

## OBITUARY

AAS family mourns the demise of Bro. Samwang, on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015. He was a 2012 Graduate from AAS. He has left behind his wife and three children and a host of relatives, good friends and well-wishers.

We continue to uphold the family in our prayers.

May God comfort and grant His divine peace to the bereaved family.



## UPCOMING EVENTS OF LITERARY COMMITTEE

- Essay Writing
- Debate
- Fun-night
- Movie Night...

## THE LITERARY TEAM

1. Ms. Chubala Sangma
2. Ms. P. Azon
3. Ms. KG Gailumliu, *MDiv. III*
4. Mr. Rakesh Lang, *BTh. III*
5. Mr. Lalsangmoi Vaiphei, *MDiv. I*
6. Mr. Samuel Mangbiaklian, *BTh. I*



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# Antioch Heights

A private Newsletter for alumni, prayer partners and friends of Asia Antioch Seminary, Guwahati, Assam. Vol. I Issue I Aug. 2015

From the Editor's Desk

Greetings to all.

At the very outset I would like to extend my gratitude to our one and only Saviour Jesus

Christ for His ever abiding guidance and presence with us, the Literary Committee, to introduce the first volume of our monthly newsletter "Antioch Heights". We, the Literary and Debate Committee take immense pleasure to help create a platform for the seminary where each person can creatively express and produce their thoughts. We strive to 'draw out' the maximum from each person and motivate them to grow in every area of their lives.

Growth signifies increase, development, change, progress, fulfilment, maturity, and it signifies life. We continue to experience growth in different areas of our life. We grow in our Christian life too. When we exercise our faith daily through meditation and prayer our spirituality grows. Spiritual growth is inevitable for every believer; it is a sign of maturity, a sign of becoming Christ-like.

One must not be satisfied with mere knowledge about the Divine but look for greater truths, search for the ultimate. Luke 2:40 says, "And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him." This verse indicates that Jesus did not just grow physically but he also grew mentally and spiritually.

Growing up is a process, and to grow in the right way requires continuous effort, dedication and a strong determination. Reaching up to heights has many obstacles but let us remember that the grace of God which enabled His son Jesus to grow will enable us also to grow and reach the highest level of intimacy with our Father in Heaven.

As we move forward let us continue to strive for that which will give us ultimate happiness, joy and satisfaction. As the song goes,

*"I am pressing on the upward way,  
New heights I am gaining every day,  
Still praying as I'm onward bound,  
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground..."*

May the good Lord lead us and help us in our quest to achieve the highest good in life.

In Christ  
Chubala Sangma  
(chubasangma@gmail.com)

## PREPARING FOR A LIFETIME OF MINISTRY

T. Hawiphah, Principal

Two years ago I bought books written by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam at the airport, one of which was *INDIA 2020* and I was glad to see it begin with a Bible verse from Proverbs in the first chapter. Like Mahatma Gandhi, he must have loved and read the Bible or at least portions of it like the Book of Proverbs. The Bible is a spring of wisdom on which many world leaders and businessmen have had their root and laid their foundation, if not in complete belief but at least in practice of its wise principles. If mere reading could have inspired and motivated people to achieve great things, how much more so for His children, who read it, believe it and meditate on it day and night. Indeed, the Bible equips us for this earthly sojourn.

In a Bible College like ours, where we are blessed with the opportunity to study the Bible more than any other being, we are served with a better chance to prepare ourselves for this life. We should take up the challenge to make the most of the privilege we have been given and set goals for ourselves - goals to touch the lives of people.

Our preparation will give us dreams and visions of the future, help us to be humble and conscious of our inability without Him and therefore to trust Him more.

Our training should motivate us to holiness of life in all aspects and lead us to a high moral life.

We will choose the right words and our speeches will be encouraging like a healing balm and an oasis in the desert.

Nothing can stop us from our calling; we are committed to move forward. We see the invisible and the promises sure to come.

Constant penitent heart fills a person in His presence. We constantly are aware of our weaknesses and help us to rely on Him alone. It motivates us to seek His face daily and study His words to know and do His will.

The Bible College is truly a place we grow to be like Him. We are prepared to seek and save the lost, to encourage and strengthen the believers, to transform lives, to be an instrument in bringing great awakening and revival by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is a time of discipline and obedience as well as self-control in the area of different types of hunger, conflicts and life partner.

Let us cultivate a willing heart to spearhead, impact, influence, and make a difference in others' lives. Let us have a sincere desire to serve without distraction and be willing to walk the dusty road for the cause of the Gospel and give up any type of self-indulgence. How are you preparing today?



## HOW I OVERCOME MY SOLITUDE...

It is Friday eve. She sits alone outside the Church Veranda.

"I just want to ignore weekends!" she screams. Yet there is no one to answer. She moves down towards library and sees people busy doing their own works. It's Saturday night she finds everyone busy, talking over the phone, enjoying, and chatting with friends...Tears well up. She clamps her teeth on her under lip, but the tears keep pushing. Unable to fight it any longer, she falls on her bed, sobbing, "Why am I always left alone?"

Have you ever experience like that-cut off from the world, lonely, useless, and empty? If so, do not despair. For while feeling lonely is no fun, it is not some fatal disease. Simply put, loneliness is a warning signal. Hunger warns us that we need companionship, closeness, intimacy. We need food to function well. Likewise, we need companionship to feel well.

"She never found that was as companionable as solitude." She lives in a small apartment building where 7 people stays together.

Sometimes she went at the back of the building just to be alone. She get some thinking done and pray. It's kind of refreshing. Moments of solitude can give her deep satisfaction...She realized what the Bible warns: "One isolating himself will seek his own selfish longing; against all practical wisdom he will break forth."

Late night she discovered that God the creator of the Universe is her best friend who always comforts her. She said, Jehovah is going to provide a way out no matter how deep a problem she have. This friendship with God is truly reassuring. One fine morning, after the chapel she found a friend who is her "Thamoi touch". Her Thamoi (Heart) encourage and listen to her hearts cry and ended with a meaningful heart touching prayer.

So, friends if you are depressed or isolated, pray to God, and seek out someone wise and understanding to whom you can bare your feelings. In the Christian Congregation you will find out "older men" who are skillful counsellors. (James 5:14, 15). They stand ready to help you maintain your friendship with God.

-Lum-Moryn Gangmei  
M.Div. III.

## "Last Breathe"

*Beauty you see in me  
Its not the beauty of mine.  
Its the beauty of man  
Who came in the time*

*When I was at the age of nine,  
I have tasted life, of which i am not worthy  
Sometimes sweet and mostly salty,  
I earned no silver nor Gold;  
And now I am old in this world.  
Yet I know there is a place.*

*And there lies my place,  
Neither have I seen paradise  
Nor do I know where it lies;  
But soon I shall see when I close my eyes.  
And my body shall return to dust*

-Ngamrei Patar (BTh I)

**"THERE IS NO  
BETTER BOOK WITH  
WHICH TO DEFEND  
THE BIBLE THAN  
THE BIBLE ITSELF."**

## *I love doing. . .*

There are many things in this world I love doing with heartedly. For example, I love travelling, I love enjoying good meals, I love reading books, I love eating fruits, I love playing and many more. Because why I love all these is I am enjoying in doing all these. And the reason why I enjoy all these is because I am alive, I am healthy. No one force me to do what I love to do most, I just love doing it and go for it. There was a time also when I don't even want to see the best meal, fruits, the best things etc. When I am sick from illness, my body didn't respond to it. If I am sick, my health goes down, so to stay healthy I take immediate possible care. That is how I care myself.

Seeing all these, enjoying all these, doing all these some questions came to my mind, 'Am I really enjoying with God, the living God? Are we Christians (called by people or ourselves) really enjoyed reading God's word, studying His word, meditating on it?' If the answer is "YES" then let's be happy, we are alive in God. If the answer is "NO" I can say we are as good as dead. And if our hunger or enjoyment for the word of God changes with time, seasons then we need spiritual check-up like we did medical check-up for our physical body.

If we find ourselves spiritually sick we need immediate treatment, we may not recover instantly but for sure we will recover from our sickness. Let's abide in Jesus Christ, in Him we will get whatever we need. Let's just trust Him. Abiding in Him, alive in Him will make us love to read His word, study His word, meditate in His word and people will see Jesus Christ in us. Let's love to live our life. Let's make our life lively and love doing what the word of God teaches us.

*G Kabidim M.Div. II*



## *"By Grace"*

Surely I was sinful, at birth,  
Sinful from the time my mother; Conceive me.

I Have sinned and, fallen short of  
The glory of God For the wages of sin is death.

I was unable to see the Blessing of God,  
Because I had Broken the sweet fellowship With God.

I was Unable to Save my Soul  
From the bondage of sin, Because I was dead spiritually.

But I heard the voice of God,  
He called me by Saying, "My Son".

Then He ask me, "Do you want to see,  
The heaven which, Which I made for You?"

I replied Him, saying Father I am a Sinner,  
I did many wrong Things Before you, how can I?

Then Lord said to me, "No one can be save"  
Unless He believes That I am The Lord.

Then I confess with my mouth the Lord Jesus,  
And believed in my heart, That Jesus Is my Saviour.

Then the Lord said to me, "For by grace You have been saved,  
through faith and that Not by yourselves: It is the gift of God.

Only God grace that make me alive again,  
Today I am Born again person, And only Because Of Grace.

I live in Christ, and Christ In me,  
Therefore I am a new Creation. Behold all things Become new.

It is, Grace only Grace That Give me new life.

*-Rakesh Lang, 87th III Year*



## TOWARDS SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

*Mr. Jam Haokip, Ministry Incharge*

Social transformation as one of the goals of the church is a much debated issue in the Christian world. On one extreme, we have those who say the duty of the church is spiritual transformation and that the church should not meddle in social or worldly affairs. On the other extreme, we have those who will not have problem with turning the church to a mere institution for social work. The reality is we can neither ignore the prevalent social issues and the plight of the people around us, nor can we lose our priority of winning souls and help people mature in Christ. The need of the hour is a holistic transformation that strikes a balance between the two extremes.

The conviction of the church as an agent for holistic transformation (both social and spiritual) calls for a dynamic ministry. In Asia Antioch Seminary (AAS), we believe that Christian ministry is dynamic in nature. Any effort and result is confronted by a question "what's next?" and any response to the question is in turn confronted by another "what's next?" The result is an unending chain of "what's next?" This calls us to be sensitive to the needs of the people on one hand and to be creative to meet their needs on the other. This also calls for adaptability to respond to the changing needs of time and people in the light of the Bible. As we strive for spiritual transformation of the people, we cannot ignore their need for social transformation. The kind of social transformation we seek to achieve is different from that of the secular world because we grounded ours in the Bible. Social transformation may be a very big mountain for us to climb; however, we have started and

seek to do whatever we can in five areas namely – hygiene, health, livelihood/capacity building, education and sports.

**Hygiene** – In Deuteronomy 23:12-14, God instructs the Israelites how they should dispose off their body wastes. Many thousands years elapsed since then, however there are many people around us living without toilet. This moved us to start Antioch Toilet Ministry (ATM) by constructing a model in the campus and we have plans to construct in other places. This will also give us good opportunities to share God's word because cleanliness, both physical and spiritual is endorsed by the God of the Bible.

**Health** – Human beings, who are created in the image and likeness of God are given the role of taking care of creations. This stewardship has to start with our own bodies which is God's creative gift to us. Therefore, health remains an important agenda in AAS. We conducted several free medical camps in the past including cancer awareness program and we look forward to conduct such camps and programs in the days to come.

**Livelihood/capacity building** – The book of Proverbs and Paul in some of his epistles commends industrious people while rebukes lazy bones. However, working hard is not enough. Choosing a productive trade and being trained in the trade is equally important. With this in mind, AAS conduct tailoring classes for women so that they can generate incomes for their needs. We look towards building capacity in other areas as well. We also link people with organizations who provide livelihood trainings whenever such opportunities come.

**Education** – In AAS, we believe that children not only determine the future of the society, but also decorate the present scenario of the society. We teach them their school lessons on Sundays. Though we cannot preach to them directly, we include a session of Bible-story telling, memory verse recitation and songs in their class hours. For a better today and tomorrow, we believe in educating the children and laying for them a good foundation in the Word of God.

**Sports** – In 1 Tim. 4:8, Paul says that physical exercise profits a little where as spiritual exercise or godliness is profitable for all things. He wanted to underscore

the importance of being fit spiritually, not to denounce being fit physically. Sport is an important avenue where we can reach out to the youths both socially and spiritually. Youths who are into sports have lesser chance of indulging in drugs and other anti-social practice. Sports also teach youths the value of teamwork, team spirit, healthy habits and sportsmanship qualities which are very crucial for social transformation. With this in mind, AAS formed a soccer team Antioch Football Club (AFC) and we played matches with local football clubs.

Work had been started and more work needs to be done in the days to come. It is our hope and prayer that through these areas, we will be able to contribute towards a biblically based social transformation.



women development programme



antioch toilet ministry work in progress

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## PRAYER

Prayer is a conversation with God. Jeremiah 33:3 is the contact number of God as it states “Call unto me and I will answer you”. Throughout the Bible we find many people interceding for others in Prayer. Some are listed below:

- *Job prayed for his friends (Job 48:10).*
- *Moses prayed for Aaron (Deut. 9:20).*
- *Samuel prayed for Israel (1Sam. 7:5, 9).*
- *Hezekiah prayed for Judah (2Kings 19:14-19).*
- *Jesus prayed for His disciples (John 17:9-24).*
- *Paul prayed for Christians (Rom. 1:9-10).*

As Christians, it is our outmost duty to pray for our Motherland ‘India’ and for all the Christian brothers and sisters all around the world who are persecuted that God will Comfort them.

*-Jams Tirkey, M.Div II*

## SOPHISTIC MOVEMENT AND CHRISTIANITY TODAY

*Mr. Khaithiandam Vaiphei, Faculty*

The movement of sophistic rhetoric influenced not only the culture, government, and society of Christianity but also the world of religions. At the end of the fifth and beginning part of the fourth century BCE, there was a great change in the classic Greece during which the philosophical movement and the so-called sophists enjoyed a life of luxury, privilege, prestige and power. However the use of sophists in the first century and in the second century is not same. In the first century the use of sophist is more related to the spiritual thing which mainly deals about philosophical themes of courage, justice, heroes, gods and the universe at length. But when it comes to the second century the concept completely changes and mainly deals with the material and worldly things such as the socio-economies of humanity.

Scholars such as Plutarch, Dio Chrysostom, Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, and Lucian criticized this Sophistic movement. Their criticism was based on the main reason behind this existence of the sophistic movement which is their boasting on their ability of wealth, different kinds of elaborated hairstyle, and fair complexion for men and their smooth skin. During this time the used of sophists was more on the outward adornment instead of religious and spiritual which was directed towards God. Plato and Aristotle were the one who often criticized the sophists for not being genuine truth seekers and called them cheaters in the arguments. This sophist movement totally persuaded them to change their mind and attention towards the lust of the worldly things and so, Plato and Aristotle could not accept it as philosophy and considered it as a false teaching.

There are many Christians who have been influenced by the 2<sup>nd</sup> century sophistic movement in our society today.

The movement of sophistic (wealth, worldly wisdom, ability, jewels and loyalty) has misled many Christian organizations. In Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, Paul tried to correct them saying that they should not misuse the sophistic movement in their local church.

The central problem of the Corinthians was self-boasting and pride. In fact, self-boasting and pride have nothing to do with spiritual warfare. In this canonical context where there is self-boasting and pride, there is neither unity nor justice in the society. According to the religious context, apart from God’s saving action Christ and His grace there is no other reason to boast and we should confirm our identity with Christ as the sole ground for our boasting. Worldly wisdom despises the wisdom of God which is why God had chosen the weak, the despised and the foolish to shame the wise men of this world.

In an era where materialism has taken the forefront, humanity has become more concerned with things that are perishable whilst failing to nourish the immortal things that make us humane. At the end of the day, life is not all about money, wealth or education. Rather, it is all about hospitality, friendship and love. Valuing the credibility of life is the secret of happiness. Value one life for one life.

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