

April 2013

Lighted Lamp Magazine



Contents

Articles

6 Christians Facing Persecution in
Pakistan

10 Her Father's Arms

A little girl and her father show us what our relationship with God should be like.

14 A Little Note with a Big Impact

Small acts of kindness can be a great encouragement to the people around us.

Poetry

4 Praying Man

Book Review

9 Who Do You Think You Are: Finding
Your True Identity in Christ



Self-confidence is one of the catch-phrases of modern culture. “Believe in yourself,” we tell people who are hesitant about a situation. If you don’t think this is very comforting, you’re not alone. There are situations in which each of us knows we are inadequate for the task that is facing us.

That is exactly the situation that King Hezekiah encountered in Isaiah 36. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came to fight against Judah. Sennacherib said Hezekiah couldn’t count on Egypt because Pharaoh was unreliable. He also said that if Hezekiah was counting on God, none of the gods of the other kingdoms he’d defeated had delivered them. When Sennacherib left, Hezekiah went and prayed for God’s help. An angel went into the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000 people. When Hezekiah and his army weren’t strong enough, he turned to God, who was strong enough.

The next time you wonder if you need more self-confidence, change your mind and aim for more God-confidence.

God bless,

Priscilla

Matthew 5:16

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Editor:

Priscilla Carsten

Writers:

Joses Tirtabudi

Kara Hyden

Leanne Nelson

Margaret Neufeld

Cover:

Katie Prescott

Book Review Logo:

Elizabeth J.C.

PRAYING MAN

BY JOSES TIRIABUDI

He's on his calloused knees, praying man.

Praying like it was his last, cause it's all he can.

Beads of sweat rolling off his brow -

Praying man, knuckles clenched, tears tumbling down.

His muscles taut as he joins battle

Against the unseen forces of hell.

The sweat becomes blood, as his spirit takes air,

Flying to an unknown land out there somewhere.

Invincible warrior he is, made of steel.

This man's walking faith's the real deal.

Fist slam into the floor, feel the chains break.

Wail and tremble ye devils, for the warrior is awake.

His petitions – they storm heaven's gates

Leaving hell's forces prostrate in their wake.

Cower ye men of words but no action.
Let the fire fall down!

Let the captive and prisoners be unbound!

As the coldness becomes a fire fuelled with fervency

The walls crumble and giants fall as heaven hears!

Set to light the invaders – the aliens of the land!

Let the earth quake at the cry of a praying man!



Christians Facing Persecution in Pakistan

Lighted Lamp Magazine had the opportunity to interview a sister from Thailand about the persecution that Christians are experiencing in Pakistan.

You mentioned that Pakistani Christians have been coming to Thailand because of persecution in their own country. In what ways are they being persecuted?

There are many ways which Pakistani Christians are persecuted. Some of the people who I have encountered were accused of blaspheming the Quran or the prophet which according to the law in Pakistan, they could face the death penalty. Some had to flee because a certain group of attackers came into the place which they were staying and destroyed their homes and businesses and threatened to take their lives or the lives of one of their family members such as husbands or sons. These are just a few cases.

Are there any particular actions relating to their faith that lead to persecution, or is it their religious affiliation in general that is the cause of the persecution?

Well, not always. However, there are cases like that also. Some people were persecuted because they stood up for justice. I know a pastor who

was threatened to be killed because he was involved in a certain Christian movement against persecutions.

Is the government the source of the persecution they are facing, or is there a particular group that is the source of the persecution?

The persecution come from some certain influential parties. The government itself does not have enough power to take any strong action against them.

Is the persecution taking place in the entire country of Pakistan or only in a particular region of Pakistan?

Most of Pakistani persecuted Christians I know are from a village called 'Gojra'. However, persecutions are taking place in various areas.

How far is it from Pakistan to Thailand, and how long does it take the people to travel?

2192.8 miles or about 4 and a half hours. Travelling from there to Thailand can only be done by airplane which is very expensive and many persecuted Christians cannot afford air tickets.

Are these Christians permitted to leave the country legally or do they have to sneak out?

They usually get tourist visas which are to be expired within a few weeks. After that, they will be living in fear of being arrested. Please note that UN's asylum seeker status and refugee status are not accepted here in Thailand and visa is required.

When they travel, are they able to bring their possessions with them?

Yes, they are. The problem is that when these people flee, they are not able to carry along much of their possessions due to some reasons such as their houses have been burnt so there are not much possessions left. And even if they can, these possessions will be sold in exchange for money to feed themselves later in Thailand because they are not permitted to work here and there is no way to earn money.

When they arrive in Thailand, where do they stay?

Mostly they rent a very small room. You will be surprised to see that ten people can fit in a very tiny room that has no air condition in Thailand hot climate. Rent is a big problem. A small room can cost around 3,000 Baht or 100 USD or more which is a big deal to people who do not earn money.

Where do they get food?

From begging and receiving money from those who have compassion on them. Some people receive support from organizations such as churches and NGOs. The numbers of asylum

seekers and refugees in Bangkok, Thailand is really overwhelming so not everyone receives help. According to the UN regulations, these people will receive monthly support from the UN after they have been granted a refugee status which can be after about one or two years of being here.

Are there jobs available to them when they come to Thailand?

No.

Why not?

They are not permitted to work according to Thai law. However, there are some organizations which provide some vocational trainings for them such as cutting hair or making jewelries.

Do you know how many Pakistani Christians have come to Thailand? To your city?

Bangkok, Thailand, is the regional arm of the United Nations Secretariat for the Asian and Pacific region.

Do you know whether there are other countries as well that Pakistani Christians are going? If so, where?

Yes, there are but I am not very certain where.

What are some of the ways that God has provided for these people?

God is good, all the time. Remember that Israelites were also refugees in Egypt and that was a part of God's great plan. God provides for His children without fail - money, shelter, food, love

and care. From my experience, I am a college student who does not work. I witness how God amazingly provides resources through me. For example, last month, I had to pay the rent and school fees for the family. I did not have any money at the time the need was presented but I prayed and trusted God to act. The next day, I was presented a big sum of money without ever begging! God does not only provides financial resources, He provides people. He brings people together and use them as a means to build up one another. Listening ears, prayers and love are as important as physical help.

What are some prayers that have been answered regarding these people?

Wow! Many! I witnessed how visas were extended, money was provided, kids were put into schools, faith was lifted up, hope was raised up and so much more!

What are the reasons why some Pakistani Christians choose to remain in their own country?

Some remain because they believe that God has a purpose for them in Pakistan.

Some have no choice because they do not have money to escape. Escaping to Thailand needs a lot of money. Many have to sell everything they have in order to get enough money to buy a plane ticket and get their documents done.

What dangers do those Christians still in Pakistan face?

Death threats, imprisonment, starvation, beatings, etc.

What would you like Christians around the

world to pray about for the Pakistanis who have left their country?

Pray for God's grace that enables these people to live by faith, to forget what lies behind and look towards what lies ahead that it shall not be like Lot's wife who looked back and became a pillar of salt.

Pray for God's mercy and favor upon these brothers and sisters.

Pray for those people they have left behind in Pakistan. Many have lost touch with their loved ones and many of those back home are still in danger.

Entrust these brothers and sisters to the able Hand. Pray according as the Spirit leads and give thanks to God for He is good!

What would you like Christians around the world to pray for about Christians who are still in Pakistan?

Pray the Scriptures over these Christians. Pray the prayers of faith and of the Spirit. 

Book Review

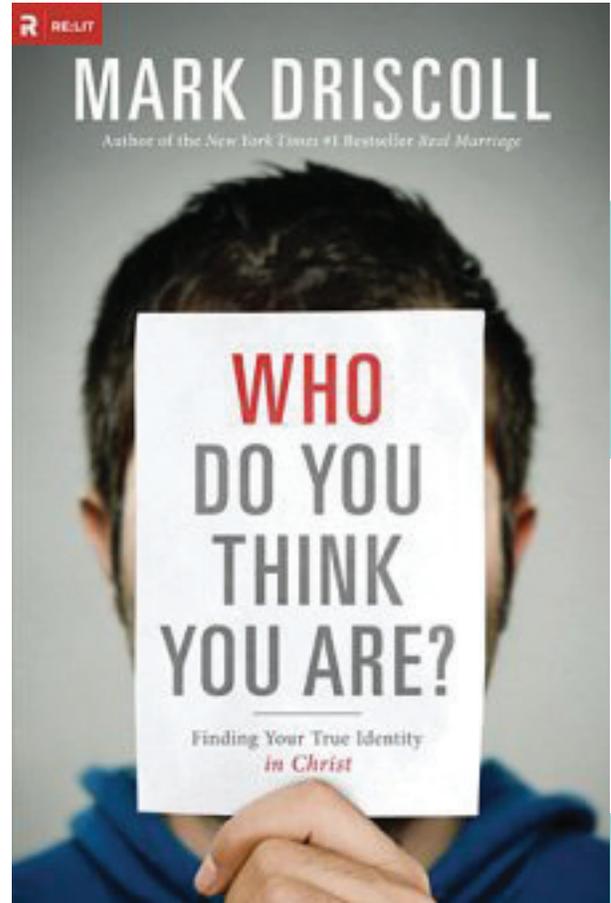
by Margaret Neufeld

Who Do You Think You Are: Finding Your True Identity in Christ by Mark Driscoll is essentially a study of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. As the subtitle suggests, it's about understanding our identity in Christ and each chapter focuses on a different aspect of our identity. He starts each chapter with a story and uses scripture to help the reader understand that we are in Christ, saints, blessed, saved, reconciled, afflicted, gifted, forgiven, loved, victorious, etc.

This book captivated me from the first chapter. Mark is very direct, his message comes through strong and clear and his words are thought-provoking. Yes, the book is fairly theological, but not to the point where it's difficult to understand. It helped me to better understand my position in Christ and that my identity is not shaped by the things I do, but rather that understanding my identity will shape the things I do.

The setup of this book is great. Mark references a lot of scripture, but he puts the references in footnotes, so it doesn't clutter the pages. Notes and references at the end of the book allow you to dig deeper into things without them being distracting. This makes it easy for someone to simply read through or study on a deeper level.

There were some theological points I didn't quite agree with, but nothing that would hinder me from recommending the book to others. I would definitely encourage all Christians to



read it, and keep a notebook and pen handy so you can learn as much as possible. This could be a great tool to help Christians understand their identity and live victorious lives. 🙏

I received a free copy of this book from the publisher through Booksneeze.com. I was not required to write a positive review and the views expressed are my own.



Her Father's Arms

by Kara Hyden, photography by Priscilla Carsten

Sunday morning at church, two rows in front of my family and me was a father and his young children. During praise and worship the father stood with his daughter in his arms. His daughter was totally consumed with her Father. She held each side of his face with her small hands and looked into his eyes. She took her fingers and ran them across each crease and crevice of his face, around his eyes, nose, lips and ears. She ran her fingers through his hair. Several times she wrapped both arms around his neck and rested her head upon his shoulder. The father at times would put her down to stand next to him. She was never far from his side and

her time on the floor did not last long and once again she was in her father's arms.

Why did this moment between a father and daughter intrigue me so? I watched the daughter examine her father's face, her face radiated with happiness, love, and joy. The daughter's eyes were totally fixated on her father regardless of what was going on around her. As she placed her head on his shoulder peace, contentment, and a sense of acceptance were in her eyes. When she stood by his side, she stood tall, strong and confident, never more than a few inches from his side.

God longs for us to seek His face

God took this father and daughter moment a reminded me that He longs for His sons and daughters to be more like this little girl. He longs for us to be consumed and intrigued by Him. He longs for us to seek His face more and more every day. God longs for us to look deep into His eyes and see His heart. He longs for us to desire to be held in His arms of strength and power. He longs for us to stand by His side and never venture away from Him. God longs for us to know Him as our Knight in Shining Armor, One True God, the God of our Salvation, Father of all Fathers, Father to the Fatherless, our Peace Maker, Deliverer, Redeemer, our Joy Giver, Forgiver, Creator, Provider, Best Friend, and our Faithful Companion.

What are we, as God's sons and daughters, doing each and every day to get to know our Heavenly Father in a deep and intimate way? God is

waiting. God is longing for each of us to meet with Him face to face every day. He longs to reveal Himself to each one of us. Can we ever truly know and understand just how deep and how wide God's love is for us? We can strive to know His love for us by taking the time each and everyday just like the little girl, to examine our Heavenly Father's face by reading His Word which in turn reveals who He is and who He longs to be in our lives. We can choose to rest peacefully upon His shoulder even in the midst of the noise and chaos surrounding our lives, we can rest in the knowledge of knowing Who our Father is. We can choose to stand close by His side and not allow the waves of life and our own fleshly desires carry us away. We can stand in strength and power, knowing we are never alone and that we are sons and daughters of the Great I Am, the One True King, God of Angel Armies, Friend of sinners, Emmanuel, God



face more and more every day.

We can stand in strength and power

with us, Prince of Peace, Comforter, Protector, Provider, Counselor, God who sees, Great High Priest, Light of the World, Keeper of Our Souls, Rock of Our Salvation, Great Physician, Living Water and Bread of Life.

As God's sons and daughters, children of the One True God, we must spend time getting to know our Heavenly Father more intimately. We will then become more like this little girl; confident, peaceful, content, joyful, strong and hopeful. The knowledge of knowing who God is, who He longs to be in our lives, and who we are created be in Him can be life altering and life changing.

We can ask ourselves the following questions

and be able to answer them with strength, power and confidence if we take the time to really get know our Heavenly Father. Whom shall I fear? Who loves me unconditionally? Who is for me and not against me? Where does my hope and strength come from? Who forgives me and washes my sins away? Who stands beside me and will never leave me nor forsake me? Who cherishes me for who I am? Who provides for me and meets my every need?

So today I am challenged to do what it takes to get to know my Heavenly Father in a deeper and more intimate way. Are you? I know He is waiting and longing for us, His sons and daughters, to climb up in His lap, examine every crease and crevice of his face, look deeply



ever, knowing we are never alone.



into His eyes, lay our head upon His shoulder, rest in His arms of strength and acceptance, and stand tall in the knowledge of Whose sons and daughters we are!

Who are we that God Almighty would call us his sons and daughters and be our Heavenly Father?

"And I will be your Father,
and you will be my sons and daughters,
says the Lord Almighty."

2 Corinthians 4:18 NLT

"O Lord, what are human beings that you should notice them,
mere mortals that you should think about them?"

Psalms 144:3 NLT

a little *Note*

I'm

by Leanne Nelson

It all started with a stressful week and a bright green sticky note that read: “Leanne, I’m praying for you today. Be overwhelmed with God’s beauty and grace; letting this love wash over you.”

My week had been more stressful than usual. One of my friends was in the hospital and I had spent some time there with her, losing sleep and getting drained by the hospital atmosphere. One of my beautiful friends stuck this note to the door of my dorm room on her way to class. Knowing that someone had cared enough to leave a note and pray for me throughout the day brightened my day considerably. I’m not sure she understood how much that meant to me when she wrote it but I know that God knew exactly what I needed to hear, and He directed her words and thoughts.

First Thessalonians 5:9-11 says “For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus

Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing” (NIV, emphasis added).

As brothers and sisters in Christ we need to be willing to encourage one another and build each other up because we are all fighting a tough battle, or, as Plato put it, “be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.” This life is hard, especially when you think you are going through it all alone. Why not let God use you to encourage a fellow believer?

I think that we often think of encouraging others in a large sense, but being thoughtful and encouraging in little things can make a big impact, just like that bright green sticky note. One of my favorite verses in Proverbs tells us that “anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up” (12:25, NIV). A kind word can make a big difference on a stressful day and being intentional about



with a **BIG** **Impact**

encouraging a friend can make an even bigger difference.

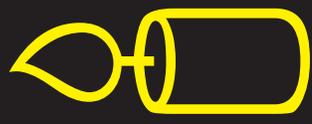
Here are some ideas on how for small acts of kindness that can make a big impact:

- 1. Bake them cookies or brownies**
- 2. Write them a card with a funny message or a thoughtful message**
- 3. Text them your favorite verse**
- 4. Write them a quick note telling them why you are thankful for their friendship**
- 5. Draw them a picture**
- 6. Write them a poem**

Let God use your words or your talent for baking delicious cookies/writing beautiful poetry/drawing amazing pictures to encourage your friend. You never know how an action that you might think is insignificant can impact your friend's life. 🕯️

Author Biography:

Leanne has been writing for as long as she can remember. When she's not writing for Lighted Lamp or her blog Crosses And Catwalks, you can find her eating ice cream or reading a good book.



LL Maggazine

Matthew 5:16