

INFORMATION

May 2021

‘The Columbia’: A Leadership Lesson from A Space Shuttle

*‘Leadership is
neither nature nor
nurture –
leadership is choice’*

Stephen Covey at a seminar
in Colombo

Do you remember
‘the Columbia’, the NASA shuttle
that disintegrated over Texas
when re-entering the earth’s
atmosphere on February 1,
2003? All seven members of the
crew died, including the first
Israeli astronaut, Ilan Ramon,
and the Indian-born woman
astronaut,
Kalpana Chawla. What few
people know, however, is that
this tragedy was a disaster
waiting to happen from the day
the Columbia was launched on
January 16, 2003.
Foam from the propellant tank
had broken off and fallen on
the left wing of the orbiter,
damaging a single thermal
protection panel. That one
damaged tile was enough to
seal the fate of the mission,
albeit two weeks later.



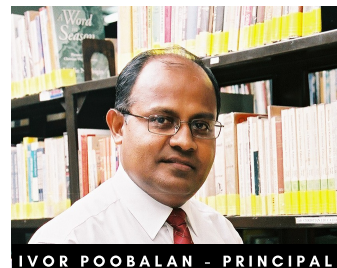
Vehicle disintegration on re-entry – Space Shuttle Columbia disaster

The *Columbia* reminds me of leadership. Every leader, like the *Columbia*, will be launched, from time to time, on a ‘mission’ that, while demanding the highest standards of excellence, will take the individual to dizzying heights and unprecedented visibility. However, as in space travel and technology, so in Christian leadership there is little allowance for unrectified error. The best example in the Old Testament is Moses, who struck the rock in anger when he had been asked only to speak to it. With that one act of impatience he forfeited his privilege to enter the Promised Land together with the nation he had led all the way from Egypt.

I think this is precisely why Paul lists the kinds of qualifications he expects of those aspiring to leadership (1 Timothy 3:1-7, 8-13; Titus 2:1-8). In 1 Timothy 3:1-7, for instance, he instructs Timothy to get up close and personal with potential leaders about every sphere of life: church (vv2-3); home (vv4-5); and society (vv6-7). For Paul, family mattered as much as church; reputation mattered as much as fact; and, financial stewardship mattered as much as the ability to teach. The bottom line for the apostle was integrity and, when you think about it, it was integrity that was missing on the *Columbia* on that fateful day in 2003.

It is known, now, that engineers at NASA had warned that the damaged thermal-protection tile could have repercussions for the *Columbia* on re-entry but decision-makers in the organisation did not want to know: after all, it was just a single tile. I, often, wonder how many leaders have been lost to Kingdom-ministry because those who saw, or heard of, that marginal error did not think the fact was worth mentioning.

FROM
THE
PRINCIPAL'S
DESK



IVOR POOBALAN - PRINCIPAL

How many would still be in leadership if seeing a weakness or failure in themselves they understood that their continuance in leadership would hinge on the choices they would make about that very weakness or failure?

Unforeseen accidents may happen to spacecraft at any time. Similarly, unintended misjudgements will be the occupational hazards for the Christian leader. I have come to understand that what ultimately matters is what you do with them. When it came to integrity, what NASA did with that one tile mattered. Have you recently become painfully aware of one act of indiscretion, one poor judgement, or one weak trait? The most important question when you prepare to re-enter the atmosphere is not what it is doing there, the vital question is, what will you do about it?

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New Arrivals at the CTS Library



CTS receives 87 Scholarly Edition Books

The CTS Library is now the custodian of 87 Scholarly Edition titles from UBS Mission Resource Center for Scholarly Editions. Every year the mission selects theological seminaries and similar institutions in 20 countries to receive free copies of Scholarly Edition titles used throughout the world to study the Bible in its original languages. Facilitated by the Ceylon Bible Society, this year, CTS is blessed to be one of the recipient institutions.

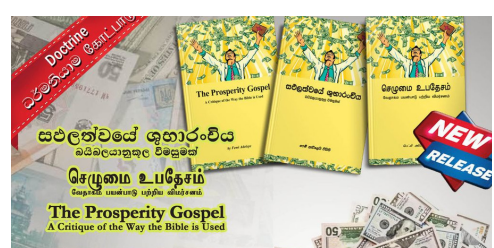
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to integrate biblical truth and psychology
and to counsel with cultural sensitivity*

CTS PUBLICATIONS



The Prosperity Gospel
by Femi Adeleye
A critique of the way the Bible is used in the modern church, this timely, pocket book resource by Femi Adeleye is available in English, Sinhala and Tamil.



The Faith Entrusted Compendium
This collection captures the invaluable talks and workshops from the Faith Entrusted Conference, organised by CTS in February 2020. It includes the transcripts of the plenary sessions by Drs Simon Chan and Ivor Poobalan.

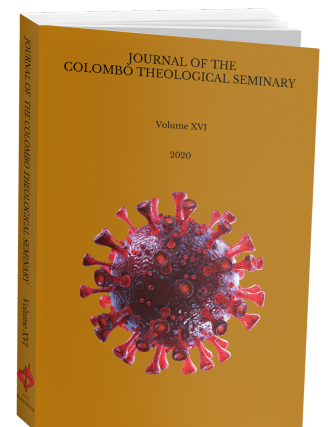


Pentecostal Tradition
by Prof G P V Somaratna
CTS' Research Professor explores the Pentecostal revival that took place in Protestant Christianity in the early 20th century. The book is available in Sinhala.

JCTS – Volume XVI *'Doing theology in a pandemic'*

The articles in the 16th volume of the *Journal of the Colombo Theological Seminary (JCTS)* '... reflect the two-fold vocation of the church's theological mission. The first to continue the work of biblical scholarship and theological reflection. Secondly, to draw on that scholarship and reflection to respond urgently to the urgent needs of the moment'. The articles in this volume are:

- 'India' (Esther 1:1 and 8:9) in the Geography of the Persian Empire**
Prabodith Mihindukulasuriya, DipM (CIM), MA, PhD
- Paul's Last Will and Testament: 2 Timothy as a Handbook for the Defender of the Faith**
Ivor Poobalan, BA(Hons), ThM, PhD
- Trinity, Theodicy and Suffering in Community: A Discussion on the Trinitarian Doctrine of Creation**
Nathanael Somanathan, BEng, MA
- What the Pandemic Revealed about the Church in Sri Lanka**
Mano Emmanuel, FCCA, BTh, MA, PhD
- The Dignity of Dependence: A Key to Christian Life and Mission in a Post-Pandemic World**
Asiri Fernando, BSc (Hon), MDiv



Joining the team



MANEESHA SILVA

Coordinator - Academic Programmes

Maneesha has served as the National General Secretary of the YWCA of Sri Lanka and has had a wide and varied professional career in the corporate world in the UAE and Sri Lanka in the field of administration.



RAMANI PERERA,
FCA, FCMA

Administrator

Ramani's professional career has been in the world of finance and she brings knowledge and experience in accounting, financial management, and compliances from having worked many years in the corporate sphere as Chief Financial Officer and Group Financial Controller.



DINESH THAMBIAPILLAI
MCPM, MABE, PGDIP

Accountant

Dinesh brings with him a significant track record as Accountant in the non-governmental sector. He holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Business and Financial Administration, and is a Member of the Association of Business Executives (London), and of the Institute of Chartered Professional Managers of Sri Lanka.



Rev Charles N Jansz *Celebrating 50 Years of Faithful Service*

On 4th March, President of the CTS Council Rev Charles N Jansz celebrated 50 years of service in the Christian Reformed Church of Sri Lanka. We join in praise and thanksgiving for his fruitful and faithful ministry and thank God for his service at CTS, too.



CTS is now on Facebook

To stay up-to-date on the latest news on courses and happenings at CTS, visit our page on FB
@www.cts.lk

Celebrating a Hero – ‘The counter-cultural Academic Scholar’

CTS recently felicitated our much loved Research Professor, Prof G P V Somaratna, celebrating both his 80th birthday and long years of service at CTS. Single-minded in his devotion to Christ, Prof Somaratna has dedicated his life and ministry to strengthening the local Christian leadership. A prolific writer, he has authored many books that filled the deep need in Sri Lanka for Christian literature in the national language, including the 7-volume Sinhala Bible Encyclopedia.

Many testified to the personal attention ‘Professor’ has devoted to the care of individual students and colleagues. Ajith Fernando called Professor ‘My Hero’, hailing him as a counter-cultural academic scholar for choosing to respond to the need of the nation without seeking personal fame or fortune. We are grateful that Prof Somaratna will continue his ministry at CTS as Research Professor Emeritus.



Congratulations



PRABO MIHINDUKULASURIYA
(DEPUTY PRINCIPAL)

PhD from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo

Thesis: ‘The Role of British Christian Humanitarian Organisations in the Post-1915 Campaign for Justice in Britain’



W A D SANATH KUMARA
(FACULTY MEMBER)

PhD in Educational Studies
Torch Trinity Graduate University, South Korea

Thesis: ‘Characteristics of Evangelical Christian Leaders for a Sustainable Ministry Leadership in Sri Lanka’



Saying Farewell

KAVITHA THURAJAH

Kavitha completed her service as Accountant at CTS at the end of April. She was a blessing especially as CTS faced the extraordinary challenges posed by COVID 19. We wish Kavitha all the very best with the next chapter in her journey.



JEI SUTHAGAR
(FACULTY MEMBER)

Master of Divinity (MDiv)
Tyndale University College and Seminary,
Toronto, Canada

CTS IN ACTION

resourcing the Church to face the challenges of contemporary times . . .

Equipping Tamil-Language Writers and Translators

In February and March several webinars were held for those engaged in writing and translating in the Tamil language.

The webinar for translators on 'How to do the Best Translation' was conducted by **Mr S K Xavier** of Dhaxaz Translators.

The series of workshops for theology writers featured:

- #1 How to write effective theological articles for the Church
by **Napoleon Pathmanathan and Christy Balandran**
- #2 Avoiding 10 common mistakes writers make by **Geetha Kandasamy**
- #3 Important disciplines for effective writing
Discussion with **Shanthi Ponnu** moderated by **Vanaja Rajkumar**

CTS Webinars

Overcoming Challenges in Online Ministries

Equipping the Church to face contemporary challenges

The new normal of a post-COVID world has compelled the Christian world at large to take its ministries online to reach people still facing restrictions of movement. Whilst online ministry opens doors to reaching a larger number, it comes with its own set of challenges. This webinar was conducted in Sinhala on 26th March by Suranga Athukorala (alumnus 2005 and adjunct faculty).

Current Challenges and Legal Background of the Christian Church

Supporting a biblical response to the signs of the time

Recent changes in the political and religious environment of our country have been deeply troubling for many of us, calling on the local Church to form a biblical response that is undergirded by a deeper understanding of the local legal framework that supports our religious freedom. Conducted in Sinhala, it was led by the representatives from the Commission on Religious Mission Freedom of the National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka (NCEASL) on 7th April.

Evidence for the Resurrection of Christ

With Josh McDowell

Apologist and author of over 150 books in 128 languages, Josh McDowell has been at the forefront of cultural trends and groundbreaking ministry for over 50 years. The webinar was open to CTS faculty, students and alumni.

Invest in Transformation

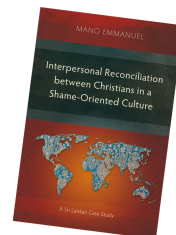
CTS' First Online Fundraising Event

In December 2020 CTS hosted its first-ever online fundraising event 'Invest in Transformation'. Attended by CTS well-wishers from around the globe, the event gave an insight into CTS' impact over the years, with testimonies from alumni and students. The response and commitment shown by our well-wishers to support Bible-based discipleship formation in Sri Lanka was both overwhelming and inspiring.



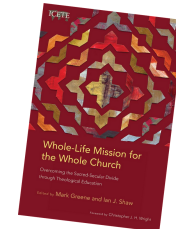
INTERPERSONAL RECONCILIATION BETWEEN CHRISTIANS IN A SHAME- ORIENTED CULTURE A SRI LANKAN CASE STUDY BY MANO EMMANUEL

In this book, published by Langham Publishing, Mano Emmanuel (Head of Academic Advancement) examines specifics of interpersonal conflict within a shame-oriented culture, incorporating cultural anthropology, missiology, and communication studies into her analysis. Identifying similarities between the local honour-shame culture with the honour-shame context of the New Testament, she provides suggestions for experiencing biblical reconciliation in a manner that maintains cultural sensitivity and protects the honour of those involved. This is an invaluable resource for Christian leaders seeking to effectively address one of the greatest threats to the health and growth of a church community – the complex issue of interpersonal conflict.



WHOLE-LIFE MISSION FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH: OVERCOMING THE SACRED- SECULAR DIVIDE THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Seeking to liberate the global church from the sacred-secular divide that permeates our churches, seminaries, and lives this is an invaluable resource for theological educators. Edited by Mark Greene and Ian J Shaw and published by Langham Publishing, it shares tools helpful to combat the sacred-secular divide in the very realm where it is so often generated: the classroom. CTS Principal, Ivor Poobalan joins practitioners from around the world, in contributing his insights into both the nature of the problem and the possibilities for its solution.



'CAN EASTER CONTAIN OUR LAMENT?'

This insightful article reflecting on the reality of celebrating Easter in the midst of joy and pain, was written for Christianity Today, by CTS faculty member, Nathanael Somanathan. It can be accessed at <https://www.christianitytoday.com/better-samaritan/2021/april/can-easter-contain-our-lament.html>

How to give to CTS

Contact the Resource Development Manager (rochelle@cts.lk) for more details.

You can give in any of the following ways; Cash, Cheque, Credit Card, Bank Transfer, Online (USD and CAD).

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