

# Foreword

In these Devotionals we are doing, the aim is to let our believers in New Life re-capture God's love constantly and personally and be filled with it daily. This third devotional on Global Mission is aptly authored by Ps Lawrence, our Mission Pastor who has been passionate about our churches entering into the higher level of enjoying God's blessings as faith and love are expressed in taking the Gospel into the nations. Being a Blessing to the Nations has been an integral part of God's Vision for New Life Restoration Centre churches. Love received and enjoyed must also be released.

At the end of each Devotional, we have a few questions. Basically, they point us to reflect on one or two areas of emphasis and hopefully train us in the habit of love: love received and love released.

Enjoy the next few days of interacting with God as we train our churches in the habit of daily reflection and meditation, making successful Christians empowered in the Word of God.

God bless you.

Jeremiah Yap  
Group Senior Pastor

# Introduction

'God's Love for the Nations' is the theme of this devotional. This booklet, with six daily devotionals listed, is prepared for the Year of God's Love 2010 and in conjunction with Missions Month in May.

1. Love      John 3:16
2. Go        Matthew 28:19-20
3. Live      Acts 2:42-47
4. Give      2 Corinthians 9:6-7
5. Ask      Psalm 2:8
6. Now      Matthew 9:35-38

The devotional thoughts presented here reflects the unchanging God of creation, whose love and grace, as experienced through Jesus Christ, gives all mankind hope for eternal life. His love extends to every nation, tribe, language and people (Revelation 14:6).

From Genesis to Revelation, the Lord God continues to call men and women to come to Him.

Genesis 3:8-9: "Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

Revelation 3:20: "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."

In the Gospels, Jesus says, "Come, follow me" (Matthew 4:19).

Let us reflect on God's call to us as we read and meditate on God's Word, His plan and His promises, and allow Him to enrich our lives.

Lawrence Chen  
Group Executive Pastor  
1<sup>st</sup> May 2010

## Day One – Love!

*Today's Scripture: John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

When Adam and Eve sinned, God did not pack up and leave the earth behind. He didn't decide to start all over again. Instead, He patiently, lovingly and continually works to bring the fallen world back to Himself. God is motivated by His love for the world.

Love came down and everything changed.

I remember my first trip to Bihar, India in 2001. We flew to Kolkata and travelled by train to Patna. Whilst clearing immigration in Kolkata, the officer asked for our destination. I answered, "Bihar". He replied "but there is nothing in Bihar". I replied "there are many people...people we hope to help". The officer grinned as if to say "good luck". When we arrived, Rev Ponraj described Bihar as "the graveyard of missions" and the Lord is in the process of transforming it into "the vineyard of missions". We have never been to a place so poor and needy, ever, on any mission. Our motivation for Jesus' mission must also stem from love.

The Lord reminded me, I came for you...I first loved you (1 John 4:19). Jesus gave up everything in heaven just to give us a second chance in life – salvation. When we experience God's unconditional love for us and calls us His sons and daughters, He is calling us His very own. Wow!

When we translate this divine love into human perception, sonship does not depend on conduct, behaviour, performance or even success. It is by birth into the family. This is with our heavenly Father. We are his children by birth – born again. **The Lord loves us.** Full stop. So "**love one another**...by this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35). Also, "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).

Is this possible? Is this too difficult? Jesus has shown us the way.



## Day Two – Go!

Today's Scripture: *Matthew 28:19-20 - Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

Jesus commands us to “go”. We need permission to stay! The gospel is the account of Jesus leaving His throne in heaven, coming to earth, taking the form of man and going to the cross for us. He sacrificed all for love. He set us a powerful example and expects us to follow in His footsteps (Philippians 2:1-7). Some explained that they had personal obligations such as caring for the elderly, attending to family matters but Jesus stressed that all else is lesser in comparison to following Jesus and becoming His disciple (Luke 9:57-62).

When Jesus called some fishermen in Galilee, namely Simon and Andrew, they at once left their nets – gave up their small ambitions – and followed Him (Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:1-11).

Are we ready to go for love? If we become too comfortable where we are, we may resist the Lord's call for us to go where He desires. Don't assume that when the Lord calls, it is meant for the other person. He may lead us across the room to share the good news to our colleague or to some lonely remote village across the planet. He is with us wherever He sends us.

Be prepared to GO!



## Day Three - Live!

*Today's Scripture: Acts 2:42-47 - They devoted themselves to... Everyone was filled with awe... All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

This is the life in the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost Day, there was a sound like blowing of a violent wind from heaven and tongues of fire rested on each one of them (Acts 2:2-4). Then Peter, who had just denied Jesus, rose up in courage and faith to speak with boldness. He proclaimed the dawn of a new community of faith. The normal Christian life we are to live from then onwards is fully described in Acts 2:42-47. The early church was formed with their primary focus on the Lord.

How much have we remodeled life for our urban setting and lost the impact and power of the Holy Spirit? Have we organized our lives and families around comfort, trends, security, financial wealth, good health, education, property and investments, business and beneficial connections? What are our present day focus and values?

If our values have changed, then our ability to influence others for Jesus will also change. Many were added then according to Acts 2:41. Few are added now. We desperately need to re-visit the life of the believers then. What did they do right?

If we desire to see the same loving and powerful God at work in and through our lives, we need to surrender our plans and embrace His purpose for us. He knows what is best for our lives. He is our Abba Father (Romans 8:12-17). He calls on us passionately - "You are My people" and our response can only be "You are my God" (Hosea 2:23). There is no one else. Live for Jesus!

# My Journal

Do you think church life today is the same as it was before? If not, what do you think are the differences then and now?

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Has God changed from the time of the early church? If not, then have we changed and how have we changed? How have our values changed?

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## Day Four – Give!

*Today's Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 - Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

In my book *Impacting Nations – New Life Churches Missions Handbook*, I wrote “to a generous church, as you pray regularly, give financially, go to encourage, change your vacation plans, utilize your precious annual leave, save your money, lead teams, mobilize your cell groups, launch your children, prepare your testimonies and messages, pack your bags, leave the comfort of your homes, bring your gifts, love and care for those on the missions field, a BIG thank you”. I meant it from my heart. You are an awesome church!

Many of you have sown into God's kingdom very sacrificially and intentionally. In spite of the financial crisis, you honour your pledges towards mission. “And God is able to make all grace abound on you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8). And the Lord adds, “you will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion” (2 Corinthians 9:11). What a promise from the Lord! Receive it!

It is my joy to give to mission and to inspire others, and I will continue for as long as the Lord sees fit. Don't stop giving your love, your talents and your time. Don't ever stop. I do not apologize for mission emphasis in New Life Churches throughout these years – including launching mission fund, sponsoring missionaries and planting churches. This has made us world Christians.

God initiated mission. Join me as we join the Lord in His mission to the world. Start with giving our money. Invest in His Kingdom. “Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:20-21). Our Christian maturity is deeply affected by what we sow. Let us sow generously in everything we do in our Christian lives. The harvest we reap will be Christ-likeness.



## Day Five - Ask!

Today's Scripture: *Psalms 2:8 - Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.*

This Messianic psalm represents the whole world organized against the Lord in deliberate opposition to His rule, and points to the contrast between the agitation and futility of rebellious peoples and the equanimity and immutable purposes of God.

In such cosmic crisis, the Lord declares that all we need to do is to “ask of Him” and “He will answer”. All heaven and earth is His, and nothing will cause Him to lose hold of it. When the Lord can answer such a big request, all our daily prayers can definitely be answered too.

God loves His people. He has a special interest in His people. When it comes to mobilizing workers for the harvest, Jesus says, “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:38). The foundation for mission is prayer.

Why do we not ask as we should? Perhaps we are afraid to put God to the test or we worry that God might not answer our prayers. Yet God promises that if we ask, we will receive (Matthew 7:7). Jesus warned that apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). Without being intimately acquainted with God and His will, our labour would be futile. Perhaps we fail to ask because we misunderstand the heart of God. Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem (Matthew 23:37). If we truly have God's love within us, we will feel compelled to plead with God on behalf of those who face His imminent judgement.

Asking requires faith. Answers may come instantly or may take many years. Yet, we need to be the ones who will stand in the gap for individuals and nations. Ask, pray and never give up.

# My Journal

What are the things we normally ask God for? Are they mostly personal or does it include other areas such as church, nation and global needs?

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Are your prayers always answered? Why do you think sometimes our prayers go unanswered?

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## Day Six – Now!

Today's Scripture: *Matthew 9:35-38 - Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field".*

The **motivation** of Jesus is LOVE.

The **message** of Jesus is good news – forgiveness, joy, peace, life, hope and love for all.

The **method** of Jesus is teaching, preaching, healing, deliverance and sending.

The **men** of Jesus are compassionate, passionate, with tears for cities and committed to the cross.

The **moment** of Jesus' love and touch is now.

We are often preoccupied with our career, family, church, ministry, anointing that we may have forgotten our call to give priority to the Lord's harvest that is ripe.

From my study, I look out into the garden of my house in Melbourne and I see a fig tree. The tree is filled with fruits – green and turning purple – with many (at least seven) Rosella birds perched on its branches eating the ripening fruits. There is a window of harvest. If I do not pick the figs now, the birds will eat them all. This is the urgency. I stopped my journal of this devotion to pick the fruits. It just can't wait.

It is the same with the Lord's harvest, the time is now. We cannot procrastinate any longer. "Now is the time of God's favour, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:1-2).

People need the Lord. People need to experience God's love. Not tomorrow, but NOW!

# My Journal

What is your motivation to share God's love?

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Consider your harvest field – your family, workplace, school, neighbourhood etc. What are some ways you can share the love of God in your harvest field?

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