calling as parents is first to the children that God has gifted us before we think of evangelizing the rest of the world. We must not just to instruct them from the Bible but more importantly live an exemplary life at home and give our children the time and attention they crave to have from us. They will certainly learn the ways of life and will choose paths to follow. The question for us is, who do we want them to learn it from? So the original question again – do we want to loose our children? We don't have to and we should not! (4/14 Window, Bengal)

ABCD – A SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

The thing that challenged us the most at a recent training on development was the principle of ABCD (Asset Based Community Development). We realised that we have so often focused on the needs of the communities we serve and encouraged them to do the same. ABCD on the other hand says that recognizing the strengths of Individuals and the community is more likely to inspire positive action for change than an exclusive focus on needs and problems. We were able to visit a village in Warangal dist. of Andhra Pradesh, where an NGO called

100% Prohibition of liquor or alcohol (From-1982)
 100% Mahila panchayath Administration for two terms (1995-2001 and 2001-2006)
 100% House tax collection
 100% Constructions of latrines (2003)
 100% Proper use of latrines (2003)
 100% Family planing operation with two kids (2000)
 100% Families in the village invested in small savings (30-3-1999)
 100% Children in the village are going to school Thus There is no child labour.
 100% All are literates (Age group between: 15-50)
 100% Entire village families using purified water.

Bala Vikasa has been helping based on the ABCD principle since 1985. It was slow and difficult work initially. But today that village is a model village for the whole country. The people stopped waiting for the government and other NGOs to help them. They realized their responsibility towards their community and began by contributing from whatever assets they had. Today they have 18 committees that are responsible for development, the environment, water

supply, tree plantation, plastic collection, sanitation, conflict management, alcohol control, etc. The members of each committee are on a one year rotation. We were very impressed with what we saw and believe that the impact of the ABCD principle can be replicated in the areas we serve in. We look forward to trying some of the things we have learnt.

MEDICINE WITHOUT SIDE EFFECTS

Herbal Medicines which can be prepared at home with locally available resources have no side effects. Here are some useful tips for common ailments prevalent in our areas.

1. Ring worm:
 - a. Grind the seeds of the Phalledo tree into a fine paste and apply on infected spot. Leave it for 15 minutes and wash off with clean water. Repeat twice a day till cured.
 - b. Make paste of Neem leaves and Haldi (Turmeric) powder. Half a tea spoon Haldi with about 6 leaves. Quantity to be made as required. Apply paste on infection and leave for 15 minutes. Tulsi's leaves can also be use in the same way.
2. High Blood Pressure: In 400 ml of boiling water add 3 tea spoons of Methi (Fenugreek) or Dhania (Coriander) seed powder and leave it for 15 minutes. Add 1 teaspoon of honey when drinking. Drink half in the morning and half in the evening before meals.
3. Urinary Tract Infections (UTI):
 - a. Burning sensation during urination: Take 3 tea-spoons of finely chopped onions and boil in 400 ml of water till it reduces to 200 ml. Drink this in two installments daily before meals till problem subsides.
 - b. Pain during urination: Add 1 teaspoon Ajwain (Bishops weed) seed powder in 200 ml of boiling water and leave for 15 minutes. Drink this twice daily before meals till problem subsides.
 - c. Dribbling of urine: Take 1 table spoon finely chopped onions and mix with 3 tea spoons of liquid Gudd (Jaggery) and eat twice daily till problem subsides.
4. Cold & Cough:
 - a. Add 1 pinch of black pepper powder in 200 ml boiling water with 1 teaspoon honey. Divide this into 3 equal parts & take three times a day till problem subsides.
 - b. Mix 1 teaspoon honey with 2 pieces of Lawang (Cloves) & chew it before going to bed.
5. Jaundice: Take 1 teaspoon Papaya leaf juice mixed with with 1 teaspoon honey twice a day before meals for 2 weeks. (Natural Medicine training - Daya Sagar)

We wish you all a joyous Christmas and God's blessings for the year ahead.

HMServe Team