

**Personal Plea: prayerfully, scripturally, honestly rethink Christian Mission in the third world**

**Nation:** There is currently an increasing level of negativity regarding Christianity and missions and churches in Sri Lanka- because of beginnings of investigations into tax avoidance of Gospel workers paid by foreign churches from the West to South East Asia, money laundering, illegal property acquisitions and buildings (tied to bribery), etc How wide the net will gradually spread is yet to be seen, since allegations touch North to South, West to East of the countries. Government, public departments are rejecting legitimate requests on the basis of Christian.

**Very much gone are the days when Christians were a highly respected part of the society and nation in Sri Lanka.** At a local level, in Jaffna, one of my engineering students now a leading Academic and Senior administrator, told me: When we were children, our parents (both teachers, one a Principal) would tell us to look at the Christians and you will learn the best of human virtues. But today, he went on to say, we have to tell children, if you look at Christians you will learn the worst of human character and bad behavior. Such anecdotes sadly could be multiplied.

The people dropping **below the poverty line** is increasing, inflation is about 100% including basic goods (government struggling to control prices), young people are becoming disillusioned addicts of the smartphone world, marriages are breaking down in very large numbers, except for the few who can make money through business and tourism (the big spenders are yet to be attracted), economy is still going downhill, a large number of professionals –including young medical doctors, consultants with children, massive number of young mothers and women as maids, truck drivers, IT specialists, nurses, etc and young people continue to leave the country in large numbers. Spiritual hostility towards the Gospel is increasingly being politicized in the parliament and pushed to be legalized at law courts.

All churches here- charismatic/Pentecostal, Anglican (Marxist, religious syncretism) to Reformed- in subtle ways promote **the prosperity theology/gospel**. There is growing public disillusionment with Christian churches, - well known over the past three to four decades, years of evasion by church pastors, organizational personnel (and property), illegal property acquisitions, massive private/family bank accounts, properties through foreign churches, Christian media and conferences- bullying, bribery and badness as part of Christian leadership culture - protected and guided by wealthy foreign Christian leaders, who for decades have used money and divisive personal ambitions to unscrupulously steal men and people from what nationals have worked hard to build (these foreign church, mission leaders have no fear of being exposed of their immoral, unlawful ways of building their kingdoms since their own best church, organizational people appear racially partial, spiritually indifferent or morally cowardly – we do not understand this- when the bride of Christ here is being gang raped); it probably has a corrupting influence on these pastors and their churches too. These made-it-rich-by Christian ministry, and idolized abroad, pastors and parachurch leaders become the role models, and ideals for the young and poor pastors. Business models are triumphantly used for Christian missions (as one rich developed world church leader boasted to me) \_ and not Biblical models and as co-working with God, under His word of both truth and goodness.

We in the third world helplessly reap the evil consequences, one day to germinate in those rich countries too – **an honest rethinking and renewal of mission – the men, methods and fruits - are needed today**, but it should not be the same old thing using mere powered Christians in privileged, wealthy nations or institutions, third world nationals who are financially supported by rich Christians (rich is right) or member of their church, seminary or parachurch organization. A fresh, honest, courageous look at the Bible and mission and third world nations. This is both an important and an urgent need of our times, we who long for the glory, that is the goodness and lovingkindness, of God to come down to us, rest upon our churches and woo our nations to look to, to wait for, the living God, Creator, Redeemer, and Judge of all. With Him we can usher in a new, better day- can't we?

We in Sri Lanka so much need God, for Him to break through to us and come to us.

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