

"I am the LORD who heals you"

Please pray for:

Bro. Ninan Thomas, Bro. M. O Mathew,

Bro. Johny T. Thomas

Sisters: Jolly Jacob, Ammini George, Mariamma Johny,
Shiny Chacko, Usha Danielkutty

Bible Reading Plan for this Week 41

October 16, 2016	Hebrew 8- 10
October 17, 2016	Num 33-36
October 18, 2016	2 Chronicle 16-20
October 19, 2016	Psalms 119
October 20, 2016	Prov 29-30
October 21, 2016	Micah
October 22, 2016	Acts 5-6

Upcoming Events Oct—Nov, 2016

October 23-30 - Fasting & Prayer
November 26—Thanksgiving Service

ICA SUNDAY SERVICE

Sunday Service @ 9:30 am & 11: 15 am
Sunday School @ 11:15 am

INDIA CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY

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WELCOME TO ICA SUNDAY SERVICE

Date : October 16, 2016



WEEKLY ICA VOICE

THIS WEEK'S MEETING

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRAYER @ 07:30 PM AT ICA
FRIDAY FASTING AND PRAYER @ 10:30 AM AT ICA
SATURDAY NIGHT PRAYER @ 07:00 PM AT ICA

CHURCH HOME TEAM IN CHARGE THIS WEEK :

Benny V. Kuriakose & Family

WEEK OF 10/23/16

Saji Pathalil & Family

A Re-vision of the Mission of the Church

Rev. Dr. Wilson Varkey, Ph.D.

I have a thesis to straight away present in this article that the mission of the church is mission. However, the church has not yet really considered the importance of mission although we are engaged with so many projects and programs. On the basis of a serious analysis, I am convinced of the fact that there was no period in the whole history of the church as today where such a great wealth is available and yet concentrated in few hands. There was no period in the history of the church to have the capacity to heal so many diseases like today, and even then lacked the will to share lifesaving cures with hurting and dying people at home and around the world. There has never been a time in the history of the church where we are so connected on such a global scale like today, as we are in this virtual and digital world, where messages and images fly faster than our senses can take them in and yet been so tragically isolated in the world of flesh and blood. Considering all these soul braking realities, I ask the following pertinent questions with a conviction that we can be different. First of all, where does the Pentecostal Church stand in relation to the crisis in mission? Secondly, are we ready to foster Christian communities anchored in the dream of God and in the urgent, missional needs of our day? Are we ready to bridge culture, race, generation, and class to build mutually transforming relationships with neighbors and other faiths?

Missio Dei

In order to actively involved in mission, and to practically answer the above mentioned questions, one needs to understand what God's mission is? The Bible speaks of a God who, without any doubt, is a missionary God. The most concrete example of this aspect is the sending of Jesus Christ as a missionary into the earth. Moreover, it is a fact that God is the one who created everything that exists. He preserves the creation like a parent, heals and restores the creation, and draws all people back into the relationship.

The understanding of the mission of God should lead us to the greatest missionary, Jesus Christ, who stands as an exemplary to the mission of the church. The incarnation of Jesus was the ultimate expression of the missional love of God. John makes it very clear that "God so loved the world, and so wished to redeem the world, that God came among us to bring hope from despair and life from death (John 3:16-17). In the gospels of Mark and Matthew, Jesus begins his public ministry by preaching that the reign of God has begun to break in (Matt. 4:17, 23; Mark 1:14-15). In response to this good news, Jesus urges people to "repent" which means to turn around and follow him in a new way of life. He then gathers followers to join him in proclaiming God's reign and living the alternative gospel vision as a sign to the world. That means Jesus is sending his followers as missionaries. Therefore, God's followers, which is the church, is called to be a missional church and Christian leaders are called to exercise missional leadership. This way of thinking about and imagining Christian life and practice has come to be called the theology of God's mission

Mission of the Church

One line of thought that we have just discussed in the previous paragraph holds to the fact that Jesus selected his disciples to proclaim God's reign and to live alternative gospel vision to be a sign to the world. That means the church should continue the mission that Jesus Christ has inaugurated. The reason is that the church belongs to the Lord and exists as an extension of God's purposes and identity. Therefore, the very being of the church is rooted in God's mission. However, unfortunately, that calling has literally gotten lost in practice. Instead the church is recognized most of the time as a building, an assembly, an event, a family, or a set of culturally prescribed rituals.

This is the reason why Jesus emphasized the discipleship. Each believer must be transformed into a disciple so that he/she will be able to disciple others. It is, of course, a challenge and a responsible job. In order to make this endeavor possible, I believe that the church must encourage networking. The word 'networking' is defined by Webster dictionary as 'the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business.' I know that this is a secular word and I am very well aware that the word 'networking' is normally used in the management sectors. Nevertheless, the beauty of networking is that each one is connected with the other one or the other way who all come from different walks of life. Therefore, my contention is that networking upholds the value of relationship. If this relationship can be tapped creatively, the church will begin to grow automatically.

The Prospect of Mission

My contention is that we need to develop a new vision of mission. In other words, the church must be able to reclaim the vision of Jesus Christ on mission. Therefore, first of all, we must realize the fact that the church is the community of the reign of God who proclaims the good news. Secondly, if the networking needs to be effective, the believers must be able to exemplify Jesus Christ. Thirdly, to ensure this good news compelling and palpable, it must be translated into the local culture. Finally, the church should hold to it the value that it is the servant of the reign of God.

Conclusion

I have been arguing that we need a renewed vision in our mission today which considers believers to play a vital role in mission. In other words, the believers must be in action to propagate the gospel of Jesus Christ creatively. In short, to be a church means to be less tied to a building and more about participating in a way of life. It means an understanding of belongingness to the Lord and deeply rooted in God's word of promise in Jesus Christ. If we are the gathered and gathering community as the people of God, then we need to learn better how to go out and living God's mission wherever and whenever. This is the task which is entrusted upon the church that lives in the end times. Let us have a redefined vision of mission and participate in the mission of God faithfully and creatively.