



BELIEVERS EASTERN CHURCH

Synod Secretariat, Thiruvalla, Kerala, India.

SHEPHERD'S LETTER

January 2018

✠Glory be to the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is indeed with great joy and thankfulness that I write to you this letter. Nothing gives me greater joy than hearing about your faithfulness to the truth and how you my children continue to walk in the truth.(adapted from 3 John 1:3 and 4) I was delighted to hear of the many ways in which you celebrated Christmas in your local parishes and shared the Good News to those around you. To us, the greatest demonstration of God's love for us has been His sending His only Son into the world to give us life through Him (adapted from I John 4:9) and what an opportunity we had to do just that!

We have come to the end of the year 2017 and we are at the threshold of the year 2018. All the world events are crying out loud and nature itself is crying out loud, telling us that the 2nd coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is very near. All the prophetic signs are being fulfilled and therefore we must live with eager expectation of our Lord's return. Only our Lord knows if we will have this whole year to live. Therefore I encourage you my dear children, to live for Him with all of your hearts. Let us live each day then, in the light of eternity.

But then how do we journey in this new year? How do we make sure that we can fulfil the will of our Lord this new year? Here are some of my recommendations for us to follow this year.

I recommend that you read the Gospel of St. Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. These chapters will help us to live out (practically) the Gospel of Christ.

While Jesus was here on earth, He Himself said '*I am the light of the world.*' (John 8:12). Yet, in the Gospel of St. Matthew, chapter 5:14, Jesus also said, '*you are the light of the world.*' Now that He is not here in flesh/body with us, He has asked us to be His light! So that through us - our words and deeds, others will see the light of God's glory in Jesus Christ. '*In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.*' St. Matthew 5:16.

Every congregation must set a goal to have an accelerated spiritual development and growth this year, especially in sharing the love of Christ with others.

- Please make sure that we spend at least one day in a month for fasting and prayer, so that everyone will experience the filling of the Holy Spirit. It is only with His power that we can resist sin and be an effective witnesses to the world around us.
- Make sure that you set apart time each day to read and mediate on God's Word. If you cannot read, then ask someone to help read God's Word to you. God's Word is the food, the daily bread that will help us grow spiritually.
- Be faithful in giving your tithes and offerings this year so that you will be blessed and that God's work can be done without fail.
- Give emphasis to family prayer - a time where everyone in the family- parents, children and grandparents (if living together) come together to read the Bible, sing songs and pray. This is a good habit which we all must cultivate. Unless there is some emergency in the family, we should ensure that time is set apart for this, daily.

Dear brothers and sisters, please remember that the past is past and this is a new year, a new beginning for us. Here is God's promise for you in the new year. '*See, the Lord your God has given you the land. Go up and take possession of it as the Lord, the God of your fathers, told you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.*' Deuteronomy 1:21.

God will be faithful to you this year. Your prayers will be answered this year! This will be the most blessed year yet! Let us enter this year full of faith and believe that the best is yet to come.

Now to Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glory without fault and with unspeakable joy, to the only God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord - as it was and shall be, world without end, Amen! (adapted from Jude 1:24,25)

May Gods riches blessings, be upon each one of you, your family and your parish.

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen✠.

Dr. K.P. Yohannan
Metropolitan