

Overseas Friends of UESI (Union of Evangelical Students of India)-USA



www.ofuesi.org

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OFUESI – Update: January 2007

January 10, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Greetings to you all in the ever faithful name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

This letter is an update on the OFUESI activities and finances during the year 2006. It includes the information about the conclusion of the Interim Committee 2006, its identification of the National Council Members for the years 2007-2008 and the NC's first meeting during December in Houston, Texas including the commissioning of the Executive Committee for the year 2007.

1. Update on the 7th National Council Meeting

In May 2006, when the Interim Committee (IC-2006) was formed and given the responsibility to carry on the OFUESI ministry, one of its prime responsibilities has been to seek God's guidance and prayerfully identify the next leadership by establishing a new National Council (NC) for the years 2007-2008.

Over the period of two months, God enabled the IC to approach more than 40 people to prayerfully consider for NC leadership. The IC-2006, consolidated this listing to final 20 people and with due consent from every one of them they were all requested for an NC Meeting in Houston, TX during December 2-3, 2006.

By God's grace, 15 of the 20 people were able to make travel arrangements in a short time and arrived in Houston from four corners of the US and from India for the NC Meeting. The rest of them participated via telecom and in personal prayers. As part of the NC meeting proceedings, the entire NC members re-affirmed their commitment to serve the next two years except three brothers. One volunteered to serve the NC at a later time as there were many others represented from the same region and one prayerfully deferred to concentrate on the regional activities. One of the requested brothers could not serve based on the current constitution due to the residence status being outside the US.

In all, 17 members committed to serve in the NC for the years 2007 and 2008 making this NC the largest for the OFUESI until now. We believe that this provision is given to us at this time and a lot more will be expected from our ministry as much is given to us.

	First Name	Last Name	State	Area	Region
1	Rojo	Mathai	NJ	Northeast	Region-I
2	Sushil	Yesupriya	MD	Northeast	Region-I
3	Charles	Dhanaraj	IN	Midwest	Region-II
4	Subha	Kumpaty	WI	Midwest	Region-II
5	Vinod	Malachi	IL	Midwest	Region-II
6	Paramjyothi	Marati	IL	Midwest	Region-II
7	Abhijit	Talari	MO	Midwest	Region-II
8	Joji	Varghese	OH	Midwest	Region-II
9	Emmanuel	Emmady	CA	West	Region-III
10	Suman	Nirmal	CA	West	Region-III
11	Vijaylakshmi	Guduru	LA	South	Region-IV
12	Suresh	Konatham	TX	South	Region-IV
13	AK	Lama	AL	South	Region-IV
14	Zeno	Philip	TX	South	Region-IV
15	Philip	Pothan	TX	South	Region-IV
16	Prem	Saganti	TX	South	Region-IV
17	Thirukumar	Vethanayagam	IND	India	India

Fig-1: National Council Members 2007-2008

With nearly two dozen attendees at the NC Meeting (including observers), the gathering of all those present filled with prayers of grateful hearts, at times even with tears in the presence of God. It was truly a blessing to be in the midst of God's children while they prayed regarding their commitment to serve the Lord through OFUESI ministry.

The NC was challenged by Dr. Lama from the charge that Apostle Paul gave to Timothy (II Timothy 4:1-5). The exhortation emphasized that OFUESI / UESI is a God-raised, God-designed movement to lead many to the feet of our Lord Jesus and that the gospel is the only solution to the dying world. These messages touched the NC and prepared them for the calling of God on their lives to be involved in the ministry for the years ahead. On the next day, the NC was challenged from the book of Nehemiah on the sacrificial commitment in God's service. For a complete listing of these three message transcripts by Dr. Lama at the NC meeting, please refer to **Appendix-A**; they will be a great blessing to many among our OFUESI. Also, Dr. Lama recently compiled a prayer to the National Council members and is included here. Please pray that our Lord be gracious to the NC in carrying out all their responsibilities faithfully during 2007-2008.

O Lord! ...May our holy zeal and love for you and your kingdom and the fruits of our works declare your presence in the eyes of all those who see our oneness. May you prove yourself once again that you can sanctify the worst of the sinners like us as you did in the lives of many who have gone before us! May you keep us humble all through and help us to seek you selflessly above all!

Help us Oh! Lord, as we commit to serve our family, our church, UESI ministry in India through OFUESI, and the people with whom we live as godly ones to bring glory and honor to you in the year 2007. ... Amen

2. Update on the Executive Committee for 2007

The National Council (2007-2008) convened for the first time in the early hours on December 3rd 2006 and nominated the following members and unanimously elected them to the offices of Executive Committee for the year 2007. The following is the listing of the Executive Committee:

EC-2007	Name	State
President	Prem Saganti	TX
Vice President	Joji Varghese	OH
Secretary	Subha Kumpaty	WI
Joint Secretary	Emmanuel Emmady	CA
Treasurer	Paramjyothi Marati	IL

Fig-2: Executive Committee Members, EC-2007

Over the past year, both in the US and around the world, several prayed for God's guidance and grace to lead the OFUESI ministry. The gathering of NC in December is certainly an authentication of God's grace and mercy in providing the needed leadership with several committed people. Bro. Thirukumar, founding member of the OFUESI, currently representing UESI moderated the proceedings of the NC confirmation and EC selection process. Thus the Executive Committee was formed at about 4:00 AM on December 3, 2006 and dedicated by the prayers of Bros. AK Lama and Charles Dhanaraj.

By the end of the NC meeting, Bro. Thirukumar reminded us of the phrase, "*It is God! Truly God!*" from the lyrics of the song titled "GOD" by Rebecca St. James. Truly it is all for God, as it was said, "*I can't explain any other way, cuz it's God.*" See **Appendix-C** for the lyrics of the song, "GOD". It is a great joy to learn that God used Bro. Thirukumar in the salvation experience of Bro. Charles in Chennai; and Bro. Charles was one among others who contributed in the salvation experience of Bro. Lama in Jamshedpur. It was amazing to realize how the Lord orchestrates in bringing people to Himself at different times and yet uses them together, years later in a special way.

3. Update on the Financial Transactions

During 2006, by His Grace and Provision, OFUESI was able to continue the support to UESI without many interruptions just as in the earlier years. At the end of 2006, it is amazing to witness how God takes care of His ministry and the needs of His servants in the UESI ministry. Bro. Sushil Yesupriya who took the responsibility as part of the Interim Committee's treasurer in April continued to serve as the treasurer through 2006 with OFUESI registration process in MD and a new bank account as well as new transaction processes to UESI. Bro. Yesupriya also presented a detailed report of the financial accounting at the NC meeting from our earlier "OFUESI Update: November 2006." Also, for your immediate reference, all the financial details through November 2006 were provided in **Appendix-D** as presented at the NC meeting in December 2006.

Additionally, in the month of December 2006, we were able to send to UESI, \$ 14,500 with designated amounts of \$ 4,500 and the remainder of \$ 10,000 towards the general UESI fund. In the year 2006, we were able to support UESI with a total of \$ 64,305 that included several designated funds and a larger proportion towards UESI general fund.

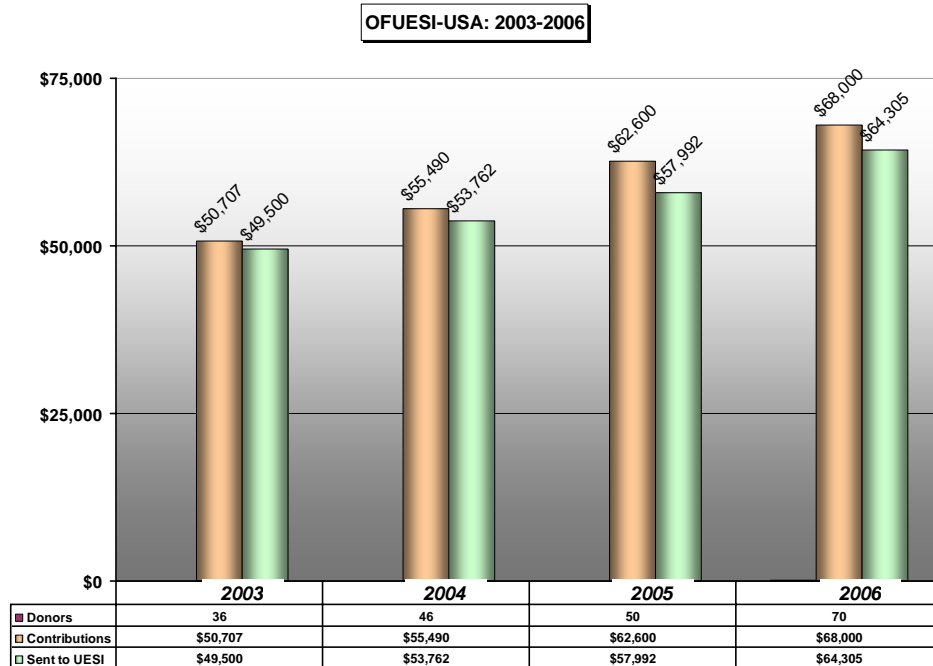


Fig-3: Support from OFUESI to UESI during 2006 and prior three years

The following is the distribution of the sending (Table-1) to UESI along with the specified designated amounts (Table-2) requested by the contributors for the year 2006.

Month	Amount
January-06	\$ 12,700.00
February-06	\$ 14,650.00
March-06	\$ 5,990.00
April-06	\$ -
May-06	\$ 8,265.00
June-06	\$ 2,100.00
July-06	\$ -
August-06	\$ -
September-06	\$ -
October-06	\$ 6,100.00
November-06	\$ -
December-06	\$ 14,500.00
TOTAL	\$64,305.00

Distribution	Amount
General Fund	\$ 36,475.00
Staff Support	\$ 14,140.00
Building Fund	\$ 4,620.00
UESI-Andhra Pradesh	\$ 3,825.00
UESI-Kerala	\$ 2,200.00
UESI-Tamil Nadu	\$ 700.00
UESI-Publications	\$ 600.00
Pilani-EU	\$ 445.00
UESI-North East	\$ 375.00
UESI-Maharashtra	\$ 325.00
UESI-Rajasthan	\$ 300.00
Bombay-EGF	\$ 300.00
TOTAL	\$ 64,305.00

Table-1: Support to UESI during 2006

Table-2: Designated distribution of 2006

From the year 2007, the new executive committee treasurer Bro. Paramjyothi Marati will take the responsibility of all the financial transactions and accounting and Bro. Sushil Yesupriya will continue to render his support for all the needed banking transactions. Please pray for these two brothers as they continue their valuable services and time to OFUESI with the treasurer responsibilities and accounting paperwork procedures. Please consider to prayerfully support the OFUESI ministry as the Lord leads. Our giving to UESI has been around 10% of the total UESI budgetary needs in the year 2006. May God lead you for His cause and richly reward you for all your commitment.

4. Update on Prayer and Praise Items

- Praise God for the successful operation of recovery of Bro. Surender Parmar (UESI) in December and please continue to pray for his health and all the family members.
- Continue to pray for Mrs (Bro) PC Verghese (UESI) as she continues to recover from her surgery and for the strength of Bro. PC. Please also see *Appendix-B* for the exhortations to all of us from Bro. PC
- Continue to pray for the needs and financial strains of UESI ministry
- Praise God for the Staff Conference held (Dec 27-Jan 2) in Tiruvalla. Mr. L.T. Jeyachandran and Dr. A.M. Prabhakaran encouraged the staff.
- Praise God for the enthusiasm and encouragement from Urbana-07 held in St Louis, MO. Bro. Abhijit Talari (St. Louis, MO) served as a volunteer and Bro. Vijayababu Vallabati (Houston, TX) participated.
- Pray for the wisdom on EC and NC members and their meetings in 2007 (first teleconference planned on January 26, 2007 (9:00 PM EST, 6:00 PM PST)).

Prayerfully,

Executive Committee 2007

Appendix-A: Highlights Exhortations by Bro. AK Lama to the National Council 2007

Highlights of the Messages as Delivered by Bro. AK Lama for the National Council Meeting Held in Houston, TX (Dec 2-3, 2006)

Timothy: The Bearer of the Baton

What Makes Christianity Unique?

Nehemiah: The Man in the Business of God

Timothy: The Bearer of the Baton¹

Text: 2 Tim 4:1-5

Bible tells us that Timothy was much less qualified than Saint Paul. While Paul was a spiritual giant, Timothy was a pigmy. He was young and immature (1 Tim 4:12; 2 Tim 2:22). He was timid (2 Tim 1:7). He was a sickly person for we know that Paul advised him to drink some wine as a medicine (1 Tim 5:23). He was also perhaps an introvert and a loner that is why Paul had to write the Christians at Corinth (1 Cor 16:10) not to do things that might scare him. He was not an able person from worldly standard. In fact, he would be disqualified for a leadership role.

Nevertheless, Paul picked him as his disciple. And the Bible tells us that Paul made a right choice. Today, the Church historians consider Timothy as the most significant successor of Paul, who continued the legacy of Paul and his teachings after Paul went to be with the Lord.

Why did Paul pick Timothy? Bible tells us that Timothy had some virtues that Paul was deeply impressed by.

First, Timothy had a good public reputation. Those who knew him, they spoke well about him. In Acts 16:2, Dr. Luke writes, *‘The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him.’* When Paul received a good recommendation about Timothy from those who had observed Timothy for a long time, he appointed him as his successor. Later, Paul testifies that his public reputation was consistent. He wrote to the Christians at Philippi, *“But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.”* (Phil 2:22) Notice the remark, “you know,” and “Timothy has proved himself.” Timothy’s credibility was a hard earned credibility and the people were aware of it. It is so important that those of us who are in the ministry should have a good public reputation. Do the people consider us worthy of the ministerial task? Have I proven myself? What do they think about me? What kind of opinion my friend has about me? My wife and my children have been the best help in that regard. It is good to get their unbiased remarks.

Second, Timothy was a faithful disciple. A good disciple is the one who learns everything with great diligence from his teacher and put them into practice. He desires to imitate his teacher in all possible ways—his ideology, his philosophy, and his life style. The relationship between the teacher and a true disciple is like a relationship between a father and a son. You remember the proverbial phrase, “Like father like son”. Church historians consider Timothy as the extension of Paul’s very life. In other words, he was a living ghost of Paul. Notice, what Paul had to say about Timothy in 1 Cor 4:17, *“For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He*

¹ © Dr. A.K. Lama for OFUESI, Houston, TX Dec 2, 2006

will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.” Notice the sentences again; “who is faithful in the Lord,” “He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus,” and “which agree with what I teach everywhere.” Wow! It is like saying if you have Timothy, you have me. Timothy is my true representation.

Third, Timothy was a sincere minister. The etymological origin of the English word minister is the Latin word *ministerio*, which simply means to serve or the one who is sent out to serve others. The concept of serving other embodies an attitude of other mindedness. A minister is expected to serve somebody other than himself. So ministry cannot be a place for self-service and self-benefit. It is not a platform for self-promotion or finding one’s fortune. A genuine minister is always concerned for others. Paul himself was a true example of this. In 2Cor 11:23-28, Paul clarifies how he is no less a minister of Christ in comparison to others. He writes,

Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

Following the footsteps of Paul was not an easy task. Timothy, as a disciple, had a big shoe to fill in. And so he did. In his letter to Christians at Philippi, Paul wrote, “*I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare*” (Phil 2:19-21). Timothy proved himself as genuine minister by being other minded, showing true concerns for others, and pouring himself as a drink offering for others as Paul himself did.

To this Timothy, who is now a worthy disciple to carry on the baton of the gospel, Paul at the end of his life journey gives him an important charge in 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-- with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to

myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

In this charge, Timothy is expected to do six things explicitly. Timothy is asked to (1) preach the word, (2) be ready always, (3) be a good Christian teacher who corrects, rebukes, and encourages others with patience and careful instructions, (4) keep his head cool in all situations, (5) do the work of an evangelist, and (6) discharge all the duties of his ministry. In one sense, the list appears to be a comprehensive one, but in another sense it is not. To preach the word, one must read the word, meditate upon it, wait upon the Lord, write one's reflections, and then practice to deliver them effectively.

Furthermore, the discharging of all the duties of ministry may include anything and everything. Sometime to get the work of God accomplished, Christian ministers may be required to do a job which may be menial like the cleaning of a toilet, brushing somebody's shoe, and doing laundry etc. Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, "*To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.*" (1 Cor 9:22)

In other words, it is not about following a definite charter of duty and doing things legalistically and dutifully. In fact, Paul's charge intends to emphasize the indispensability of the preaching of the Word of God, the urgency and the readiness of a minister, the uttermost necessity of maintaining a cool temperament, a lifestyle of an evangelists rather than acting like the managing director or the CEO, and be willing to do anything in order to accomplish God's work.

The next important things to be noticed in this passage are the reasons for this charge. Paul gives four important reasons for implementing this charge diligently.

First, notice the clause in verse 1, "*In the presence of God*". For Paul, God is present. He is a real being. He is omnipresent. God is not a historic personality of the past. He is not an ideological figure or philosophical icon. But God is a present being.

As a young Buddhist temple boy, one of my vices was stealing money from the Buddhist temple. I only waited for an opportunity when no human could see me. I was more afraid of human beings than God. But after having received Jesus Christ in my life, it is the fear of the Lord that has protected me from many sins than the fear of human beings. In Psalm 139: 1-7, David expressed it well.

O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD. You hem me in-- behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

There are two unseen eyes who watch over us all the time. These eyes scrutinize not only our external activities, but also our inner and mental engagements. We have been careful to teach our children not to be aware of their parents only, but be aware of these two eyes primarily. My children think that it is very freaky idea.

Paul was conscious and aware of God's holy presence in his life. Such awareness can change mindset, our decisions, and our ethical behavior. A child of God conducts himself/herself primarily under such awareness. He/She feels primarily accountable to God for he is omnipresent and he is always watching.

Second, there is judgment a day in front of us. The ever present God is going to judge both the living and dead. One day, there will be a pay day. We will stand before him and give an account of what we did with what God gave us. In fact, Paul warns about this to Christians at Corinth. He wrote in 1 Cor 3:12-15,

If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

Paul might have got his idea from Jesus' parable of the talents. Jesus was explaining about the end times and the coming of the Kingdom of heaven. This is what he said about the person who did not use his talents appropriately. He said in Matt 25:28-30,

Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jesus did not use euphemistic language for his disciple. He did not intend to be soft because after He was gone the perishing world would desperately need the faithfulness of his disciples. That is true even today. Our faithfulness to God would determine how our family members and neighbors will fare on the Day of Judgment. So, Paul says not only because we are aware of God watching us presently, but also the fact that he will be judging us tomorrow, we should take the charge seriously.

The third reason for the charge is mentioned in verses 3-4. Chronologically it is not the third but I would like to mention it first before I emphasize on the last. In these two verses, Paul prophesies a negative picture of the world. According to him, the people are not going to improve spiritually rather they are going to become bad. The world is going downward with influence of the evil. There will be absence of truth. People will prefer story telling. They will look for fictions that entertain. They will look for the preachers, who agree with their ideology, who can satisfy their human needs, who do not make them

uncomfortable by preaching the truth. They will prefer preachers who can entertain them. Paul says that there will be many preachers who would fit into that category.

The fourth reason to carry out the charge is the promise of the glorious hope given to every Christian. God is not only going to judge, but also He is going to come and establish His kingdom. We will see Jesus face to face. When Jesus comes He will reward us and escort us to the tree of life, passing through the gates of the city. John records Jesus' words in Revelation 22:12-14,

Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

In that city, we will meet our beloveds who have gone before us. In that city, there will be no sorrows, no tears, no sickness, no cancer, no sinful nature, and no presence of the evil. We will be worshipping God day and night. We will serve God and will reign with him to eternity. And we will sing a new song with the angels. John describes this Rev 5:9-10:

And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Timothy understood clearly why the baton was placed in his hand and why the charge was given to him. It was a historical challenge to Timothy to grow up and become Paul because Paul had come to the end of his life. Timothy could afford no more to remain the same all his life, he must become Paul for all the reasons Paul explained.

Likewise, the baton is in our hand now. We know why it has been placed in our hand. And why we should heed Paul's charge with an absolute dedication. May the good Lord enable us.

Let us reflect for a moment and pray. How are we doing as Timothy today? What do we need to reconsider in our lives and dedicate them to God? Pray that God will enable us to be the faithful Timothy of our generation.

Amen

What Makes Christianity Unique?²

Few months ago I received a phone call from an Indian gentleman, who happened to be a neighbor of my friend Mr. Paul. Probably, Paul might have told him that I was an Indian Buddhist who became Christian. So, the Indian gentleman wanted to know why I had rejected a religion like Buddhism which promotes peace and tranquility in the world, and embrace Christianity, which according to him, was historically associated with crusades, imperialism, war, exploitation, slavery, high divorce rate, individualism, and feminism. I discovered that he had a different definition for Christianity. We will be surprised how Christianity is perceived by our friends from other religions in our neighborhood. Their ignorance is understandable.

However, it is bewildering to know that even the Christians who supposed to know the Bible perceive Christianity differently. For some Christians, Christianity is all about charisma, healing, and miracle. For others it is speaking in a strange tongue. And still for others it is a way to material blessings and security. For some it is denominational segregation, purity, and setting apart of the sheep from the goats. For others it is all about wining the souls of the pagan and increasing the membership of their Church.

What is Christianity? I know a Church, which has a four-fold mission statement—Worship the Savior, Win the Lost, Disciple the Won, and Care for the fellowship, I wish I could tell them that a mission statement without understanding the true Christianity may become an activism. Even if they accomplish all that are mentioned in their mission statement, they would be surprised to find that they still fail to understand the true essence of Christianity.

Christianity is not about doing things and carrying out the project. If Christianity is about worshipping, we will never be able to outdo the Muslims, who offer their prayers five times a day and the millions of them go to circle around the black stone in Mecca every year. If Christianity is about caring for the fellowship, we will never be able to outdo Muslims again who are willing to give their lives for their community. Think about the Hezbollah members who have great reputation for loving and caring in Lebanon, who were recently seen on the TV distributing \$10,000 to each family after their houses were destroyed in the Israeli attacks. If Christianity was about conversion, we are much less enthusiastic than the members of the Jehovah Witness, or the Church of the Latter Day Saints, who persistently and repeatedly knock our doors.

It seems Christianity is generally defined by the obsessions of Christian's engagement into all kinds of external activities, but very rarely by the fundamentals of what the Christianity is all about.

What makes Christianity unique in the world? What is the true essence of Christianity?

² © Dr. A.K. Lama for OFUESI, Houston, TX, Dec 2, 2006

The best place to look for the answer is the Bible. How does the word Christian began? We read in Acts 11:26 that the disciples of Jesus Christ were called Christians. In other words, Christians are those who are the disciples or the followers of the historic person Jesus, who came as the *christus*, the anointed one (Greek), the messiah (Hebrew).

In other words, external Christian traditions, practices, doctrinal teachings, mission activities, and other Christian engagements are not the actual place for finding the true definition of Christianity, but the life of Jesus Christ and his teachings. The external Christian activities are good as long as they truly represent the inner reality of the Christians who imitate Christ in his being. To state more explicitly, Christianity finds identity in the being of a true Christian, the follower of the historic person of Jesus Christ.

That takes us to the question: how do you follow Jesus Christ? Should we follow like the Protestants, Catholics, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutheran, Methodists, etc. and etc.

Who else can answer that question other than Jesus himself?

There are two accounts in the Bible which describe what Jesus requires from us in order to follow him. First one is Matt 8:19-22 and the second one is Luke 9:57-62. For our meditation, we will consider the second one.

Let us examine the text in its literary context. If you notice the broader context, you will see that Dr. Luke places a series of events before this passage in order to help us understand the event in its context.

In chapter nine, Dr. Luke places several glamorous events before this small gloomy and difficult passage. First, he informs us about Jesus performing the miracle to feed the five thousand. The public miracle of multiplying the bread and fish to a surplus for five thousands is not an event to be undermined and forgotten. Who would not like to follow such a miracle performer? Obviously, Jesus had a crowd following him with wrong expectations. They did not recognize Jesus' true identity.

Therefore, Jesus asks his disciple, "Who do you think I am?" As you know, Peter was the only among them, who seems to have understood Jesus partly, as the anointed one of God. Jesus was indeed the anointed one of God but that was not his full identity. With such an incomplete information one may still follow Christ with wrong expectations. So did Peter! As we know, he could not stand the fear of life and denied Christ three times.

Next, Dr. Luke narrates the story of a mountain top experience of the three disciples. The disciples saw the glorious transfiguration of Jesus. They saw Moses and Elijah, and they heard the divine prophecy about the future of the city of Jerusalem. They were surrounded by the glorious splendor. It was the greatest moment in their life. Peter wanted to enjoy the mountain top experience longer, so he offered Jesus a magnificent building plan that would sustain his mountain top experience. But the voice from the heaven said, "Listen to him!" In other words, "Peter! Its not about glorious experience, its about listening to Jesus and obeying Him."

Then, Dr. Luke narrates a story of a father coming to Jesus pleading him to heal his son who is possessed by the evil spirit. He tells us that Jesus is not very happy about the spiritual state of the people around them who looks for him only for their physical wellbeing. Jesus calls them “Unbelieving and perverse generation”(verse 41). Anyway Jesus heals the boy and everybody was amazed by the miracle (verse 43). The text says everybody marveled “at all that Jesus did”. They were attracted to miracles of Jesus, but not the very person of Jesus. They missed the point.

Next, Dr. Luke informs us about the argument among the disciples for the hierarchy—which of them is superior? They expected Jesus to be the future king of Israel. It was very important for them to settle who among them was the greatest. If Jesus is going to be the president of Israel it important to know who would deserve to be nominated as the prime minister of Israel. Do you see what assumption they have about Jesus?

Finally, he tells us about James and John, who wanted to bring fire from the heaven to destroy the Samaritan, who were opposing their ministry. And finally, James and John wanted to exercise their power—they wanted to bring down the fire. It was a chance for them to show who they were. Don’t you know that we are the follower of Jesus Christ, the anointed one? It reminds me of the Bruce Almighty, who was excited about his new found power, “I’ve got the power.”

In other words, Dr. Luke highlights the serious misunderstanding of the disciples concerning Jesus identity and the mission. If you do not know who Jesus is then how are you going to become his disciple? How can you imitate him?

According to Dr. Luke, Christianity is not about performing miracle, have mountain top experience, be on the top of the hierarchy and exercise power. The quintessence of Christianity lies in fulfilling the requirements that Jesus places on those who wants to follow him.

Let us read Luke 9:57-62.

In verse 57, the man said that he wanted to follow Jesus wherever he would go. Jesus in his divinity perceives his failure to understand what it means to follow Jesus Christ. The man wanted to become Christian but he had wrong expectations.

Jesus replied to him, “*Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."*

We know that Jesus was not a street beggar or a homeless person. He certainly had a home and a family. Even if he didn’t have one, could he not build a house for himself? Surely, he could. If he can multiply bread and fishes, he can also build a palace for himself. Then what does he actually say in this sentence—Jesus replied, “*Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.*”

Foxes holes, nests, shelter, a place to lay our head are the symbols that connote safety, security, comfort, and rest. In other words, if you want to follow me expecting that I would be giving you any one of these then I want you to know that is not the priority of my company. Please do not join me with these expectations. By the way, this is Bill Gates' company, not the Donald Trump' casino! You want to play casino, go somewhere else. You need safety, security, comfort as your priority; Christ is not the one you would choose to follow.

With wrong expectation this man cannot go all the way that Jesus was planning to go. Dr Luke, in fact, reminds the readers twice Jesus' primary mission. The Son of man came to suffer and be rejected (see verse 21 and 44). And if we want to follow Jesus we must come with such readiness.

In verse 59, Dr. Luke informs us about the second person who is not a volunteer. But Jesus invites him to become his follower. He said, "*Follow me.*"

I can safely speculate that this man must be greatly fascinated by Jesus and he must have already been following Jesus for sometime. As Jesus saw him, he gives him the opportunity to make the commitment to become his true follower. It is also possible that Jesus is aware of his dilemma and lack of absolute commitment to Him. So he picks him up as an example to assert the cost one should consider before following him. Not just follow him because of the fascination and glamour but also consider what it means to follow. So Jesus invited him, "*Follow me*"

But the man replied, "*Lord, first let me go and bury my father.*"

Probably, he was the only son in the family. He was conscious of the custom and tradition, which obligates him to give priority to his father. Custom and tradition are formulated on the basis of the natural law and the ability of what men and women can do. It does not take consideration the metaphysics and the supernatural law. The thinking within this frame is earthly and the priorities are often earthly bound. Within such realm of mindset, we fail to understand the priority of God.

So Jesus said to him, "*Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God.*"

Was Jesus against his social responsibility toward his father? No. There are two lessons that is being taught here. First, it was a matter of shifting his trust from his own ability to fulfill the social requirement to Jesus who had fed the five thousand.

It is one thing to see somebody walk on a rope over the Niagara fall and get fascinated, but it is another thing to walk that rope yourself. A true disciple must have an absolute confidence in the ability of the one who he wants to follow. Can I take Jesus by His word and obey Him?

Secondly, it is a lesson for understanding the absolute priority of the Kingdom God. Jesus came preaching, *“Repent! Kingdom of God is here.”* This was his mission. This is why he came. This is why he died on the cross and gave the great commission to the Church to Go and disciple the nations. If we want to follow Jesus, we cannot afford to have time for wishy-washy mission commitments, potluck lunches, and Christmas tree decoration. Jesus said either you were with me or against me. There is no place for half hearted following in Christianity. Such following produces mediocre Christians only not a true and genuine Christian.

This reminds me a story of a staff worker and her family who chose to give priority to the kingdom of God. This happened several years ago. I was preaching in a discipleship camp. At the end of the sermon, a girl came with tears in her eyes. She told me that she wanted be a missionary. However, at her home she has a mother suffering with stomach cancer. She is the only daughter and her brothers are young. Her father is the only earning member so he has to go to work daily. How could she go to mission field leaving her mother and the family when they need her so much at home? What should I do? I could sense in her a clear sense of calling from God and a crushing burden to directly engage in mission. It was a serious matter. I shared the situation with one of our graduate friend, who was the Director of Education in that state, who also joined us in praying. We prayed for four days. After the camp was over, we decided to go and meet the parents of the girl. We came to know that her parents were also a good Christian. We explained the situation to the parent. In a simple statement, I requested the family to help her daughter decide who should she give priority to? Whom should she love the most? Her parent began to cry and pray. At the end of the prayer they consecrated their daughter for missions. Today after, several years, the family is doing well. God has blessed the family and her mother takes care of the home. In fact, other persons in the neighborhood who were healthy died but her mother is still enjoying good health.

In following Christ, it is all about how much we can trust Him. Can his business be our priority?

In verse 61, there is still another person who wants to follow Jesus, but he also wants to first go to his family and say good-bye. In other words, he is still emotionally attached to his family. His desire to follow Jesus is still divided. In the list of priority, family takes precedence over following Jesus.

Later Jesus said more explicitly in Luke 14:26-27, *“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters-- yes, even his own life-- he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.”*

Our love for God and our passion for his kingdom must surpass all other love and passion in our lives. The question is where is our first love?

From this passage it becomes clear that Jesus demands from his followers an unwavering absolute trust and an untainted supreme love. Without these two we cannot be a genuine

Christian. But these things can happen only if we are absolutely detached from our natural selves and be attached to Jesus entirely.

In one sense it is state of denial—not the annihilistic denial, like the self-denial of suicide bomber—but a purposeful holy denial for a common and eternal good. Unless a kernel of wheat falls on the ground and dies in the soil it cannot multiply.

In verse 23-24, Jesus said it clearly, *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it."*

Jesus lived out this life of self-denial and went to the cross so that through his death he may give life to many. Our denial may not be as vicarious as Christ, but he calls us to follow his path so that many may see the self-less Christ in us.

Put differently, Christianity is state of having Christ like mental attitude that governs our life, our ethics, our business, our family, our value system, and our world. It is a state of mind in which we are detached from ourselves, but attached to Christ alone. We do possess things but we are not obsessed with it. We consider ourselves God's steward. We do not crave for it. Our only craving desire is to seek His Kingdom and his righteousness above all. We chose to trust in the ability and the power of God on daily basis for all our needs. Our only obsession is to please God and do his kingdoms work on this earth. For this we are willing to suffer and make sacrifices because we know this is why we exist primarily in this world.

Jesus! Jesus! Jesus in the morning, Jesus in the noon time, Jesus when the sun goes down.

Is Jesus the first trust the first love, and the first priority in our lives?

Paul wrote in Col 3:1-10

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. ⁵ Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

It may seem to be very difficult proposition, but not so. Scripture testifies that men and women of God who went ahead of us were able to live the life that Jesus demanded from them.

God gives the grace to those who wants to follow him and live a life worthy of His call.

He give us the sanctifying grace of God, the empowering grace of God, and the enabling grace of God. Not by might but by His Spirit and his power, we can live a Christian life that brings glory to his Name.

For this reason Paul said in Romans 8:37-39, *“No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

May the good Lord enable us to love Jesus with all our heart, mind, and soul! May He enable us to be a true disciples of Jesus Christ. May we seek His kingdom and his righteous the first and foremost! That people might see Jesus in us.

Let us pause for a moment, reflect what we have heard, and then commit ourselves in prayer, seeking His sanctifying, enabling, empowering grace of God in our lives.

Amen

Nehemiah: The Man in the Business of God³

(A study on the life of Nehemiah)

Text: Nehemiah 1:1-11

I. Introduction:

The text for our meditation is Nehemiah 1:1-11. But I will also refer few other verses in the same book.

Nehemiah is one of my favorite books in the Old Testament, because Nehemiah was a lay leader, not a liturgy. The story tells us that he was a cupbearer and then the Governor of Jerusalem, and yet he was in the business of God. He was in a secular profession, but his knowledge of scripture (perhaps the writing of Moses), His love for the people of God, and for the city of God was amazing.

The context of the story has great relevance to our context in the OFUESI ministry. We are lay people called into different profession and yet we are men and women of the Word of God. We desire to engage in the business of God.

Let us read the text in the NIV version: **Neh 1:1-11**

Let us pray

In our meditation today, I would like to highlight three things:

- 1. Nehemiah was a man of godly expectation**
- 2. Nehemiah was a willing volunteer**
- 3. Nehemiah was a man of sacrifice**

I. Nehemiah was a man of godly expectations

The Bible does not tell us specifically about the family history of Nehemiah. How he came to Babylon and what happened to his parents. But Bible does tell us about the plight of many Jewish youths like Daniel, Shadrach, Mashach, and Abednego.

It will not be wrong to imagine that Nehemiah and his father suffered in the hands of Assyrians, Babylonians, and then in the hands of Persians.

However, Nehemiah, as a young man, aware of the cruel plight of his people, he grew up without any guile or bitterness, but with the knowledge of the Word of God. With positive and godly attitude, he won the confidence of the Persian king—king Artaxerxes. And Nehemiah became his cupbearer, a privilege that even a Persian could not acquire.

³ © Dr. A.K. Lama for OFUESI Meeting, Houston TX Dec 3, 2006

As we listen to the prayer of Nehemiah, it becomes clear that Nehemiah knew that his people along with his ancestors went into exile because of their sins. That God had promised to Moses that he will gather his people again and that God's promise had begun to fulfill as many Jews had returned to Jerusalem and the temple was built. But God's vision for his people was not yet complete.

Nehemiah was well informed of the Scripture. The Scripture shaped his thinking. Put differently, the Word of God shaped Nehemiah's dream for future and the expectation. He clearly understood the vision of God for the people of God and the city of God. He knew that God had not redeemed them from Egypt and then from Babylonians with his great and mighty hand only to keep them in Persia.

Nehemiah was caught by the biblical expectations, not human frustration. Through the Scripture, he saw a vision for the people of God to live in a city that has beautiful and glorious gates, mighty and secure walls. He was not ready to settle for the less.

When the vision of God grips the heart of men and women, it makes them dispensable instruments in the hands of God in spite of the cost that it may entail. They begin to look at the things the way God looks at them. Their ambition changes, their destiny changes, and they become **a man of great expectation.** They begin to anticipate the fulfillment of the word of God. They foresee what God has foretold. They do not see ordinary dreams, but extra-ordinary visions. They anxiously anticipate God to take full charge of their circumstances and transform their broken world right side up.

Their great expectation leads them to an intensive inquiry

Look at Ch 1: 2

I questioned them (ch.1: 2)

It implies that he questioned more than one person.

They just do not do mere inquiry. They actually research, a thorough research.

Let us examine the text. What did Nehemiah hear about the people of Jerusalem?

- *those who returned are in great trouble and disgrace.* (ch.1:3)

-*walls of Jerusalem is broken down.* (ch.1:3)

- *its gates are burned with fire.* (ch. 1:3)

When our anticipation seems to be crumbling down, we get upset and in desperation, we turn to God. In such circumstances, our turning to God is not a routine activity. In all seriousness, we would not settle for anything less than our expectations.

Read Ch 1:4.

When I heard these things (ch.1: 4)

For some days I mourned (ch. 1:4)

Nehemiah is stirred, and turns to God in desperation

Mourning, weeping, prayers, and fasting.

In 1993, when I discovered that Asangla, my wife, was suffering from a brain tumor, I was terrified and shocked. I literally began to lament and cry like a child in my prayers. We anticipated having a family and serve God together. We did not marry expecting that we should part so early. My expectations led me to ask all kinds of questions about my wife's sickness. I asked not one doctor, but many doctors. I mourned, wept, prayed and fasted. I did all that I could do. Finally, after thirty days, God in his abundant mercy healed my wife.

The point I intend to make here is not about the result, but our Godly expectation that produces a passionate effort for the result.

What are our godly expectations for the Christian world? What do we expect to happen in next 20 years in OFUESI?

I see more than 20 millions students in the Universities of India who have every opportunity to become intellectually capable, but spiritually miserable.

I see the broken walls and the burnt gates when I see 865 million unreached Muslims, 550 million unreached Hindus, 150 million unreached Chinese, 275 million unreached Buddhists, and 2550 unreached tribal groups with a total population of 140 million in the world. Do they meet my godly expectations? Do I see *great trouble and disgrace* like Nehemiah saw? Am I upset about it?

I see the broken walls and the burnt gates when I see 97% of one billion people in India who does not believe in God of the Bible. They are either agnostics or worship the idols as their gods in order to overcome their daily sufferings. Do they meet my expectations? Am I upset about it? I see the broken walls and the burnt gates when I see a large number of youths in India who want to serve Jesus Christ but they don't know how to handle the Word of God. Some don't have money to go to seminary. Because of the lack of training they interpret the Word wrongly and mislead the Church.

Do they meet my godly expectations? Do I see *great trouble and disgrace* like Nehemiah? Am I upset about it?

I see the broken walls and the burnt gates when I see alarming high rates of divorce among Christian families weakening the very foundation of Christian homes that build society and a nation. Do they meet my godly expectations? Do I see *great trouble and disgrace* like Nehemiah saw? Am I upset about it?

I see the broken walls and the burnt gates when I see homes where children grow without Christian parenting, just left alone in front of TV and the violent video games. I see a stream of young lives becoming the victim of the devil's scheme. Do they meet my

godly expectations? Do I see *great trouble and disgrace* like Nehemiah saw? Am I upset about it?

I see the broken walls and the burnt gates when I read about high percentage of Christian youth engaging in pornography, teenage pregnancy, and the shootings and killings on the school campuses. Do they meet my godly expectations? Do I see *great trouble and disgrace* like Nehemiah saw? Am I upset about it?

I see the broken walls and the burnt gates when I see young Muslims memorizing the Koran to become martyrs for Allah by becoming suicide bombers. Do they meet my godly expectations? Do I see *great trouble and disgrace* like Nehemiah saw? Am I upset about it?

If yes! Then why there should not be mourning, fasting or tears in our eyes today.

Remember! Tears do not represent our weakness and immaturity alone, but also the seriousness and the depth of our involvement. It is an overflow of a genuine love and dedication.

The smallest sentence in the Bible has a profound meaning—Jesus wept.

II. Nehemiah was a willing volunteer.

Well, Nehemiah had other options. Nehemiah could have called for a town hall meeting-discuss how to raise fund from the Jews of diasporas, organize prayer meeting and mobilize resources, and organize a short-term construction mission trips. The natural response could have been to mobilize resources: man and money. There is nothing wrong in itself.

But Nehemiah did not begin this way. The question is what do I do with my godly expectations? Am I only a dreamer? Every one of us can copy Martin Luther and pose like him and say “I have a dream.” I used to make such a fun as child. Until I understood what it really means. The real question is what I am doing about my dream.

Notice in Ch 1:11, what Nehemiah Does?

Give your servant success today. (ch.1:11)

Nehemiah clearly saw his personal role in the crisis because the vision of God had gripped his heart. He was personally in love with the people and the city of Jerusalem. If we are only available to pray and not do anything then our praying is just playing with words.

We not only pray for those whom we truly love but we also make ourselves personally available to them. The questions arise here:

Who are the people whom we love? Where is our Jerusalem? Have we carefully considered our mission field?

For God so loved the World that He gave his only begotten son, and now it is our turn to pick one specific part of the world, people group as our Jerusalem given by God, so that we can practically love them, mourn for them, pray for them, fast for them and cry out to God for them.

This leads us naturally to consider the next point.

III. Nehemiah was a man of sacrifice.

To see that our godly expectations in God are fulfilled, we need to sacrifice.

We, who are entrusted with the business of the Kingdom of God, cannot afford to be a miser in our investment of the resources. There is not place for tokenism in the mission of God.

We cannot do great missions of God with tokenism. You get what you invest.

We must ask the tough question: What percentage of your income goes to the mission field?

Notice chapter 2 onwards, Nehemiah was using selflessly all the resources that were available to him.

1. He sacrificed King's personal favor for God.

-What is it you want? (ch.2:4)

2. He sacrificed his personal leisure time for God.

- By night I went out. (ch.2:13)

3. He sacrificed his position and authority for God.

“Neither I nor my brothers nor my men nor the guards with me.” (ch.4:23)

“Moreover, from the” (ch.5: 14 – 16)

4. He sacrificed his income for God.

Furthermore, a hundred and fifty Jews...” (ch.5: 17-18)

We don't know if Nehemiah was worried about his retirement, the future of his children, and his security. But the scripture does say that he was giving away which he was not supposed to give.

If we are giving to God an amount, which we owe to the IRS (tax-exempt money), we are only relocating the IRS money (Thank God for the government who allows their money to be used for God's work). But we still owe to God what is due to God. If we give only what is due to Caesar and what is due to God, it is still not a sacrifice.

Furthermore, if we give out of abundance or out of the things that are useless to us, that is not a sacrifice.

What is sacrifice? Sacrifice reflects our absolute trust and dependence on God. It reflects the measure of our sincere love. We bring our best to God because He is our best and He deserves the best.

Nehemiah reflected such trust, dependence, and true love for YHWH. He was able to sacrifice because he trusted in God's goodness. Our sacrifice is directly proportion to our trust in God.

He had the absolute confidence in the God who called him. When God calls, He not only appoints, but also He sees it through that we accomplish the task for which He called us out.

Notice in chapter 2:20: *I answered them by saying, "The God of heaven will give us..."*
Again, notice in chapter 4:20: *Confidence that God will fight for us.*

REMEMBER OUR GIVING REFLECTS OUR TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN GOD FOR OUR NEEDS. IT REFLECTS OUR LOVE AND PASSION FOR HIS WORK.

Conclusion:

Finally in 444 BC, Nehemiah completed the building of the walls and the repairing the gates of the city of Jerusalem in 52 days.

So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence, because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God. (Nehemiah 6:15-16)

HOWEVER, our walls and gates are still in ruins. Who will build these walls and repair the gates? Where is our Nehemiah?

I believe we are the Nehemiah. We can do even better than Nehemiah did. We have the revelation of the New Testament. We have full gospel. We have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. We have the community of God, the body of Christ. We have the 2000 years of history of the Church to protect us from errors and pitfalls. We have the modern technology and the power of the human intellect. And above all we can do better than Nehemiah because we have God who promised, "Lo, and behold I am with you to the ends of the earth."

Let us pray:

- that we will not be complacent toward God's mission. We will expect great things from God and we will attempt great things in God because our God is great.

- that we will volunteer ourselves for His service
- that we will sacrifice our resources for God's purpose.

- that we will choose to trust God and never UNDERMINE the importance of building the Kingdom of God SACRIFICIALLY.

- AMEN

Appendix – B: Greetings from Bro. PC Verghese, UESI

A General Letter to Many in the US from Bro. PC Verghese

Dear Ones,

May the Love of Christ which passes knowledge, the Joy of the Lord that is inexpressible and full of glory and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, be yours always. Have a wonderful Christmas and a blessed new year.

Christmas is all about knowing God:

The *First Person* of the Holy Trinity loved the world of fallen humanity so much, He sent the *Second Person* of the Holy Trinity, that, whoever believes in Him should not perish, but, have everlasting life through the *Third Person* of the Holy Trinity.

Eternal life is knowing God:

Knowing God is not the same as knowing the Bible. It is possible to know so much of the Bible and yet, not know God. Knowing God is not the same as knowing about God. It is possible to know so much about God and the Bible and yet, not know God.

Knowing God is growing submission to the God Whom the Bible reveals. What a tragedy to be a Theologian and a Bible scholar who does not know God! Submission is yielding to God and doing what we may not like or prefer. Through faith and loving obedience to God's Word as the Holy Spirit reveals, we come to know God. Knowing God must be a dynamic process of growing in intimacy with Him. It is possible to know *about* God and yet not know *of* God! We shall know the Lord if we follow on to know Him. Knowing God is experiencing the reality of His Person: His love, grace and communion constantly.

The more we know God, the more we will become like Him in Character.

God is full of grace and truth:

Are we gracefully-truthful and truthfully-gracious? God's glory is His moral excellence. We can know God only to the extent He reveals Himself. His revelation to us increases, depending on our response to what He has already revealed. *Finally the* reverence to God is the proof of knowing God. Anyone who disagrees with the Lord Jesus of the Bible has the right to be wrong.

No one has seen God at any time, but the Second person of the Holy Trinity reveals God to man. No one can call the Lord Jesus, Lord, except through the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity. The Lord Jesus reveals, reconciles, regenerates, renews, transforms and glorifies every believer. In every act of God all the three Persons of the

Holy Trinity are involved and act in harmony. In the light of all these what is our desire and response as we end the old and begin the New Year?

May God give us a God-size hunger and thirst for Himself.

Praying for you,

Love

PC

December 21, 2006 (India)

Appendix-C: Lyrics of the Song, "GOD" (from the Open Source)

Lyrics of the Song, "GOD" from the open source:

<http://www.stlyrics.com/songs/r/rebeccastjames8199/god285835.html>

Artist: Rebecca St. James; Song: God

*He made the night He made the day
Spread the Earth upon the waters
Made the heavens and the rain
Look at the sky see its design
The very same Creator is the One who gave us life*

*And what is man that He's mindful of us?
We're merely clay in His hands
And what am I that He loves me so much He would die?
All that I can say is...*

CHORUS:

*It's God! Truly God!
Can you see, can you hear, can you touch, can you feel?
It's God! Truly God!
I can't explain any other way, cuz it's God.*

*Inside us all there is a void.
All mankind is searching for the one who fills the soul
In Him there's hope in Him there's life.
The world cries for a Savior that's right before their eyes.
And what is man that He takes us in as His children to be His own?
And what are we that He wants to be our Father?
All that I can say is...*

REPEAT CHORUS

*Lord I praise You for Your endless love
Your boundless grace
I stand here amazed*

*God! Truly God!
I can't explain any other way, cuz it's God
God! Truly God!
Can ya see? Can ya hear? Can you touch? Can ya feel Him?*

*God! Truly God!
I can't explain any other way, cuz it's God.
God! Truly God!
It's God! Truly God!
It's God! Truly God!
I can't explain any other way, cuz it's God.*

Appendix-D: Financial Status of OFUESI and Financial Needs of UESI as Presented at NC Meeting in December by Bro. Yesupriya



OFUESI-USA Financial Update

Sushil Yesupriya, December 2006

Interim Committee 2006

Saganti, Yesupriya, Kumpaty, Chandran, Malachi



“Called to Serve”

“...rather, serve one another in love.” Galatians 5:13b

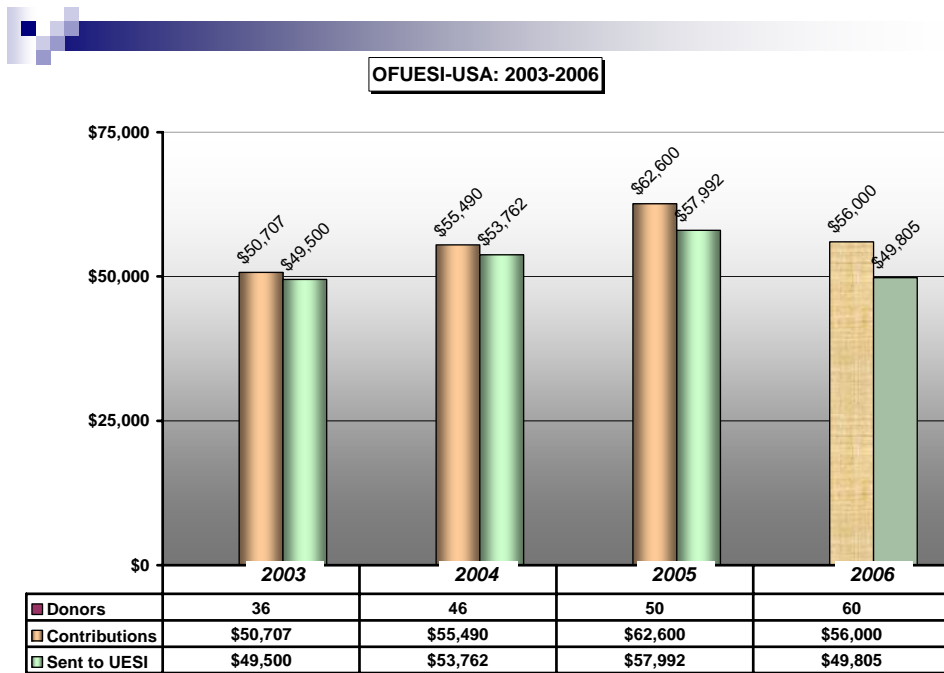


Figure-1:

- *We all have been part of this contribution from 2001 till to date through the faithful support of many and sincere work of our treasurers: Sis. Latha Jesudass (2001-2005); Bro. Daniel Gera (2005-2006); and Bro. Sushil Yesupriya (2006-Present). For the Year-2006, contributions received and the money sent to UESI through October are shown.*

<u>Month</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Distribution</u>	<u>Amount</u>
January-06	\$ 12,700.00	General Fund	\$ 26,475.00
February-06	\$ 14,650.00	Staff Support	\$ 9,640.00
March-06	\$ 5,990.00	Building Fund	\$ 4,620.00
April-06	\$ -	UESI-Andhra Pradesh	\$ 3,825.00
May-06	\$ 8,265.00	UESI-Kerala	\$ 2,200.00
June-06	\$ 2,100.00	UESI-Tamil Nadu	\$ 700.00
July-06	\$ -	UESI-Publications	\$ 600.00
August-06	\$ -	Pilani-EU	\$ 445.00
September-06	\$ -	UESI-North East	\$ 375.00
October-06	\$ 6,100.00	UESI-Maharashtra	\$ 325.00
November-06	TBD	UESI-Rajasthan	\$ 300.00
December-06	TBD	Bombay-EGF	\$ 300.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$ 49,805.00</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$ 49,805.00</u>

Table-1:

- *During the Year-2006, we have received generously from many of you and were able to send the money to UESI as listed in the above table on the left. On the right, the distribution of these amounts per donor requests is shown through October 2006.*

	Projected in Indian Rupees (Rs)	Estimation in US Dollars (\$)
Staff Salaries	10,00,000	22,222
Theological Studies	25000	556
Children Education	25000	556
Conferences	75000	1,667
Kotagiri High Fields	3,25,000	7,222
Staff Retirement	1,25,000	2,778
TOTAL (per Month)	15,75,000	35,000
TOTAL (per Year)	189,00,000	420,000

Table-2:

- *As of October 2006, UESI anticipated the need for monthly operating budget to be around Rs.15 lakhs per month with the above mentioned estimations in rupees. Also for our immediate reference approximate US \$ equivalents are also provided. Our contribution to UESI through OFUESI has been between 10 and 15% for most years.*