

**THE NEW TESTAMENT MODELS FOR
THE EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN INDIA**

A Thesis

Submitted to



Bible University

For the Award of

MASTER OF THEOLOGY

By

G PRASAD RAO

Bible University
New Brunswick, CA

2009

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Under the Guidance of

Dr. S M Young

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DECLARATION

I, declare that this thesis entitled

**THE NEW TESTAMENT MODELS FOR
THE EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN INDIA,**

submitted to the Bible University of CA, USA for the award of degree of Master of Theology (Th. M) is the result of my own study carried out under the scholarly guidance of professor Dr. S M Young, Bible University. I further declare that the work has not been previously submitted for any other degree, either in this or any other university.

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Date :

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that this thesis entitled, THE NEW TESTAMENT MODELS FOR THE EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN INDIAN CONTEXT submitted by G Prasad Rao, is product of the research carried out by him under my guidance

Grade

S M Young
Guide

Seal of the University

Date



DEDICATION



I dedicate this thesis to my beloved father

Mr. Suba Rao Ganayaka

who led to me Christ and put the fundament my learning character,
showing me the joy of intellectual pursuit ever since I was a child.

G Prasad Rao

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis arose in part out of years of research and experiences since I came to Bangalore city for my further studies. By that time, I have worked with a great number of people whose contribution in assorted ways to the research and the making of the thesis deserved special mention. It is a pleasure to convey my gratitude to them all in my humble acknowledgment.

In the first place I would like to record my gratitude to Professor Dr. S M Young, Bible University, Canada, for his supervision, advice, and guidance from the very early stage of this research as well as giving me extraordinary experiences throughout the work. Above all and the most needed, he provided me unflinching encouragement and support in various ways.

At the same time I extend my gratitude to Bible University's Board of Directors and staff for allowing me to do my Th..M. studies beside my ministries by being remain in my own situate.

Where would I be without my family? My parents deserve special mention for their inseparable support and prayers. My Father, Suba Rao Ganayaka, in the first place is the person who put the fundament my learning character, showing me the joy of intellectual pursuit ever since I was a child. My Mother, Prasadini Ganayaka, is the one who sincerely raised me with her caring and gently love.

Words fail me to express my appreciation to my wife Siwi whose dedication, love and persistent confidence in me, has taken the load off my shoulder. I owe her for being unselfishly let her intelligence, passions, and ambitions collide with mine.

And also my little daughter *Rachel* for becoming reason of joy and peace during my weary and distress point in time.

I shall always be remain thankful to my dear uncle Rev. Somesh Rao Ganayaka, for his continues prayer for me, my family and my ministries, which has been a supportive strength behind my studies and ministries.

My heartfelt thanks go to the Bible University for the facilities offered for the study that has gone into the preparation of this thesis. I am deeply grateful to the staff of the Department who encouraged me and showed their appreciation of my work.

I am indebted to several libraries and collection of Bangalore and other for allowing me to use their libraries in my research work. I thank my co-pastor Venu Gopal of Maranatha Fellowship for providing me insightful most sought after resources form his personal libraries and for being beside as brother trough out my study.

I can not express in words for the family love and supportive prayers of my dear aunty Mrs. Saraswati and Mrs. Sangeetha Venu Gopal.

My heartfelt thanks go also to Maple Suites' administration and staff for permitting me to use their computer for my research of this paper.

I say a deep felt "thank you" to several, family members, Prakash Rao, Amith Missal, David Missal, friends Rev P.C. Laldwauma, Mrs. Jenny, Rev Joy Pamey & Mrs. Meshan, brother Kaiphen, brother John Wesley, brother Shadrach, brother Vinod, brother Krishna, sister Pramsy, sister Adi and other prayer partners, supporters, colleagues and companions for being supportive and caring siblings, who, by their interest in my work encouraged me till its final completion.

Finally, I would like to thank everybody who was important to the successful realization of thesis, as well as expressing my apology that I could not mention personally one by one.

G Prasad Rao

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A sincere attempt has been made in this thesis to explore the prospects of Effective Christian Education India from the New Testament outlook.

The thesis has three chapters; each chapter is subdivided into different topics.

Chapter one deals with the current leadership of Indian politics (an analytical and critical study). It is a study of some unique qualities, methods and strategies of Jesus and the dimensions to which we can apply these qualities in the political leadership in India.

Chapter two deals with Apostle Paul's missionary methods used in the multi-cultural context of early Church History. The chapter is to draw out the same application of Paul to Indian context in the fields of Christian Education.

Chapter three deals with Apostle Thomas; his methods of Gospel and strategies and revelation received from the Lord being applied to Indian Christian Education

The origin of Christianity as history in India draws back to the very beginning of the early Church History in 1st century B.C. apostle Thomas was the very first Christian missionary to India, who was called by Jesus Himself and personally had experiences the Power and Person of the risen Lord Jesus Christ by teaching the wounds of His resurrected – glorified body. And Thomas called Him, My Lord, My God who after few days was commissioned with His authority and power to teach all the Nations.

Biblically thinking Jesus in His sovereign knowledge knows that Thomas would be the first missionary and martyr for His Gospel in India. Therefore, Jesus Christ Himself remains always the origin and source of Christian Education in India and others parts of the world.

Through less has been recorded and told about St. Thomas contributions towards the Christian Education, his successors found the doors open to this land of mysteries,

India with much more contributions towards this particular field. In numbers they are many, but few have played role models for Christian Education in India as the Scripture and history exposes.

Christian Education has undergone massive changes in philosophy and methodology over the past few thousand years. Changes happen because of the lifestyle and education levels of people and because of innovative thinkers who shape the world around them. In this paper I describe the changes, adjustments, motivations, helps, and hindrances to Christian education by describing the individuals or groups of people within periods of this world's history who were the rudder behind a philosophy of Christian education. Using this approach, he gives us a picture of where Christian education came from and where it is now. Let me begin with Jesus Christ, the Master and Foundation of Christian Education:

CHAPTER ONE

JESUS CHRIST : THE MODEL FOR THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN INDIA

1.1. Displayed in three-fold Features of Jesus' Life

- 1.1.1. The Great Claims of Jesus Christ Presents this fact
- 1.1.2. The Great Ministries of Jesus Christ Prove this fact.
- 1.1.3. The Great Commission of Jesus Christ Proclaims this fact.

1.2. Displayed in three-fold Characteristics of Jesus' Teachings

- 1.2.1. Jesus Christ – The Spiritual Educator
- 1.2.2. Jesus Christ – The Ethical Educator
- 1.2.3. Jesus Christ – The Practical Educator

1.3. Displayed in three-fold Methods of Jesus' Training His Disciples

- 1.3.1. An Advance Focus Training – Remnant
- 1.3.2. A Multi Facets Training – Result
- 1.3.3. A Contextualized Training – Revelation

CHAPTER ONE

JESUS CHRIST : THE MODEL FOR THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN INDIA

Christian Education had its beginning with Jesus Christ who brought unique freshness to the teaching task. He taught God's message as the One heaving authority. Charles Benton Eavey has stated it well,

“Teaching was His chief business. He was often a healer, sometimes a worker of miracles, frequently a preacher, but always a Teacher.”¹

Jesus Christ was the divine teacher and called and accepted by other and the foundation of the Christian education is explained in below two points:-

- Disclosed in Three-fold Prospect
- Demonstrated in Three-fold Characteristics of Jesus' Teachings

1.1. Disclosed in Three-fold Prospect

1.1.1. The Great Claims of Jesus Christ presents this fact.

“I Will build My Church... and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it”
Matthew 16:18

He is both the foundation as well as the founder of the essence of Christianity. He is the source of spirituality, the Author and Finisher of our faith, and the Hope of glory of all human being.

Rightly Apostle Paul declares that Jesus Christ is the Foundation (I Corinthians 3:11). And so He remains always the Forerunner of Christian Education, for every nation in the world. If so, Indian Church needs to lay their base on the true foundation of Jesus Christ for her effective – contextual education.

¹ C. B. Eavey, *History of Christian Education*, Chicago: Moddy Press, 1964), P. 78.

If foundation be destroyed, what can the righteous do...? Psalms 11:3. in any context and every context or culture Christ Himself is to set as the only base and foundation particularly in the field of Christian education. Christianity does not ignore cultures and context of society. Jesus Himself was born and brought up in a particular culture and context. But He always determined Himself to please His Heavenly Father above the cultures, traditions and above all. Indian Christian Education will be effective when it is based on Christ Himself rather than her orthodox traditions.

1.1.2. The Great Ministries of Jesus Christ Prove this fact.

Jesus was an educator. People who knew Him of His time repeatedly called Him 'Teacher'. A sincere student of the Bible will know the preaching ministries and teaching ministries of Jesus always went hand-to-hand. But the purpose of both the ministries seems to be different Dr J Randall has mentioned it clearly:-

“If Jesus’ preaching were designed to save people, His teaching, as rule was intended to show people how to live once they are saved.”²

Beginning from the Sermon on the Mounts (Matthew 5 – 7) to the Sermon on the Upper Room (John 13 – 17), it contains His wide and range of themes and instructions for all the saints of all ages. All His teachings served up to a single main purpose – to reveal the Father in Heaven to His Children.

“All of His teaching, delivered in all kinds of places, was characterized by simplicity, authority, brevity vividness and picturesque ness.”³

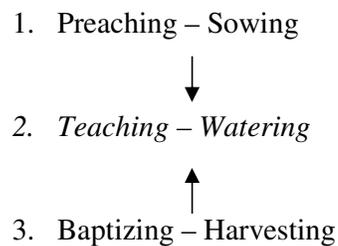
I have heard people saying that a teacher may not be able to serve as pastor, but a pastor is and must be a teacher. If so I believe even a evangelist and a prophet must be able to teach God’s word to people to bring them to God’s salvation and revival. India needs qualified teachers as well as pastors for the bright and effective growth of the Christianity in the midst of diversity of culture and context.

² J. Randall O’ Brien, *Who is Jesus*, Nashville, Convention Press, 1993, P. 46.

³ Herbert Lackyer, *All the Doctrines of the Bible*, MI: Zondervan Publishing House Rapids, 1992, P. 49.

1.1.3. The Great Commission of Jesus Christ Proclaims this fact.

Teaching ministry of Jesus definitely has the vital role in building of His Church. Not only the prophesied about the birth of the Church (Matthew 16:18) but also given His life for it as ransom. His Great Commission reached His called out and trained disciples before the historical birth of Church, where *teaching* has prior place along with preaching and baptizing. Matthew 28: 19 – 20 states the Great Commission, where ‘*teaching* to all the Nations’ is listed first, where as Mark (16:15) put *preaching* in prior to *baptizing*. In either case *baptizing* the saved ones comes later. And it is a known fact to every soul winner that preaching takes first place followed by teaching and then finally baptizing the believers. No one to be baptize unless he or she is taught what is and why is baptism. So the order of evangelism in the Great Commission is clear and seems like as in below –



As per this above order teaching becomes the vital link between the other great ministries, preaching and baptizing. Teaching (watering) ministry is long process in composed to preaching (sowing) and baptizing (harvesting). Rightly Jesus has given more stress on teaching in His Great Commission to His disciples; He said, “...teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you...”.

We need observe here that *teaching is continual process* to be followed and obeyed by His Church today. Teaching is to be given before baptism and after baptism. It is to say teaching to be carried out till Jesus come. It is not just teaching, but teaching them *to observe all things*. Thus it is not just passing the total information, but making them observe all things. It goes beyond even observing all thing i.e. making them disciples of Jesus Christ who will be also able to make disciples making disciples. It is an ongoing circle and process till His coming. To observe all things it requires our time, desire and commitment. Teaching and learning never ends with baptism. Follow-up is responsibility of each disciples of His Great Commission. Thus

Christian education is an unending continual process of the Church till Jesus comes again.

Church in India need make firm this fact that follow up to make disciples of Jesus is commissioned by Jesus Himself. To my knowledge follow-up is not been taken into much consideration in most of the Churches, mission and training centers, college and seminaries of India. It just left out as passing the information in the colleges and churches. Graduates are to be disciples making disciples. Jesus and Paul have given the same method of Christian education. It is called DMD method (Disciples Making Disciples). Without follow-up it looks like a well planted seed left out to dry and die. It is not the question of how many graduates have been produced of the seminaries, but how many graduates are in His great mission of making disciples. Great Commission of Jesus is not counted on how many numbers of Churches planted, but how many disciples been made. As Christianity is failure without making disciples so also without *teaching* it would be the failure of Christian Education in India.

Teaching also is to be for *all* the believers. He said teaching them to make disciples of *all Nations*. All the believers are to be given the same importance and concentration in Christian Education. It does not mean all the believers have the same capacity and gifted to observe the teachings. When we say Christian Education is for all the believers it is to say that all beavers have right and required to be taught according to their context and capability. Christian Education in India need positive to this regards and make sure that her all Churches are taught and trained.

Christian education in India must know that making disciples is much more significance and essential than social service and other activities. This could be the reason for the recent draw back in India churches. Few years back there were re-conversion from Christianity taken places in several places of India. Those who were thought to be born again believers in Jesus went back to their won religions. The reason is simple and open before us – the salvation experience was not real or the follow up was not done. There would have possibility that church given priority to social development of the new believers than their growth in Jesus. I am not against any social service of Christian missions. Jesus did help the poor and cared for them. But it must be notice that Jesus never just fed them with bread and heal their diseases; He never ignored to teach them the truth of lives and God's Kingdom. In most of the

incident as recorded in the Gospels Jesus first taught them and then met their needs. In either case, whether He taught after or before He met their needs, one thing is very sure that He never just left them without teaching them.

As Apostle Paul listed the five-fold ministries of the Church bestowed by the risen and ascended Christ, he put meaningfully and chronologically *teaching* at the last. And the reason could be that the continue effect of the formers four ministries, namely, apostle, prophet, evangelist and pastor rely on teaching ministry in order to make a born again child of God a follower of Jesus Christ and as mature complete man of God. When some one receive Jesus as his or her Savior, he or she becomes a new born baby in God’s house; but as he or she is fed continually the teachings, he or she will progressively become mature into the image of Jesus Christ.

Look at again what Paul has to say here, “ all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for *teaching*....for *training* in righteousness... that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good works” (2 Timothy 4:16 NASV). Good works, again, here too come next, after teaching. Whether it is His Great Commission or be His given five fold ministries, teaching ministries serve the great purpose till the end of Church period for the edification of the Church.

Jesus Christ, the Foundation of the Christian Education laid this truth that teaching is one of the prominent and dominate ministries of the Church. So also it should of Churches in India. India should give more priority to education beside other ministries in the Church and out of the Church.

1.2. Demonstrated in Three-fold Characteristics of Jesus’ Teachings

Three important characters of Jesus as teacher are explained below chart :-

	Jesus Christ as:-	Purpose	Demonstrate
1	The Spiritual Educator	To Show the Way	His Mission
2	The Ethical Educator	To Reveals the Truth	His Authority
3	The Practical Educator	To Manifest the Life	His Solution

1.2.1. Jesus Christ – The Spiritual Educator

Jesus Christ as the Spiritual Teacher gave priority to the spiritual aspect of his disciples.

The records of the four gospels reveal so vividly that the teachings and preaching of Jesus were concerned more on the man's spiritual part rather than the rest of His need. It does not mean that Jesus ignored other needs and aspects of man in the world. But His first concern and priority was man's spirit. Never ever we see in the Scripture Christ's denying the human's physical needs.

He fed the multitude with five loaves and two fishes as well instructed in saying, 'blessed are those who are hunger and thirst for righteousness' ; he cried when His friend Lazarus died and after four days raised him from the dead then acclaimed saying, ' I am the Resurrection and Life....whose ever believes though die yet shall rise again'. He was hungry yet taught His disciples to trust in their heavenly Father for tomorrow eating and wearing.

There are several more examples and incidents we find in the gospels which tell that Christ taught people to have right relationship with God their Creator first and then with neighbors, their fellow creatures, too. He taught to seek first the Kingdom of God and to have desires for the treasures in heaven rather than of the world.

Jesus Christ has been greatest spiritual educator for the ages and will be in the ages to come.

And the question to be asked in Christian education system in India is, does the outcome of Indian Christian Education produces spiritual edification, personal revival and edification or just academic excellency. There are many Christian institutions that begin with great zeal and motive of training the believers in righteousness but fail gradually to hold on to the sole aim of it and end up with just graduating hundreds without any spiritual awakening. This is a great mistake that need to rectify in the system of Indian Christian Education. India should give concentration on this things which even the desire of God's won heart rather than high standard of accommodation, foods, updated facilities etc. it need to see that man and woman of

God are being matured and complete in Jesus Christ. Thus Jesus said to His disciples to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect.

Jesus Christ as the Spiritual Teacher involved Himself in the lives of His followers.

A true spiritual teacher lives within the culture and never ever can isolate himself from the culture. We have seen and we are seeing in and around India several spiritual Gurus or teachers who keep away themselves from the community of their own. In the case of Jesus, He moved among the community of His time, understood each situation of the community; and therefore He was able to relate the other needs and aspects of the human spiritual aspects.

Jesus called and separate His disciples and told them to remain with Him (Mark 3: 14); and He lived among them unlike many other Indian Gurus or teachers who live in bungalows and luxurious suites. This is the reason their guidelines and arts of life do not provide the way of salvation to mankind. Jesus was accessible to His disciples. Here is the point for us to think when it comes to Indian Christian Education. As teacher and leader we should be accessible. His availability made Him to win and train very handful but powerful and dedicated disciple making disciples.

Jesus Christ as the Spiritual Teacher lived inside them

Spiritually taking these characters of Jesus, we know from the Bible that Jesus is the spiritual teacher because He lives in us. He not only involved Himself to the culture and social lives of His followers but also He lived inside them to show the Way of Salvation.

1.2.2. Jesus Christ – The Ethical Educator

As Jesus is the beginning and source of the spiritual aspects of man, so is the only revealed and approved source by God for Christianity's ethics aspects. He is the standard and foundation of the Christian Ethics. In defining Christian Ethics Dr Luckyer put this way:

“ An (Christian) ethic is a standard of character, and God’s standard for us IN Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:5; 2 Timothy 3:16 -17; Heb 12:2; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 Timothy 2:6).”⁴

Looking back to the India, the most loved ethical teacher and revolutionary is not other than the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. His exemplary leadership – ethical life, moments and teachings have not only dynamic impact in India and Asia, but Africa too is highly influenced by Gandhism

It takes us more close to our point here when we know this fact that Mahatma Gandhi’s philosophy and life was inspired by most of the teachings of Jesus Christ, particularly the Sermon on the Mount. Even the Patriotism Spirit of him which is known as *Satyagraha* revolution was a clear reflection of Jesus’ teachings on him.

However, Russell brings out a sharp difference in between Mahatma’s ethical impact and Messiah’s ethical impact in India, as below,

“ Mahatma Gandhi’s teaching on *Ahimsa* was inspired by the Sermon on the Mount. His program of *Satyagraha* was intended as discipline for the practice of *Ahimsa*. It is true that *Satyagraha* was meant to be discipline of *non-violence* to over come hatred. In Jesus’ teaching, however, a person’s conduct towards another is not in expectation of any reward. What Jesus taught was ‘Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors’ (Matthew 5:14), where as *Satyagraha* is a non-violence resistance. Jesus’ teachings teaching calls for radical non-resistance to evil and the positive practice of love. Evil is overcome not by evil but by good. Jesus not only taught evil but demonstrated it is His life which culminated in His death on the cross.”⁵

Wide range of differences between Jesus’ ethical foundation and Gandhism, however, never teaches that Gandhism had less impact on India, but rather India and

⁴ Herbert Luckyer, *All the Doctrines of the Bible*; MI : Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1992, P 221.

⁵ J. Russell Chandran, *Christian Ethics*, New Delhi: ISPCK, 1997, P 62.

her churches should learn the lesson of drawing her ethical standard from Jesus Christ just as her Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi did.

Anyone who is very well with the India and her context today will never dare to avoid these amazing ethical teachings of Jesus rather to adopt them as unique pearls of Christian Education in India. Today, Indian missions and institutions should keep the followings in the front, drawn from the ethical teachings of Jesus, while educating her people for the Kingdom of God :-

- a. India and her education have to depend on God fully for the revival, growth and best outcome of Christian education, since poverty is an ongoing and increasing crisis in India.
- b. Christian institutions have to be conscious about this vital fact that India being a vast country of multi-culture and multi-religions cannot bring growth and prosperity unless they become meek heart and wise in conducts.
- c. India still needs more people with merciful and generous hearts, especially when it comes to the churches and Christian mission of India. Indian churches and missions need to learn to help each other and be self-supported institutions rather than always depend on western and foreign contributions.

Three lessons can be easily applied to Christian Education in India from the Sermon of the Mount:

- i. *The Beatitude* : The Fundamental Characteristics of Christian Education.

The Beatitude is the basic passage which teaches the true Characteristics not only of an individual Christian but also of all kinds of Christian missions and institutions. It teaches to be humble and meek, to be pure in heart and thirst for justice and inner holiness. The disciples of Jesus displayed all of these characters in their ministries and lived. Christian education without these fundamental characteristics is impossible to fulfill His Commission and win souls for His Kingdom, particularly in the Indian context of today. India is watching the lives of Christians and not only their services. In the midst of multi-cultural and multi-religious context Indian Christian education requires to maintain a highly appreciated exemplary life and display the life of Jesus Christ.

ii. *The Salt and Light* : The Influence of Christian Education

Similarly, Christianity is called to be an influence. The core meaning of leadership is nothing but influence. To be a leader it does not require just many followers, a good teacher is never known only for his skillful teachings; all that last to be a good leader or teacher is influence.

Salt and light influence such a way that the world cannot survive without them. These lose their forms while used but never lose their identity. In the midst of rapid and huge contribution of information technology of this 21st century, Christian education has to be like a salt and light in India to pass the knowledge of Christ.

iii. The Kingdom of God :The Destiny of Christian Education

“*Thy Kingdom Come....Thy will be done*” is to be the purpose and prayer of Christian Education. The sole purpose behind every Christian institution, particularly of Christian activities, particularly of Christian education is to establish the Kingdom of God in India rather than contributing books knowledge and information. Christian education in India should look up for theocracy rather than only theology.

In summary, Jesus Christ our ethical educator gave priority to Christian *Characters* rather than so-called Christian *Charisma*, to Christian *Influence* than Christian *Information*, to look ahead for Christian *Theocracy* in India rather than just Christian Theology to reveal the truth in His authoritative ethical teachings.

1.2.3. Jesus Christ – The Practical Educator

Doctor Luke records it in this way, ‘...that Jesus began both to do and teach’ (Luke 1:1)

The fact that Jesus being known as the supreme spiritual teacher and called as the best ethical teacher is proved strongly because he practiced what He taught. First He gave Himself to the lessons and then He taught. He is the best practiced teacher the world has ever seen and will see. It is because :-

- i. He *practiced* what He taught His followers
- ii. He taught practical *Lessons* to His followers
- iii. He *Made* His followers to practice what He taught.

- i. He practiced what He taught His followers

He showed them first in Himself that He taught them. Luke rightly put the order i.e. ‘...Jesus began both to DO and TEACH’; He prayed first, before He would teach them to pray; He fasted and then taught the principles of God accepted fasting ; He loved His enemies and so commanded His disciples to love one another; He trusted and obeyed His Father in heaven and so advised them to do so.

- ii. He taught practical lessons to His followers.

View through the Gospels records, you will see more of practical than theoretical. He emphasized more on obeying the commands of God rather than learning them. Jesus always looked for actions than methods. This fact has been missing in Christian education today, especially in Indian mission and institutions. There have been many books, thesis, methods, theories for mission, evangelism, church planting, etc but to my surprised the application of those has always been very less. The books and research remains as reference and information documents. Jesus, unlikely, emphasized always practical in His lesson and life.

- iii. He made His followers to practice what He taught.

He lessons and His practical exemplary life did not remain as lesson as sermon. Jesus made His disciples to experience the results and fruits of the lessons. He paid the tax and set an example of obedience to government and at the same time made sure that Peter pays the tax. Jesus sent the seventy for the evangelism and received and evaluated their field reports. The great commission is another instance to mention that He even on the last movement made His disciples to practice what He taught.

Christian education should not be end in the class room, it is not over when the academic year is completed or the curriculum is taught fully. Jesus said teach them *to observe*. It is not just teaching but teaching them to observe. Christian education

should see beyond the classroom and makes sure it is implemented. It should make the students to learn as well as make them to do. Christian education is remains just information board of education without *follow up*. Practical life in the Christian life is the solution to overcome of the problem and difficulties, to defend the faith and to understand the mysteries of the Lord mentioned in the Scripture.

1.3. Displayed in three-fold Methods of Jesus' Training His Disciples

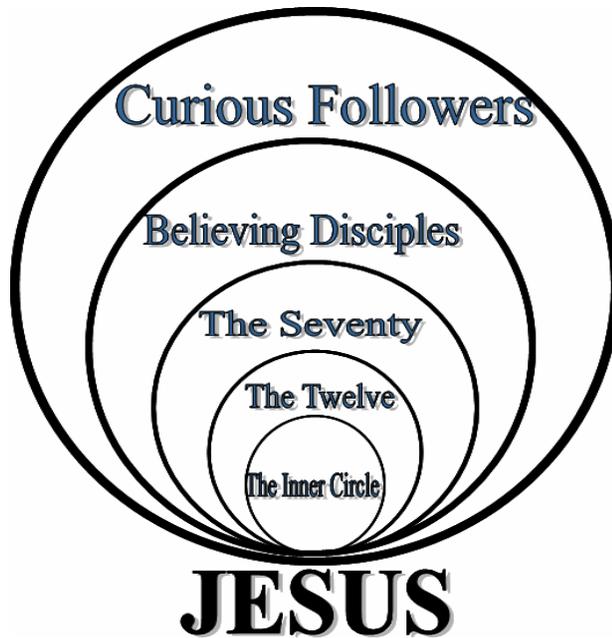
1.3.1. An Advance Focus – A Remnant

Advanced discipleship is not accomplished merely through preaching, teaching, or a one-on-one Bible study. Jesus was a mentor to the twelve – a personal trainer, tutor, and teacher. He lived and traveled with the twelve; His life was intertwined with theirs, and theirs with His.

Thousands believed in Jesus and committed themselves to Him. But Jesus did not commit himself to *all of them*. John tells us that during the Feast of Passover, “many believed in His name when they saw the signs that He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men....” (John 2:23-25 NKJV). Jesus entrusted Himself to a smaller group of disciples, His emerging leaders, those who would lead the early church after He had returned to heaven. Though many were focused on Him, He focused on a small group whom the Father had given Him to equip for ministry (John 17:6).

Jesus' Spheres of Discipleship

When someone says “Jesus' disciples,” we often think of the twelve. The truth is that Jesus had thousands of “disciples,” but over time this large group of people diversified into five different stages of spiritual development:



Decreasing numbers of disciples in each sphere Increasing focus of Jesus' per
disciple:-

1. Curious Followers

Jesus had thousands of Jewish adherents who followed Him as a prophet, and were evaluating whether He was the Messiah. They were a crowd of curious unbelievers, but because they were following him, they were called “disciples.” Over time, Jesus’ teachings and the specter of persecution made them choose for or against Him. After the miracle at the wedding in Cana, some of Jesus’ disciples believed in Him (John 2:11). When his teachings became difficult, in John 6, other “disciples” turned away and followed him no more (John 6:64, 66).

2. Believing Disciples

Jesus had thousands who listened to His teachings, believed in Him (John 2:23, 4:39-41, 7:31, 8:30) and became true disciples. A number of years later, the residents of Antioch began to call these disciples “Christians,” and the name has stuck with us since then.

3. The Seventy

Jesus chose seventy people and sent them out in twos to do preparatory evangelism in the towns to which he was coming (Luke 10:1).

4. *The Twelve*

Jesus committed himself to being a mentor to twelve men for three years. He “appointed twelve, that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach . . . “ Mark 3:14 (NKJV). See also Luke 9:1-2.

5. *The Inner Circle*

Jesus seemed to draw Peter, James, and John into more protracted discussions and to reveal things to them that he did not reveal to others. For instance, Jesus asked these three to join him when he healed Jarius’s daughter (Mark 5:37), when he was transfigured (Matthew 17:1-2) and when he was in deep anguish in Gethsemane (Mark 14:33). They were the first great leaders of the early church.

Thousands believed in Jesus and committed themselves to Him. But Jesus did not commit himself to *all of them*. John tells us that during the Feast of Passover, “many believed in His name when they saw the signs that He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men....” (John 2:23-25 NKJV). Jesus entrusted Himself to a smaller group of disciples, His emerging leaders, those who would lead the early church after He had returned to heaven. Though many were focused on Him, He focused on a small group whom the Father had given Him to equip for ministry (John 17:6). Again it is the quality and not the quantity in Christian Education. God always keep and use for His glory a *remnant* as seen through out the records of the Bible. It is not always how many are graduated but who are graduated.

Jesus Christ is the foundation of Christian education remains the vivid fact. His ministries and commission seals this fact. This becomes more visible in His teaching ministries. Christian education in India to be founded in the foundation of Jesus Christ is not only a requirement but also becomes the reason for its growth and prosperity in wining many souls to His kingdom.

1.3.2. A Multi Facets Training – Result

As a mentor, Jesus’ method of training the twelve was multi-faceted. It was more than an academic education. Because it was comprehensive, it was focused on only a few. Jesus had 12 men for 3 years – that’s an average of 4 per years.

To follow Jesus' example, our Christian educational methods in India of emerging leaders likewise be multi-faceted. The mentor's work is therefore an umbrella of related activities to develop the *hands* (ministries skill), the *heart* (Character) and the head (Biblical and theological knowledge) of an emerging leader.

Hands	Heart	Head
Practical Training	Private Training	Public Training
He must develop Interpersonal and Ministry skill	He must develop Godly Characters and Virtue	He must develop Biblical and Theological knowledge

Jesus maintain the balance and given equal important to each of these areas in training of the twelve. This is a big crisis seen in today's Christian education. Somewhere some place the training center lack one or two of these. I believe this method of Jesus should be applied in Indian Christian Education, should be displayed their curriculum and training methods to harvest disciples who can face easily today's world of high education and wider demands.

1.3.3. A Contextualized Training – Revelation

In the present teaching ministry of mainline churches Christian education is limited to the imparting of the Bible and Christian tradition. As it is observed, “ The Church school stops often at merely giving information about the Bible”. Quite often Christian education is understood as a set imparting Biblical content, stories and creeds. It is used as process of conditioning the mind, body, and spirit of learners according to the popularly norms and beliefs of the Church and society. But Christian education is much more and very different from above mentioned position. As *Herbert Hoefffer* succinctly remarked :

“The aim of Christian education is much more radical and dynamic. The emphasis is not knowing but becoming. Christian education is the process of relating God's people to the challenges and opportunities to their lives in His service.”⁶

⁶ Herbert Hoefffer, ed., *Debate of Missions, Madras* : Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research, 1979, P.448

Jesus Christ did the same. He communicated the content in their context and communicated the revelation. Thus they knew the reason of the communicated message and lived up to that. He made them understand the content by using both the context and available media available at that time. He used nature and field, birds, sky, trees, different professionals to communicate the revelation.

This is what to be changed in the Indian Christian education. Indian Christian education needs to avoid the old traditional methods of communicating the truth and adopt the present available resources, media and apply in the context. Particularly at the present time where media explosion has crept into the lives of our younger generation, they are losing their interest in the religious life of the Church as they feel the way Christian religious way of teaching is not on par with recent media techniques. On the other hand, the stories and mythologies of the other religious faiths are presently in such an effective manner they are more attracted to them. So between these two realities the Church needs to present Christian religious education which is appropriate and meaningful. Christian education must include a study of the environment, various religions in our area and the various burning issues of the time with which are struggling. If we are really serious about a Christian education for Indian Churches, we cannot ignore the contextual issues like widespread poverty, the impact of the national economic policy, globalization, media explosion, plurality of religions, cultures, festivals, fundamentalism, increasing tendency to violence and widening the social imbalance. Therefore, the content of Christian education, particularly in India, cannot be limited to the so-called Judeo-Christian heritage contained in the Bible and Christian tradition. We need to take the cultural heritage and socio-economic realities which are contained in Indian scriptures, literatures, news papers, and also in the day to day experience of learners.

Jesus Christ is, was and will be the foundation of Christian faith and education. His life, ministries and commission to His disciples are most vivid picture of this fact. His methods, meaning and reason of made His teachings imperishable. The methods of His training the Twelve are most required and lasting methods by today's Christian Education. Indian Christian education can be build up and effective on no other foundation than Jesus Christ Himself.

CHAPTER TWO

APOSTLE PAUL: THE MODEL FOR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN THE MULTI – CULTURAL CONTEXT OF INDIA

2.1. The Significance of Paul in Christian Education

2.1.1. Paul was a most influential teacher.

2.1.2. Paul was a highly educated teacher.

2.2. The Distinctiveness of Paul as an Educator

2.2.1. Paul as Missionary : The Mission-focus Educator

2.2.2. Paul as Theologian : The Christo-centric Educator

2.2.3. Paul as Writer : The Bible-based Educator

2.3. The Methods of Paul as an Educator

2.3.1. Mission to Unreached

2.3.2. Invariable Follow Up

2.3.3. The DMD Method

2.3.4. Accommodative and Cultural Adoptability

2.3.5. Ministry Partner

CHAPTER TWO

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2.1.The Significance of Paul in Christian Education

It is impossible to think about any other person than Apostle Paul for his contributions to the field of Christian Education following Jesus Christ. As a model for missionary, preacher, evangelist, interpreter, writer, leader and Christian life and hope, Paul is accurate person. Thus, he is one of the significant models for the Christian education in the New Testament for India and to her context.

2.1.1. Paul was the most influential teacher.

More than any other disciple or apostle, Paul was given the opportunity to set forth and explain the revelations of Jesus Christ. Because Paul was called to teach Gentiles rather than Jews, he was in the unique position of confronting and answering problems which could only be presented by those completely unfamiliar with Jewish traditions. So, he is also for India.

2.1.2. Paul was the highly educated teacher.

Paul's education can be measured to an extend through his written epistles. As Jew he studied under one of the most importance Rabbis of that period, Gammaniel. As a Jew he knew Hebrew; Aramaic was the spoken language used since Jesus' time; and Greek was ofcourse the official language. Paul had knowledge of such three languages. Perhaps this could be one the major reason Paul was able to interpret the Old Testament and communicate it to various people group of various context and culture accurately.

Through the Book of Acts it is understood Paul was from a educated background; his epistle like Romans dispels the knowledge and believe on Christian doctrines, Corinthians enlightens his ability of solving various crisis of the local Churches, Galatians proves his knowledge of Jew Law; letters like Thessalonians tells of his

heart for discouraged Christians with future hope; the letters to Timothy and Titus contain his knowledge of discipling and pastoral training; and Philemon reveals his care and passion of counseling and winning a perishing soul with the Gospel. Words and space here are not enough to describe the knowledge of Paul.

2.2.The Distinctiveness of Paul as an Educator

2.2.1. Paul as Missionary : The Mission-focus Educator

Apostle Paul was a missionary rather than an educator. His call was to be a missionary to the Gentiles. Paul established more churches than training centers. The churches themselves were converted into training centers which raised native missionaries.

There is an ongoing crisis of dedicated missionary and missionary training in Indian Christian Education today. Today training centers, bible schools and theological institutions are found more in cities like Bangalore than the churches. And the reason is not they are not mission oriented education. The motivation and result of every Christian institution suppose to be mission and church growth. Christian Education is a part of the mission rather than mission to be the part of Christian education. Christian education is born of the mission and not the mission born of the Christian education.

Training for the relevant mission to be implemented in Indian Christian Education. David Finnell and Sidney P Schmidt have put this very elaborately in six points which are very much practical to Indian context:-

“ First, the luxury of single method evangelism does not exist in our pluralistic societies. Most communities served by theological education are multi-cultured. Cross-cultural studies must be in the core of theological education in order to meet the local needs as well as the foreign mission challenge.

Second, a conviction that the church is to be reproduced by itself must be taught. If church growth is to be continued, congregations must be multiplied as well as expanded.

Third, people's consciousness must be developed to correct a lack of social insight on the part of churches. Hidden ethnic and socio economic groups of people have been passed by due to our people blindness. How to exegete a social mosaic must be a theme of theological education.

Fourth, urban studies must be incorporated in to the curriculum. Students should be taught to exegete the city as well as the Scriptures.

Fifth, innovative educational produces must be adopted. Residential theological education and TEE (*Theological Education through Extension*) must learn to incorporate.....

Sixth, local resources and leadership should have priority in theological education. There is still a place for the well-trained, adoptable foreign missionary in theological education, but national leadership is preferred where available....."⁷

2.2.2. Paul as Theologian : The Christo-centric Educator

' *We Proclaim Him...*' (Col 1 : 28), ' *we preach Christ, the Crucified*' (1 Cor 1 : 23)... In these verses Paul clearly declares that Christ Jesus was the theme of this sermon, teachings and ministries. There was nothing for Paul to preach or convey to the perishing people than Christ their Messiah and Savior. If we remove Christ from the Bible, there is nothing remain solid reason to believe and prove the genuineness of it. Bible is just another mythological story without Christ.

If so, Christian education has nothing to center on except Christ and his Commission. Teaching and learning are to be thoroughly and completely centered on Christ and His Church. In the multi-context of Indian, the best solution to be implement the truths of the Bible and win perishing souls is to be Christ centered and Christ-contextualized.

⁷ Ed. David Finnell and Sidney P Schmidt, *Singapore Baptist Urban Church Growth Conference Papers*, Singapore : Singapore Baptist Urban Church Growth Conference, 1983, P. 76.

“... For you cannot speak of Christ without describing Him in relation to God, creation, Church, the incarnation, reconciliation, the future and the cross.⁸

Christ-centered training is most useful safest thing to adopted and practice by Indian Christian education for the smooth and rapid growth of the mission and church.

2.2.3. Paul as Writer : The Bible-based Educator

If Jesus Christ if the founder of Christianity, Paul is one of the interpreters of its faith. Paul's role in defining Christianity can't be ignored. Paul is regarded as the great interpreter of Jesus' mission, who explained, in a way that Jesus himself never did, how Jesus' life and death fitted into a cosmic scheme of salvation, stretching from the creation of Adam to the end of time.

In Christian education and mission there is always an error made my leaders to create another foundation and a new ministry. According to the author there is no new ministry or another foundation other than what Jesus Himself has established.

We just are carrying on His task. Similarly in Christian Education there is nothing new invention to be taught but only interpretation to be communicated. The author believe that that we are not theologian, as the apostles of New Testament, but students of theologians.

Paul was an interpreter. His interpretation always based n the Old Testament. Just like Jesus Paul reinterpreted the Scripture in stead of anti-interpretation. Christian Education can develop when it the principles to reinterpret not only the Bible and Christian truth but also the other Scriptures and believes without judging against them directly. Biblical interpretation is never against any religions.

⁸ Derek Tidball, *What kind of Bible Collage do we need for 21st century?*, A Lecture given to The Center for Theological Education, Belfast Bible Collage,, 2006. P.4.

2.3.The Methods of Paul as an Christian Educator

2.3.1. *Mission to the Unreached.*

Paul preached Gospel where it was not preached. His mission field was always an unreached place. Paul himself said he did not build upon somebody's foundation (I Corinthians 3:10). This does not mean that a mission should not assist or join in another established mission or institution. For Paul himself says again that mission is not by a single person effort. Mission is planted by one, watered by some one else but grown by God Himself. (I Corinthians 3:6). Paul missionary trips recodes that he always prefer to work with another companion.

Christian education has to definitely implement this method. The foremost requirement of every mission and institution is to find out a place which is barren and need of the ministries.

In the diverse context of India with hundreds of people groups, there is always a need of Gospel and Savior, which should be discovered by each missions and institutions. But this is sad issue that today's Christian mission and institution are seen in great numbers mostly in single area, particularly in city area, where as there are thousands villages and hills still unreached.

2.3.2. *Invariable Follow Up*

One of the secrete Paul's successful ministries is follow up. It was almost like a habitual activity of Paul in his ministries. He maintained this as a Christian virtue. The way he loved and kept the relationship with God, in the same way he loved and maintained the relationship with his fellow God's people. He loved God and he loved his neighbors. He knew the importance of relationship and so he fulfilled the two greatest commandments? Loving God and loving people.

His thirteen letters in the New Testament testify the chief reason behind the writings is follow up. His 3 great missionary journeys but his follow up the mission fields. Till his last days Paul followed up the mission through letters and by appoints some one to look after it.

In Christian Education today follow up is most wanted lesson to be adopted. Christian education is not ends up in conferring the certificates and degrees. Education is not be limited within the classroom, particularly Christian Education and Indian Christian Education is failure and can not be fruitful without follow up.

2.3.3. *The DMD Method*

The training method of Timothy by Paul is one of the orthodox methods widely used by many mission and institutions. Early Church has rightly called letters to Timothy and Titus Pastoral Epistles. The three letters to these young pastors from Paul give and divine instruction and guidelines for Christian education. I call these letters Proverbs, Ecclesiastic and Songs of Solomon in the New Testament. The Pastoral Epistles are a must for the Christian education, particularly for India. These letters are personally and individually address to Timothy and Titus. Timothy and Titus were not only children of Paul in Christ, but also trained and appointed by Paul himself as overseas of the churches. It is in order to guide them take care of the churches Paul wrote these.

One of the most well-known and taught methods Paul taught them was 2 Tim 2:2. I call this DMD method - *Disciple Making Disciple*. It means making disciples who makes other disciples making disciples. It's a clear circle of making disciple. Making a disciple is not the matter here, the point is the disciple qualified to make other his disciples. This is the question in Christian Education, particularly in India.

In the training of Timothy I see the actual definition and purpose of Christianity i.e. not just to make disciples but to make disciples making disciples. Christianity from the history is proven its nature and growth not as plus manner but in multiplication. Paul says in II Tim 2:2 to train faithful people who will be also able to train others. Thus it is never end multiplication till Jesus' advent.

The greatest lesson I learnt in my college, Eastern Theological Institute & Seminary, New Delhi, is that I am trained to train others. It is easier to feed a fish than to teach some to catch fish. Yet there is reason for the Church to exist on earth except to make disciples making disciples

Education is not at all education without productivity, especially Christian Education. I believe DMD is the solution and nature of church growth and every mission development.

2.3.4. Accommodative and Cultural Adoptability

"I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some."
1 Corinthians 9:22, N1V

Brad Price has given a wonderful exegetical outline of this verse about Paul's strategies applied in his mission, can be applied in multi-cultural contexts of Indian Christian Education.

" The Apostle Paul's Plan

In 1 Corinthians 9:20-23, the apostle Paul outlined his strategy for reaching his world for Christ. Paul was a true on *mission* Christian. He planned every move that he made. He worked with different language groups as he carried out his many missionary journeys to the known world of that time. In this passage, Paul shared his strategy for success in his mission. What is a strategy?

All Things ...

Paul said that he had become all things to all people. This means that he identified with who people were. He tried to understand them. He was sensitive to their needs and desires. When he went to a Jewish synagogue, he acted like a Jewish man. He was careful to behave in such a manner that would not offend their religious and cultural traditions. When he went to the forum in Greece, he was a philosopher and engaged in their favorite pastime-debate. He first gained a basic acceptance of people, so that they would listen to what he had to say.

Different people see you in different roles or even different personalities. Your friends may see you as a husband, IBM executive, and golfer or perhaps a wife, mo and "soccer mom."

To All Men ...

As a citizen of Rome, Paul could go anywhere he wanted. Roman citizenship had its privileges. Much like our U.S. citizenship, Paul's citizenship opened doors for him to enter into many of the places he traveled. Paul had friends on every social, racial, and economic level. He was a friend of servants in Caesar's household. He knew Roman soldiers, governmental officials, slaves, and slave owners alike.

Paul loved everyone, just as his Master had. Before God miraculously saved him, Paul had been known by many as a killer of Christians. Yet after his conversion, he became known as the apostle to the Gentiles (i.e., everyone who was not a Jew). Although Paul was a Jew, he reached out in love to everyone without prejudice. For the Jews of Paul's day, even talking to Gentiles was not acceptable, much less building relationships and sharing the gospel. Many Christian Jews believed that Gentiles must first become Jews before receiving Christ. In other words, they thought the world should first become culturally like them before they could share the gospel with them. But Paul was the missionary. He crossed boundaries in order to "become all things to all men."

By All Means ...

Paul worked as a tent maker so that he could make a living in a way that would allow him the freedom to travel. Certainly he could go from place to place and sell his tents in the open markets of the cities. This put him in busy commercial centers where he could begin relationships with people from across the known world. Many of the cities where Paul ministered were centers of commerce. Paul's skill provided an avenue that allowed him to meet people for Christ. He chose a trade that followed him to travel to people who needed to hear the Good News.

Save Some

Paul was not convinced that all people would embrace the gospel. In fact he knew that many would not. He had seen crowds get angry, he

had been put in prison at time, but he was optimistic that a consistent strategy of being “all things to all men” would pay off with new souls for the Kingdom of God. It is a given that not all people will believe the good news of Christ. But it is also inevitable that many will believe, we need not only to be consistent in our planning and in our doing.”⁹

The two things, I believe, sums up Paul’s thinking bout the relationship between a Christian and culture:

- i. Every one has a culture by default.
- ii. Every one are not belongs to culture
- iii. No culture is better than other. All culture is import and best in itself to be respected.
- iv. In Christ, culture doesn’t matter (Gal 3:26-29)
- v. In Communicating Christ, Culture matters a great deal. (I Cor 9: 19 – 23)

Let’s explore the last 2 points a bit further.

In His letter to Romans Paul makes it very clear that his gospel is the saving power “to everyone who believes, first t Jew, then for the Gentile’ (Rom 1; 16). Every one need the salvation of God since every one has fallen away from the standard of God. Paul’s says in the further portion of the Romans that sin and grace are relevant to every culture. So also, the salvation of Jesus Christ is to every one. This means to say that in Christ we have found a place to stand that transcends all human culture. Since we are spiritually free in this way no culture should bound us to sin against His grace. Thus in Christ culture does not matter.

On the other hand though we are free we are willingly make ourselves slaves to our neighbors for the sake of Christ. And our interest is to communicate gospel, and put no unnecessary tumbling blocks in its path. As Paul puts it, I make myself slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. (2 Corinthians 5: 14 – 15). Here Paul adapted

⁹ Brad Price, My Purpose and His Plan : Sharpening Your Skills for His Mission Adult Workbook, Alpharetta : North American Mission Baord, 2000, Pp.47 – 49.

himself to his cultural context. Paul himself as bicultural kid and citizen of Rome, was able to move quite easily between the Hellenistic world and the Jewish world. He did not learn any new languages to communicate. Even Paul felt free to use some Greek quotes.

In our position in Jesus Christ we all are same and free from the cultural bonds. But Culture is highly important when it comes to communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

S D Pondraj has summoned up the versatility of the multi-culture and context of India this way :

India is a land of so many cultures, religions, languages and ethnic groups, that it may be considered a multi-national State, a federation of many cultures, many nations in one country. Take for example the different languages: according to 1971 Census, India represents a baffling variety with 1,652 languages or mother tongues, actively spoken: Eighteen of these are official languages and there are another 370 major languages plus many other minor languages. Apart from languages, India is a land of many religions: Hinduism, (both popular as well as philosophical) Islam, Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity, and several indigenous religions, sects and cults. According to the Anthropological Survey of India there are 4635 communities including many tribes, castes and sub-castes.¹⁰

2.3.5. Ministry Partner

God as Trinity shows a God-head partner. This is divine portrayed in Creation of the World, Salvation of Men, and in many other accessions as Scripture records. God the father worked in partner with God the Son and Holy Spirit. Jesus, God the Son did not do any thing which was not His Father's will and Father was pleased to perform His glory by and in Him. Holy descended into the Church and began continue the works of the Son (Acts 1:1). Scripture vividly displays Trinity as Divine Partner.

¹⁰ S D Pondraj, *The Mark of a Missionary*, Chennai : Mission Educational Books, 2002, P.126.

God created a life partner for everybody on this earth. God knew important of life partner.

In the Bible always chose to work with the partnership of man for man. God brought judgment to the sinful ancient world through Noah, a righteous man, God called Abraham by his grace for his great purpose to create a people of His own and to bring Messiah for the salvation through them. God called Moses to lead His people out of foreign captivity. God called Joshua to capture back the promise land for His people. God raised mighty judges to deliver His people from heathen attacks. God raised faithful prophets to bring His messages to His people. The kings were the God's divinely appointed ruling agents over His people. God raised foreign gentile powers like Babylon, Assyrian to judge and discipline His loved people.

Finally when the fullness of the time came God Himself became man and dwelled among them and proclaimed the good news of the Kingdom of heaven and died for their eternal Salvation. Jesus rose again from the death and commissioned few Galilean fishers men to preach His good news of resurrection and second coming.

Jesus appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus and called him for the great Mission to the Gentile and told him to meet a man called Anania for further leading. The Churches in Jerusalem divinely chose Barnabas and Paul for the mission.

Paul knew this divine fact that ministry is always with partner. Then after, Paul always worked always with a companion. Paul himself explain that ministry of the church is always like human body, which depends upon each tier for the proper function and growth of the body. Barnabas, Timothy, Luke, Silus, and many others among the most close companions of the apostle Paul. Even during his last stages of life in longed to have companion (2 Tim 4: 11). Ministry is never a ministry with one man show. Ministry never begins with one man's man vision. When God give one person a vision for the ministry God at he same time prepares some else who is to be with the same ministry.

This is another fundamental principle which cannot be denied in Christian Education. Indian mission, organization and churches are to work united as partner for the development for Christian education. A mission or organization has not everything.

Churches are to depend on each other and share each other burden. So, is in Christian education. Indian Christian educational institution has great growth in sharing the resources and facilities such as teachers, library, premises, etc.

Next to Christ Himself, no greater example of Gospel in and to multi context can be seen than that offered by the Apostle Paul. In finding Christ he found all that he really needed for communicating the Gospel. By his inspired letters and by his gospel driven life, Paul teaches us to know about the Christian and Culture, Gospel and Context, and Christ and Community. Paul is the perfect example and model we can follow for the total evangelization of India in Indian context.

Whenever we want to think through matters of Christ and culture, we must turn to Paul. Why? Our Lord Himself chose this 'Hebrew of Hebrews' to be His emissary to the Gentile world. In crying out his mission, Paul constantly has to grapple with the questions of custom and culture. In a very important sense, he had to detach himself from his own culture in order to do so. What used to be the motivating center of his worldview prior to his conversion was placed with Christ. In that transformation, Paul came to see all things new. From that place of freedom in Christ, he was able to become all things to all people without losing his gospel integrity.

In his another book, a great tool for the mission studies Pondraj sums up the communication methods of Paul in different context in the way:

“ Paul began where his hearers were; he did not try to argue them into a different world view. Entering into their frame of reference he was able to effectively advocate the gospel.”¹¹

This very model should be the best model of Christian Education in multi-cultural context of India.

¹¹ S D Pondraj, *An Introduction to Missionary Anthropology*, Chennai : Mission Educational Books, 1993, P.65

CHAPTER THREE

ST. THOMAS : A MODEL OF CHURCH-ORIENTED OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

3.1. Thomas: The Apostle of Jesus .

3.1.1. Chosen and Called by Jesus

3.1.2. Eye Witness of the Resurrected Christ.

3.1.3. Commissioned by Lord & Empowered by the Holy Spirit

3.2. Thomas: The Apostle of India.

3.2.1. In the History of Indian Church Thomas was Church

3.2.2. Planting Missionary

3.2.3. Indian Context during Thomas and Now

3.3. Revelation to Thomas – A Revelation to India

3.3.1. I am the way, truth and the Life – asked the **Way**

3.3.2. Let us also go with Him and die – got **Life** to be martyr for
Jesus

3.3.3. My Lord and My God – touched Jesus' resurrected body
and experienced the **Truth**

CHAPTER THREE

ST. THOMAS : A MODEL OF CHURCH-ORIENTED OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

3.1. Thomas : The Apostle of Jesus

While I was in Bible Seminary I learnt about the office of Apostleship in the New Testament are based on three major qualifications:

- i. Chosen and Called by Jesus,
- ii. Eye Witness of Jesus' Resurrection and
- iii. Commissioned by Jesus

Thomas had all these happened to him on special accessions.

3.1.1. Chosen and Called by Jesus

In the first three gospels there is an account of his call to the apostleship (Matt 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15). The rest that we know of him is derived from the gospel of John. His election to the Twelve is recorded in Matt 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13.

Christian education as other ministries is a service to the Jesus when there is definite call from Him. It is the call that makes Christian education special and effective than any other qualities. It brings the power and purpose of the ministries in Christian education. Christian education just as every other ministry is based on Call and not merely on people needs. Today in India there are many bible schools and training center than the churches, it is because they could not see the need of the mission fields. Establishing a bible school or training center should be according the vision and call of God and there are lot in the city like Bangalore where bible schools are closed or failed to continue, some runs for the name sakes without any solid results, is because they were founded without any proper call of the Lord.

Where there is need of people, the Lord knows it and he will call His people to do His work according to the need of the people. So also, Christian education supposes to be based on.

3.1.2. Eye Witness of the Resurrected Christ.

It was special appearance of resurrected Christ. When Jesus appeared to the first assembly after His resurrection, Thomas, for some reason, was absent. The others told him, "We have seen the Lord!" Thomas broke forth into an exclamation that conveys to us at once the vehemence of his doubt and the vivid picture that his mind retained of his Master's form as he had seen Him lifeless on the cross (20:25). "And after eight days again His disciples were inside and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, 'Peace be with you.'" This was special and privileged appearance to Thomas alone. The co-apostles might have tried to convince Thomas of Jesus resurrection and failed. The reappearance of Jesus just for Thomas has definite purpose in his life. He though did not believe his friends words, Jesus still counted him his own and mighty witness of His love. Thomas was called by Jesus and became eye witness of Jesus' resurrection and

Turning to Thomas, He uttered the words that convey as strongly the sense of condemnation and tender reproof as those of Thomas had shown hesitation and doubt. "Then He said to Thomas, 'Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.'" The other disciples might have or might not have the touching experiences of resurrected Jesus ; Or Jesus might have touched them or not are not recorded in the New Testaments. This is divine purpose of God to record that Jesus Himself called out Thomas by name and asked him to touch is wounds.

The effect upon Thomas was immediate. Doubt was removed, and faith asserted itself strongly. The words in which he expressed his belief contain a high assertion of his Master's divine nature: "Thomas answered and said to Him, 'My Lord and my God!'" The answer of our Lord sums up the moral of the whole narrative: "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed" (20:26-29). From this incident came the title of "Doubting Thomas," and he has been

characterized as "slow to believe, subject to despondency, seeing all the difficulties of a case, viewing things on the darker side.

" It may be that he was of a critical tendency of mind, in which he did not recognize the statement of eyewitnesses as a sufficient ground of faith. When Jesus declared His intention of going to Bethany after Lazarus's death, it was Thomas alone, apprehensive of danger, said to the other disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him" (John 11:16). At the Last Supper, when Jesus was speaking of His departure, Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" (14:5). Thomas was brave enough to go with His master in the midst of the dangers."¹²

While other say "we have seen the Lord", Thomas could say "I have touched Him" !

3.1.3. Commissioned by Lord & Empowered by the Holy Spirit

After the above-mentioned incident, we hear of Thomas only twice again, once on the Sea of Galilee, with six other disciples (21:2). Before His ascension, Jesus commissioned all the disciples he had called to be with Him. And Thomas present there. It is a commission to Thomas too as was to other apostles.

And again in the assembly of the apostles after the ascension (Acts 1:13) Jesus instructed them to wait on the Upper Room. It says the disciples often gathered there in one mind and one accord to pray (Acts 1:14) and therefore definitely Thomas was present and regularly would join with the other disciples in one mind and heart in praying and witnessing his especial experiences of touching the Lord's resurrected body.

3.2. Thomas, the Apostle of India.

At the last supper, when Jesus revealed that he is going to leave them, St. Thomas came out with his doubt "Lord, we do not know where Thou art going; how are we

¹² The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988, P

know the way there?" and Jesus answered lovingly for the whole mankind: "I am the way; I am the truth and Life; nobody can come to the Father except through me. Generations to come will be indebted to the doubting St. Thomas for this illuminating glance into the eternal life.

3.2.1. In the History of Indian Church Thomas was Church Planting Missionary

The historic proofs of St. Thomas mission in India are many. Taking into account traditional evidence available in India and abroad. It may be said that the Apostle was approximately 17 years in India. Viz.. about 4 years in Sindh, 6 years at most in Malabar, and 7 years at Mailepuram or Mailapore. Crosses carved on stone, some of which are attributed to St. Thomas by unbroken tradition, have not been lost to posterity.

Government of India bringing out two stamps in commemoration of the Indian apostolate of St. Thomas, one in 1964 and another in 1973, and the Holy See proclaiming St. Thomas 'The Apostle of India' and in Cardinal Tisserant bringing his bones to India and Kerala in the year 1953.



Historians today believe that St. Thomas planted the seed of the gospel on Indian soil. This is the general trend of their thinking: During Apostolic times there were well frequented trade routes, by land and / or water, connecting North-West India (today Pakistan), the West Coast and the East Coast, with North Africa and West Asia.

Thus Alexandria, Aden, Socotra, Ormuz, Ctesiphon, Caesarea, Taxila, Broach, Kodungallur (Muziris) and even Rome were inter-linked. The witnesses of different authors belonging to different places, Churches, cultures, centuries and races (and

often speaking different languages) supporting the Apostle's Indian mission provide an almost unassailable bulwark of evidence, along with the South Indian tradition that is woven into a myriad details of folklore, place names, family traditions, social customs, monuments, copper plates, ancient songs, liturgical texts etc..

“It is the hoary and unquestioned tradition in Malabar, which is corroborated by the customs of the place and by the ethnological research, that the Apostle was signally successful in the conversion of the high cast 'Nambuthiri Brahmins'. Four of the leading Brahmin families are believed to be raised to the privilege of the priesthood. They are:

- a) Palamattam (Pakalomattam)
- b) Sankarapuri
- c) Kalli &
- d) Kalliankavu.

Some of them still exist in 'Koravilangad' a place near Kottayam in Kerala. The head of the Malabar Church - the Archdeacon - had to be selected from Pakalomattam. This practice was continued among the Jacobite, till a hundred years ago. There is a strong belief throughout Malabar that St. Thomas founded 7 Churches or group of Christians in the following places and the imprints and tradition proves it true.

7 Churches of Malabar (Estd. by St. Thomas) :

1. Cranganore or Maliankara (Present Kodungallore)
2. Palur or Palayur (A place near Thrissur)
3. Paraur or Kottukavu (A Place near Cochin)
4. Kokkamangalam(A place between Allappy & Kottayam)
5. Niranam(A place near Tiruvalla)
6. Chayal or Nilakkal (An interior hill side place near Sabarimala)
7. Quilon or Kollam”¹³

¹³ _____, Thomas, The Apostle to India, A assignment submitted to the author on subject the Church History of India , Bangalore : Asia School of Theology, 2002, P. 3,

The seen churches of Malabar could be the mission center of Thomas might have planned. Thomas arrived in South India and he established these seven mother churches in the south first. It was just as the commission methods of Jesus given to His disciples before he ascended to heaven. He said to be His witnesses beginning from Jerusalem, then to Samaria, then to Judea and then to utter most parts of the World. Thomas knew this strategy given by his Master and prudently he put into practice in establishing the churches. He began with a Brahmin family, then to community and then to neighboring areas.

- Nabbuthiri (four)Brahmin Families >>>
- Malabar (seven) Churches >>>
- Palur Church (one of the 7 churches of Malabar) migrated to Travancore and established churches among the fanatic Hindus and won many witches, evil possessed people an established Koravelangutta Church....>>>

It's then multiply just as the early church during Paul and Peter.

To me Thomas was Paul of the New Testament in India and John of the Book of Revelation. For the gospel sake John and Paul were imprisoned and were able to pant many churches and write the words of God to natured then as Bride of Christ.

This is the methods our apostle of India, Thomas established for Indian context mission fields. India needs to see how these exploited in developing Christian Education today.

3.2.2. Indian Context during Thomas and Now

In the viewpoint of broader understanding the land INDIA can be introduced as follows:

"It is certainly not as small as the present political INDIA. As per the ancient historians and travelers, India is the farthest part of the inhabited world towards the east.

Political and Commercial Context

“From the time of invasion of Alexander the Great in 326 BC crossing the Indus river, India became more open to the countries of the west. He conquered King Poros (the king of present Punjab) historically and broke the great barrier, the empire of Persia which had separated people of western countries including Greece from India and opened a channel for direct communication. Eminent scholars of those times; Ptolemy, Aristobolus etc'. and others give reference to it.

After the death of Alexander, the great Indian king Chandraguptha Mourya liberated Punjab from Greek domination by a friendly alliance with the Seleukos Nikator. Owing to this better atmosphere, many Greek merchants and others were attracted to Indian subcontinent. They and their successors exchanged ambassadors and many other western kingdoms followed it such as Egyptian Ptolomies. Many of them like 'Megasthenes' wrote books and defined boundaries of Indian subcontinent in it.

Communication between the western world and India became less frequent preceded to the Christian era due to the rise of new Parathian Empire. It was for a short period and Roman empire raised and started developing trade and commerce with the precious goods of east. Again Parathian Empire raised in between and a toll was levied for trade to Rome. This forced Romans to find a sea route to the east - especially to India. This created a problem with the Arabs as they were losing the importance. After a lot of conflicts and problems, the incidents favored Roman ambition to set sail for India. The Indian Kings like 'Pandyan' of Madurai have opened embassies in Rome and the trade was immense as the western world was a good market for Indian goods. India was in a flourishing stage during that period.”¹⁴

This should be the reason St. Thomas selected India as his mission field which was well known to Palastinians and there was all means of communication which was

¹⁴ Ibid. P 1.

prevailing at that time. India then was bigger wider than today, consist of various tribes, groups, languages, religions, wide range of commercial countries, rulers and emperors, etc. It's challenged Thomas.

It is interesting to note that Malinkayal' speaks of St. Thoma's arrival by sea to the port of 'Maliankara' (Kodungallur). The commercial history of the times lends support to this assumption. He must have either sailed from Kalyan in north India or from the island of 'Socotra'. He established the following 7 churches and a Christian community in Malayattor as it is narrated in "St. Thomas parvam" by 'Rabban St. Thomas' in the 1st century. St. Francis Xavier, who landed at Socotra on his way to India about AD 1545, declared that the natives of these islands render special honors to the apostle St. Thomas, claiming they to be the descendents of Christians begotten to Jesus Christ through that Apostle in these countries.

3.3. Revelation to Thomas – A Revelation to India

3.3.1. I am the Way , Truth and Life – asked the *Way*

One of the greatest missionaries to Indian soils who have contributed a lot to the field of Christian Education was Dr. Stanly E Jones. He related the truth of Gospel of Jesus Christ such way that is applicable to Indian context, particularly this revelation of Jesus to Thomas:

“.....Jesus stood between the Greek and the Hindus, midway between East and West, and made this announcement: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.

- Turing to the *Greek* he says :

I am the Way – A method of acting the Greek's good.

I am the Truth – The Greek's True

I am the Life – The Greek's Beauty, for life is beauty

- Turing towards the Hindus he says :

I am the Way – *The Karma Marge* (A Method of Working)

I am the Truth – *The Gyana Marga* (A Method of Knowing)

I am the Life – *The Bhakti Marga* (A Method of Emotion)....

Jesus faces Human personality everywhere and fulfills it; the modern thinker analyzes personality into intellect, feeling and will. And Jesus said I am the Way – the response of the Will; the Truth – the response of the Intellect and the Life – the response of the Feeling.

- Jesus faces *all race and culture* of all ages of the world and says :
I am the Way – that's *Ethics*
I am the Truth – that's *Philosophy*
I am the Life – that's *Religion*
- Turing to *Islam* – Islam is a way of the *Will* –
Will can not be affirmed, so it must be submitted (*Islam*). The end is an entire losing of the human will to negation.
- Turing to *Hinduism* – it is the way of *Mind* –
The deepest meaning of Hinduism lies in way of mind. – it is to recognizing one's identity with Brahma. The mind can not affirmed, so its end is to realize that it does not exist, that only Brahma exists. The end is losing of the human mind, a negation.
- Turing to *Buddhism* – it's the way of Emotion.
Buddhism is the way of emotion- suffering and existence are one. The emotion can not be affirmed or complete, so they must be snuffed out in Nirvana – a negation. The human personality can not be saved and affirmed there, so it must be negative.

So Jesus is the affirmation of all in this way :

I am the way – the Way of Will ,

I am the Truth – the Way of Mind

I am the Life – the Way of Emotions

Here human personality is not deprived of and negated, but redeemed and affirmed.”¹⁵

Jones observed that there are three elements needs for humans everywhere, namely “an adequate goal for character, a free and full life, and God”, and all the three of which Christ Jesus alone can fulfill completely in any human.

3.3.2. My Lord and My God – touched Jesus’ resurrected body and experiences the *Truth*

Thomas was a very much blessed and fortunate enough than other disciples to receive this revelation and touch the resurrected body of Jesus Christ. The statement that Jesus declared is found no where else in the Scripture and even other religious literatures. And it was the answer to Thomas curious question to Jesus brought this eternal revelation, which is for the entire human being.

The character of the divine revelation is referring to any particular sects of religion, castes, tribe, context, culture or color; it is a revelation to the entire human being which is very clear to understand and teach. Thus definitely this is very much applicative to Indian context too.

Hence in his evangelistic meeting Jones, some time called the Billy Graham of India,

“..would not speak to Hindus or Muslim but to persons – persons in spiritual need. Jesus Christ has met my needs – and He could meet theirs”¹⁶

Thomas did exactly follow long before Jones would reveal this to us. The apostle preached Christ and Him alone among the pagans worshipers of India. And India was spiritually hungry and they accepted Christ as their Savior.

¹⁵ Eunice James Matthew and James K Matthews, Selection from E Stanley Jones, NY : Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1970, Pp 145 - 153

¹⁶ E. Stenly Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road, NY: Abingdon Press, 1925. P 110

Indian Christian Education can be successful in with solid and lasting growth when it first learns to present Christ's Salvation alone more than His healing, and miraculous signs and power.

3.3.3. Let us also go with Him and die – got *Life* to be martyr for Jesus

I guess personally, that when Thomas first came to Indian and was able to bring the Brahmin families to Christ, he might have definitely explain this revelation to them telling them that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Perhaps this truth might have become Thomas's theology and core sermon, the theme that he might have built the faith of the new converters. This was such a revelation that Thomas might have not forgotten while he preached his gospel to the gentile.

Indian, being lost in multi-religions, multi-cultures, multi-tradition and costumes, etc do not know which way to go ahead, what the life eternal and what is the truth of God for their lives. India is called a land of mysteries, and I believe it is not merely only because it is land of many religions and cultures, but also could be it is lost land from the truth of God.

Christian education India needs to discover these needs and method to meet them in winning the perishing souls of India. How wonderful it is that this mighty revelation given to Thomas so accurately meets the need of the Indian perishing souls. Thomas did not have much knowledge about the religious of India, yet he discovered the greatest need of India is Jesus, their Way, their Truth and their Life.

Thomas just asked for the way to heaven, but received all that a common man in India need: -

- I am the Way, Truth and the Life – *asked* the **Way**
- My Lord and My God – touched Jesus' resurrected body and *experienced* the **Truth**.
- Let us also go with Him and die – got **Life** to be martyr for Jesus

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

The possibility of contextualization of Christian Education in India seems to be enormous difficult in human ability. In general two reasons are suggested as primary stumbling blocks to an effective communication of the Gospel and effectively execute the Christian Education into Indians. One is cultural and the other theological; both of which speaks clearly for the need of contextualization of whether it is Gospel or Christian Education

But New Testament has laid the way and the process for it so vividly that no other could have done better.

It is therefore an urgent Biblical call to every Christian to contextualize Christian Education which shall meet the needs of perishing in India and fulfill the means of Great Commission of teaching every nation and making His disciples.

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