

# GRACE & PEACE


An E-periodical For spiritual enlightenment, edification and encouragement.



## BELIEVER'S FREEDOM IN CHRIST



A Tribute



Lewis James Samraj

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# BELIEVER'S FREEDOM IN CHRIST

 By Nelson Thomas

Once again the people of India are celebrating their independence from the British rule, which they received 74 years ago. Every Indian will always remember with respect those patriots who sacrificed their lives to attain this freedom.

Yet, as we travel through the length and breadth of this great nation, one thing is very much evident: not all are really enjoying freedom in its fullest sense. A great number of people are still living below the poverty line. Corruption is rampant, so is alcoholism and drug addiction. Casteism is another bondage that nobody could eradicate in spite of the best efforts of the successive governments. There are many other social evils plaguing the people of India. Yes, there are numerous organizations and activists making every effort to liberate such helpless ones from bondage. However, what does all this signify? Political, national freedom is not enough; man needs much more to be free indeed.

This is exactly what the Lord Jesus Christ articulated to the Jewish people who had shown interest in His teachings. When He told them, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free", they could not digest it. They immediately responded, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone." (John 8:31, 32) Amazing, either they forgot the reality or purposely told an utter lie. There were number of occasions when Jewish people were under bondage. To begin with, we see that Egypt enslaved them, then from time to time many other neighboring countries. Above all, the major invasions by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, and in the first century, they were under the rule of Rome. Yet, they vociferously declare that they have never been in bondage.

That is the way often even most of us react to the variety of oppressions we face. We tend to become blind to the bondages we are in.

## SPIRITUAL BONDAGE

Christ made this very clear, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34). The Lord was referring to the moral, spiritual slavery of the Jews. They continued to resist such revelation of reality, claiming their Abrahamic ancestry. Then finally the Lord Jesus told them,

*"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."* (John 8:44)

Most people even today will fail to appreciate this statement. Let us patiently analyze His words in their context. The words and deeds of those Jews unmistakably exposed their internal state. Their arrogance, falsehood, hatred, and the subsequent effort to stone Him, all proved beyond any doubt that they were controlled by Satan himself. (cf. John 8: 39 - 59) They were acting on behalf of the evil one, who is the 'father of all lies and a murderer from the beginning'.

Do we find similar occasions and people even today? Of course, we do. Yet it's very difficult to convince some of their diabolic attitude and the moral slavery they are in. Even after witnessing the barbaric, heartless activities of men, modern society conveniently rationalizes those evil actions.

## GOD WHO LIBERATES

The Bible from its beginning reveals that Satan always enslaved people with various traps, at the same time God always liberated them. We see that God came down to deliver the people of Israel from the Egyptian enslavement. (Exo 3: 7 – 10) Even in the Law of Moses, they were commanded not to keep a servant for more than six years. A servant in the Hebrew home must be set free in the seventh year. (Exo 21: 2) The godly always knew that the Lord looks down from heaven and listens to the groaning of His people and comes down to release them from their bondage. (Psalms 102: 19, 20; 107: 13 – 15; 146: 7)

The prophet Isaiah saw liberty for the captives as one of the major missions of the Messiah. (Isaiah 42: 7; 61: 1) After commencing His ministry in Judea, Christ was visiting the synagogue at Nazareth, and He read the same passage from Isaiah 61 and declared, *“Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”* (Luke 4:21) Christ made it loud and clear that He is the Messiah and His mission is to preach the gospel, heal the broken hearted and proclaim liberty to the captives and the oppressed. It was in this same tone the Lord Jesus told those Jews, “if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.” (John 8: 36)

## FALSE FREEDOM

Notice the expression, ‘free indeed’. Those Jews were under the impression that they were free and not under any kind of bondage. But the Lord Jesus says that what they had was false freedom. This is the way the evil one traps mankind. The devil promises independence, pleasure, entertainment, etc., but only at a later stage would man realize his tyranny. (Gen 3: 5; 2Peter 2: 19) There are occasions when Satan used evil spirits to control an individual. (Mark 5: 1 – 12; Luke 13: 16) But most of the time, Satan traps people through things that are seemingly natural and acceptable; for example, thinking what is there in just eating a fruit which looks edible? More than our logic and opinion of others, we are supposed to live according to the will of our Creator. But when man violates God’s plan for him, this makes him a sinner and leaves his heart corrupt and conscience guilty.

The inherent sinful nature passed on to man from Adam and Eve gives devil a foothold to oppress man. Various kinds of sinful thoughts and deeds continue to keep man under bondage. (John 8: 34; 2Peter 2: 19) Many sincerely wish to come out of certain bad habits, evil practices and wrong thinking patterns, etc. Their futile efforts only leave them defeated and depressed. Apart from the bondage of sin, we can also notice the bondage of legalism, tradition, superstition, fear, etc. (Gal 3: 13; Matt 15: 3-6; Heb 2: 15)

## TRUE FREEDOM

Praise be to God, for when we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we find deliverance from all such bondages. This is not just a teaching but a true experience. The power of sin on a believer’s life is broken, and he who was a slave of sin becomes a slave of God. (Romans 6: 17, 18, 20, 22) An unrighteous life pattern is changed to a lifestyle of righteousness. Unholy practices become the difficult thing for a child of God, whereas an upright life becomes a natural and joyful thing.

Because it’s a liberty coming from the innermost part of their being, any external issues, even the political, social oppressions and turmoil do not disturb their heart. The peace of God that passes all understanding guards their heart. They find the joy of the Lord as their strength and stay peaceful in all situations.

Their sense of internal freedom is reflected in their daily life. Because an unlawful activity is difficult for them, you will see them refusing to give a bribe or doing an illegal thing. They will be true to God, their conscience and even to their superiors. They don’t merely follow the law, but being led by the Holy Spirit who dwells in them, they do what is pleasing to God. They reflect the liberating attitude of God, not the oppressing approach of Satan.

This is the freedom the Lord Jesus brings about in the hearts of all who yield to Him. What a privilege we have in Christ Jesus our Lord!

## THE BASIS OF FREEDOM

How does this happen? Yes, freedom is always costly. We respectfully remember the freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for our national freedom. Lord Jesus paid the price for our spiritual freedom. He satisfied all the demands of God's holy law. He took our place and suffered as an atoning sacrifice. He defeated Satan with all his schemes and triumphed upon him publicly on the cross. (Colo 2: 14, 15; Heb 2: 14, 15) Today Satan is a defeated foe and God is at liberty to forgive and justify a believing sinner because of the work of Christ on the cross. (Rom 3: 24 – 26)

The moment a sinner confesses his sins and yields to Christ for salvation, a lot of changes take place internally, such as forgiveness, regeneration, and justification and so on. He is indwelt by the Spirit of God and thereby he gets a divine nature from above. He finds that his old sinful nature with all its passions has been crucified with Christ. (Romans 6: 6, 11, 13; 2Cor 5: 14, 15; Gal 2: 20; 5: 16, 17; 2Pet 1: 4)

## ENJOY FREEDOM

Do we really experience this freedom in Christ? Is it just a teaching and foreign to our day to day life? If we our life is characterized by disobedience, bitterness, murmuring and cloudy deals, what does it mean? A lifestyle of selfishness, prejudice, negativity, complaint, materialism, etc., betrays our Christian testimony.

No wonder Paul admonishes the Galatians, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage." (Gala 5: 1) If we fail to stay close to Christ on a daily basis in obedience to His will, there is a possibility to lose the experience of this freedom. Notice, our freedom is not lawlessness or absence of restrictions. We ought to acknowledge that we are servants to God, and we need to be obedient to Him. Yes, He will never force us to do so, but the result is always life and holiness. (Romans 6: 22; Matt 11: 29)

Remember, it is by such a commitment and obedient life that we win over the constant efforts of the old master. Though the devil can never capture us back to his fold, definitely he can

trouble us with his various schemes. (John 10: 28, 29; Gen. 4:7; 2Cor 2: 11) Our enemy can disturb our joy and effectiveness.

Never forget the wonderful work of God on the cross of Calvary and its application within us at conversion. A constant awareness of this and its appropriation makes us confident of His liberty. This in turn inspires us to reckon these in daily practical life. (Rom 6: 6, 11, 13)

What a relief it is know that 'the master sin' has no authority over us. The One to whom we voluntarily submit is gentle and lowly in heart, His yoke is easy and His burden is light. (Matt 11: 29) He desires the best for us, teaching and leading us in the right way. True enjoyment of spiritual freedom in Christ actually derives from being a slave to God wholeheartedly.

*Sin enters as a guest, and then becomes a friend. You get to know each other. Then sin becomes a servant. It promises you to give you pleasure. But that servant becomes a Master and that Master becomes a tyrant and that dictator becomes a destroyer.*

*There are two freedoms – the false, where a man is free to do what he likes; the true, where a man is free to do what he ought.*

*- Charles Kingsley*



# BRIEF NOTES ON TABERNACLE – 2

 By Charles .E. Wigg , Australia

## The Church: Universal and Local

We have seen that the Tabernacle represents the Church, but the Church is seen in two aspects in the New Testament, that is UNIVERSAL, & LOCAL. The Church universal embraces every born again believer, on the earth, who when they were saved, were baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ, the Church. (1Cor12:13; Eph 4: 4) That is the Church universal.

Though there is but one universal Church, there are many local Churches and each, if properly constituted, is to be a local expression of the one universal Church. The local Church is a company of believers who are gathered out of the world or the community, and gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus alone (Mat 18: 20)

Each Church is independent of the other but because led and formed by the Holy Spirit and governed by the word of God, there will be a great similarity between them. There will also be a sweet but unorganised fellowship between the local Churches in any given area and

between the Churches in different countries.

All this is accomplished without any formal hierarchy, there being only local government of each assembly by a plurality of elders, who are placed over the local Church by the Holy Spirit as shepherds, but recognised by the local Church as such.

The Tabernacle embraces both concepts, but principally and practically is seen in the life and practice of the local

## The placing of the Tabernacle

The Tabernacle was to be placed in the very centre of Israel's encampment. They were all instructed to pitch their tents in the allotted place according to their tribes, around the Tabernacle. Judah etc. on the East side; Reuben etc. on the South side; Ephraim etc. on the West side; Dan etc. on the North side. Thus every tent of the families of Israel was pitched facing the Tabernacle, showing in the type that the Tabernacle, (for us the Local Church), was central to every aspect of their lives.

As each time any person emerged from the tent

door, the first thing they saw was the cloud of Glory, and the Tabernacle. The local church should also occupy a similar place of importance in the lives of those who are received into its fellowship.



If this principle was followed, the local assemblies would be in a strong and healthy spiritual state. All of the gatherings of that assembly would be well attended. (Heb 10:25)

**The East side:** - The place of the sun-rising represents those who live in the daily expectation of the coming of the Lord Jesus, first for His Church then as the “Sun of Righteousness” to “arise with healing in His wings”. (Mal 4; 2; Heb 9: 28) Judah was the royal tribe, Gen. 49; 10, and Rev. 5: 5, where the Lord Jesus is called the “Lion of the tribe of Judah”.

**The South side:** - Represents

the place of warmth, comfort and blessing. Job 37:17

**The West side:** - is the place of the sunset, and suggests those who are constantly reminded of the brevity of time. As each day ends and the sun sinks beneath the western horizon, another day has passed into history, into eternity, never to come again. Opportunities that we have failed to grasp have gone forever.

Countless souls have passed out of time into eternity, some to an eternity of indescribable blessing and joy, others to an eternity of indescribable horror, and eternal punishment. It reminds us to “Redeem the time”, (Eph5:16), and that “The night cometh, when no man can work”. (John 9;4)

**The North side:** - To the North of Israel's boundary stands Mount Lebanon, which is forever clad with snow. The name Lebanon means “whiteness”. The winds that sweep down from that quarter are icy cold. All remind us of the trials, and troubles of life that God in His love allows us to experience, which when we accept them, and are “exercised thereby”,

bring the “peaceable fruits of righteousness”.

From the North comes Gold. Job 37; 22, (J. N. D.) That is the acceptance of trouble, and learning from it makes us spiritually rich. Job said “I know that when I am tried I shall come forth as GOLD”, (Job 23:10.)

### *Around the Tabernacle: -*

Levites were to camp, and they were a protection to the rest of the tribes, to protect them from the wrath of a holy God. Because of their godly lives and ministry, because they lived close to God, and especially because of their intercession, they were a protection and a blessing.

They represent those who are spiritual, Gal 6:1, such as Epaphroditus, Philippians 3: 25-29, Epaphras, Col 4:12, those of the house of Chloe, 1Cor 1;11, Stephanas, 1Cor 16;15, whom we may take as examples. Such are a protection and a blessing to the less spiritual members of the local Church.

## ANECDOTE:

# DOOR TO FREEDOM

**A**t the end of Korean War, thousands of Chinese prisoners were faced with the alternative to either return to communist China or go to free China in Taiwan. They were brought in to the room of Decision. Two doors on opposite sides of the room stood open. The prisoner had to choose which door he wants to enter through: the door to freedom or the door to slavery.

Under terrific Chinese verbal pressure some were induced to return to China and slavery. Most of the Chinese prisoners of the United Nations however chose the other door, refusing to return to China. They chose freedom.

## SERMON OUTLINE:

# POSSIBLE BONDAGES OF MAN

- |       |                         |                                     |
|-------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| i.    | Bondage of Satan.       | Luke 13:16; 2 Timothy 2:26          |
| ii.   | Bondage of sin.         | John 8:34; Romans 6:14              |
| iii.  | Bondage of law.         | Galatians 5:1; Mark 7:8, 9          |
| iv.   | Bondage of man.         | 1 Corinthians 7:23; Galatians 1:10  |
| v.    | Bondage of the past.    | Philippians 3:13; 1 Timothy 1:12-17 |
| vi.   | Bondage of materialism. | Matthew 6:25; 1 Timothy 6:10        |
| vii.  | Bondage of traditions . | Galatians 4:3; Colossians 2:20      |
| viii. | Bondage of fear.        | Hebrews 2: 15; 2 Timothy 1:7        |

# DO NOT BE JUST A RECIPIENT, BE A GIVER TOO

 By Bro. M. L. Francis, Chennai

We are living in such a perilous time that we are not yet able to come out of the terrible pandemic. The world is reeling under the pressure of endless troubles. God's people are no exception but share a part of these sufferings.

In Christian circles, we have been hearing innumerable messages of comfort and peace, which men and women seem to expect from the preachers. No doubt, many of our loved ones are still going through great struggles. In a situation like this, it is fitting for us to comfort those who are going through pain. Apostle Paul places before us some valuable suggestions in 2 Corinthians 1: 3 - 7

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.”*

Who is the source of our comfort? Paul says, ‘God is our comforter’. Let us keep this in mind when we try to comfort others. Why is He comforting us? God comforts us so that we will be able to comfort others in troubles. This means that only those who have received comfort from God will be able to comfort others. This needs us to go through lots of experiences in life.

Paul doesn't say that anyone can comfort anybody. **“And just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.”** V. 5. After we have gone through sufferings, we comfort others with the comfort we received.

There are people who will pour out some words mechanically, hoping to comfort others without sincerity. They have no real understanding of the depth of the grief of the afflicted. They are like subtle politicians who love to do it as a duty. Consequently, they will have to face many shocking results.

A person who fails to permeate himself into the sorrow of the broken heart cannot comfort effectively. Remember, it is God's Spirit working in and through us, bringing heavenly peace into the crushed soul.

**So, how should be our approach?**

a) We must draw near the grieving men and women with utter sincerity,

and not for outward show.

b) Our approach should be with a hope of seeing a change in the person. Notice v. 7a, ‘our hope for you is steadfast.’

c) We need to come to the afflicted with full conviction; then there would be good result. V.7b “you will also share in our comfort.” (ESV)

I wonder why Apostle Paul added this thought in his letter right in the beginning. I suppose Paul was thinking that those Corinthian believers were still in the state of childhood. They had not come to spiritual maturity. The writer of Hebrews depicts how a baby is like. Heb. 5:12, 13. Babies always love to receive, not to be generous. They desire to remain in a comfortable place. They want to be the centre of attraction. Such characters are among us too. Please don't mistake me. There are exceptions however. Now, let me come to the second point. John Shedd once stated as he was talking about the responsibilities of believers, “ships are safe in the harbour, but it is not what ships are built for.” This statement speaks a lot.

This is very vital for us to turn our attention to. Often we are stuck in the thought of our own comfort for too long. Of course, we need consolation and comfort in the time of grief. But, being in the assembly, if this is the only thing we are seeking

always, then we are in the danger of being pushed back to our spiritual infancy. We can never do anything for the One who gave His life for us. We are comforters and should not be the recipients only. We are to be wounded healers. While bearing our own wounds we should become 'the balm of Gilead' Jer. 8:22. If we are indifferent to the afflicted, if we fail to console the downcast, then, as the Lord asserted, we are salt without savour worthy to be trampled by men outside.

My point is this: The purpose for which we are called is being thwarted. In the book of Isaiah we see a vivid picture. Look at Isaiah 58:12

*"Those from among you Shall build the old waste places; You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of Streets to Dwell In."*

This is an awesome responsibility that lies on the shoulders of the

redeemed. If you look into the previous verses you will see a series of wonderful doings of the Lord on behalf of His people.

*"If you extend your soul to the hungry And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in the darkness, And your darkness shall be as the noonday. The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail."*

"If you satisfy the afflicted soul... the Lord will... satisfy your soul... "Isa 58:10-11 (NKJV). The Lord doesn't stop where men and women often stop and say 'amen' to it. We can trace at least 4 things in verse 12:

- i. You shall build the old waste places
- ii. You shall raise up the foundations
- iii. You shall be called the Repairer of the Bread
- iv. You shall be called the Restorer of streets to dwell in

So, both the above passages from Corinthians and Isaiah are two aspects where the Christian life comes to surface.

- a. What we receive?
- b. What we should render?

This is the crux of the matter: Receive and do something. Paul received comfort, and he comforted others. The apostles received power and went doing great things for the kingdom. Opportunities lie all around us. Do we take these things seriously?

Dear brethren, in this perilous time, let us listen to what God is speaking to us. Let us leave behind the state of infancy and grow into spiritual maturity. May the Lord take us to the victory ground. May the name of the Lord be glorified. Amen.

**“Man needs to be free from himself and the tyranny of his sinful nature.”**  
- Warren W. Wiersbe

## TRIBUTE

# LEWIS JAMES SAMRAJ

(3RD APRIL 1930 – 16TH JULY 2021)

 By Nelson Thomas

Uncle Lewis James Samraj who went to be with the Lord on 16th July 2021 is one of the few who have influenced me tremendously in Christian life and ministry.

My personal contact with uncle began at ABTI, Madras (now SBC, Chennai) in 1984, when he came to teach us from the gospel of John. His



unique way of teaching attracted all of us, and somehow from thereon a special bond developed between us. I still remember, just before returning to Bangalore after his series of classes, uncle called me aside and made a special prayer for me. He maintained this care and love all these years.

I fondly remember the occasions



when we could serve the Lord together in Andhra Pradesh as well as Mumbai. We as a family enjoyed his stay with us. One of his habits we noticed was that he used to get ready early in the morning and wait at the drawing room, maybe to give the family easy access to the room. He used every opportunity to share his convictions and encouraged us by way of example to follow the same.

### His Commitment

When we reflect upon Uncle Lewis's life, one thing that stands out is his commitment. He was not just an able Bible teacher and preacher, but one who was absolutely committed to the New Testament church principles.

When many in the past thought it convenient to compromise for temporary gain, he stood firm by his principles till the end. We understand that the teachers of Clarence High School and the godly elders of the Bethesda Assembly molded him in such a way.

His communication style and language was exceptional. Once while translating his message into Hindi he corrected me, only then I realized that he was well-versed in Hindi too.

Not only about spiritual things, his commitment toward his family is also notable. When he was just 37, his wife went to be with the Lord. Along with his five-year-old son he initially continued in North India for the Lord's work, but later returned to Bangalore. He continued to live alone taking care of his son. When someone suggested him of a remarriage, his response was, 'I may get a wife, but my son will not get a

mother'.

In 2013, the Lord gave me an opportunity to visit dear uncle Lewis in Bangalore and spend few days with him. It was a very refreshing time for me. His godly counsel on various matters gave me new light and energy. His zeal and discipline even at the age of 83 challenged me. I saw him getting up very early in the morning and doing all the work at home alone, including cleaning and cooking. Even he took me on his bike for a city ride.



### His faith

During our conversation, he spoke of God's miraculous provisions for him and his family in the past. Leaving Burma (today Myanmar) his birth place as a twelve-year-old boy with his siblings and mother, they rented an accommodation in Bangalore, and later resigning from his job for faith-based gospel work in North India, in all those situations, he found the divine hands underneath. God faithfully and wonderfully provided; he never had to disclose his needs to man, even for a place to stay.

My repeated effort to take a picture of him was in vain. Even my suggestion to publish his notes for the benefit of many also was not taken very pleasantly. All this shows his hesitation for any recognition or

### His departure

Uncle Lewis had invited a brother from the assembly for a meeting at home for Friday, 16th July morning 9:30. The brother reached uncle's place at the right time, but there was no response from inside. After failing every effort to know his whereabouts, our brother managed to reach uncle's bedroom, only to find him lying on his bed well-dressed. Uncle Lewis had already gone to be with the Lord, whom he loved and served with extraordinary devotion.

Brother Godly Daniel, Bangalore writes, "The last day of his life was a fitting finale to the way that he lived all his life."

Uncle M. T. Thomas a long-time friend who lives in the same locality says that on Thursday, Lewis visited them and unusually spoke a lot especially regarding his son and grandchildren with complete satisfaction. They both prayed together and he left. On Friday morning, uncle M. T. Thomas called him as usual but there was no response. He says, 'just like in the case of Enoch, God took Lewis to Himself'. What an end to a wonderful life of faith and commitment!

Definitely, we can say as Apostle Paul writes that dear uncle has 'fought the good fight, finished the race and kept the faith', and has gone to be with his Master, whom he served faithfully all these years. May the Lord challenge us to be faithful to the light we have received and be filled with hope of the soon coming Lord Jesus Christ.

## PERSECUTION WITH A PURPOSE

✍ By Dr. Babu K. Varghese, Mumbai

**W**hat should we do during persecution? When Herod beheaded John the Baptist, the disciples took away his body and buried it, and then went and informed the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew. 14:8, 12. This is exactly how we ought to approach any oppression the saints face.

Persecution for the Lord's people is not a new thing. Down through the centuries it remains a fact that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Persecution empowers the church and draws us to the feet of Christ. Opposition gives us new strength of the Lord and an undying passion for the souls. Ultimately, persecution helps the church!

More than the persecution from outside, mistreatment from inside is more serious! Corruption from inside destroys the church.

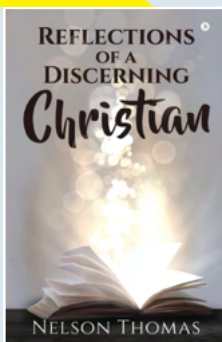
Carnality, fighting, backbiting, covetousness, unfaithfulness and marital discord, etc., corrupt the local church and hence remain the biggest challenge more than opposition from outside.

We see such a situation in Acts chapters 5 and 6. There was financial fraud and fighting in the church. Then we see that persecution purifies the church in chapter 8. Even today the Lord does the same! Let us fall at His feet, stop living in sin, live in harmony and get reconciled to one another. Love, edify, and help the people of God. 1Peter 4: 1-8.

Let's be serious about the present state of affairs and be prepared to preach the gospel. Take leadership in the church of Christ and encourage the people of God. You may not be supported by many but God will take care of you. 1Corinthians 15: 58. Opposition is opportunity, and persecution develops the church.

*(Summary of a message at a prayer meeting)*

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