

Presented

to _____

by _____

on _____

as a _____

*“The Lord has called me
from the womb;
from the matrix of my mother
He has made mention of my name.
And He has made my mouth
like a sharp sword;
in the shadow of His hand
He has hidden me,
and made me a polished shaft;
in His quiver He has hidden me.
And He said to me,
You are My servant
in whom I will be glorified!”*

(Isaiah 49:1-3)



Bible Pearls

**200 Select Sermon Outlines
from a Pulpit Ministry
of 50+ years, 1963-2016**

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Bible Pearls

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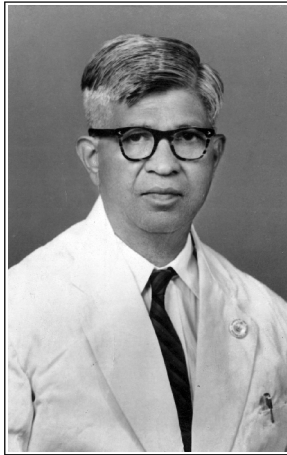
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Dedicated

to the memory of
my School & College Teachers,



especially **Mr. S.A. Thomas** (1905-1971),
the legendary Headmaster
of Margoschis High School, Nazareth, South India,
who taught me English.

Thanks

My sincere thanks to these friends
for their selfless help in the preparation of this book.
God reward them according to the blessings
it would bring to its users all over the world!

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Hundreds of friends were praying for me
during my 3-year preparation of this Volume from 2014.
God bless each of them!

Opening Lines

God anointed me to preach His Word immediately after my Rebirth in 1962 while I was a fresher in College at the age of 16. Even as a teenager in Nazareth, my native town in South Tamilnadu, India, I had the privilege of listening to outstanding men of God like Brother N. Daniel, Evangelist N. Jeevanandam, Sadhu Kochukunju, Dr. Sam Kamalesan, Dr. Theodore Williams, Dr. Victor Manogarom, Vedanayagam Sasthriar (Sr.), and several gifted Presbyters of the Church of South India like Rev. Joseph Abraham, Rev. P. Jebamony and Rev. K.S. Abraham. Almost all the celebrity preachers of India had preached in Nazareth. I was thrilled to hear later that Sadhu Sundar Singh was one of them. With the regular attendance in the Anglican Church in Nazareth, I used to listen to atleast 100 sermons each year. Trainees from the Bible Seminary that was in that Christian town used to preach regularly in our street prayer meetings and cottage meetings. I cannot underestimate the impact this background had on me before I started preaching.

My first sermon was in a Sunday Service in May 1963 in the CSI St. John's Church, Virudhunagar. It was my personal testimony of salvation connecting various Bible verses. I still remember these words of encouragement from the Presbyter, Rev. C.E. Soundiraraj, (now 85 in 2016), at the close of the Service: "God will use you more and more as a pulpit preacher. Saturate yourself with the Scriptures and stay faithful!" (I have decided to honour him with the first copy of this book.)

My first inspiration for meticulous sermon preparation came from my Dad (1913-1973) who was an Army Officer. To preach a 45-minute sermon, he would spend 3 to 4 hours in

preparation on his knees in the red sandy desert of palmyrah trees near Nazareth. I've seen his sermon notes with interest. This has taught me never to preach without well-prepared notes. In Amsterdam '83, Dr. Billy Graham mentioned about two preacher kids. One boy boasted before the other, "My daddy is great; he can preach without notes!" The other boy countered, "My daddy is still greater; he can preach without thinking!" Billy Graham added, "I am not as great as any of them; I need notes!"

I thank God for the discipline I had from day one for systematic and painstaking preparation of sermon outlines. At times I do get spot inspirations on the pulpit and go extempore, but my notes keep me from going off-track. "Don't worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour" (Mt 10:19,20). This is a misquote for pulpit preaching. Jesus gave this promise concerning our defence before possible imprisonment (vv18,19). Let's not use any Scripture as a cloak for laziness.

God in His sovereign grace has taken me over the years to preach to all types of congregations: Mainline and Free Churches, Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal, Charismatic and non-Charismatic, Calvinists and Arminians, Indian and non-Indian. He has enabled me to stay faithful to His Word and never compromise. I never preached expecting a second invitation. I can boldly testify with Apostle Paul, "The Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me" (2 Tim 4:17). During my preaching ministry which has spanned over five decades now (2016), God has been glorified, and His people have been edified and challenged. Thank God who places the treasures of divine truths in ordinary "earthen vessels" so "the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor 4:7).

One of my young coworkers once requested me for my unused sermon outlines, if any! This he asked following what I said in a Training Seminar that I had received more outlines, as an inspiration from God, than what I could possibly preach! This is God's reward for faithfulness over the little that He gives: "To everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance" (Mt 25:29). Since then I had an inner urge to give to the Christian world a collection of my Sermon Outlines. Wherever I've used these Outlines, the result has been changed lives. I always try to be both descriptive and prescriptive in my sermons. Our sermons must have forthright answers to people's question, "What must we **do**?" (Lk 3:10,12,14; Acts 2:37).

This book brings you 200 of my select Sermon Outlines covering a wide range of subjects. You can use them for personal meditation, group study and pulpit preaching. A question arises: "Can I preach others' sermons?" Nothing we have is of our own. Whatever we have is what we have received from God (1 Cor 4:7). Apostle Paul received most of his revelations directly from God (1 Cor 11:23; 15:3; Gal 1:12). But he told Timothy to teach others whatever the latter had learnt from the former. And he wanted the chain to continue (2 Tim 2:2). This is God's general method of communication. Therefore, in the strict sense, there's nothing wrong in using someone else's Outlines for preaching. When one begins his public pulpit ministry, some of these readymade Outlines can be used with suitable modifications. What prevents you from going higher and deeper? Make sure you wait on the Lord for a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit before you go to the pulpit.

When sermons are well-structured, they stay longer in people's minds. Orderliness is divine (Lk 1:1-4; 1 Cor 14:40). My professional training as a Building Engineer came in handy while preparing these Outlines. A close study of Outlines in

this book will train you for systematic sermon preparation. If you take time to study all these Outlines, turning to each Scripture reference, it will be more than a 3-year Bible College course. These Outlines were typed out from my original handwritten notes which I actually used on the pulpit. A sample is on page 20.

The quality time that Pastors and Preachers ought to spend in God's presence to receive messages from God for the people is stolen by administrative responsibilities, building projects and too many travels (Acts 6:3,4). The result is overfed shepherds and underfed sheep. God views this situation quite seriously (Ezek 34). As the Founder-leader of the Blessing Youth Mission (1971-2003), I had so many administrative and field responsibilities. But, by the grace of God, I never ever sacrificed my sermon preparation time for any activity, however legitimate and urgent. Otherwise I would have no legacy to leave behind like this book. "The lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts" (Mal 2:7). If those called and gifted to preach and teach God's Word waste their time in mundane things, the people of God would starve like Israel of old "without a teaching priest" (2 Chr 15:3). A "famine" for the Word of God would be inevitable even though people would go from meeting to meeting (Am 8:11,12).

The Outlines are categorised subjectwise. In such a work, repetition of thoughts and points is unavoidable. Wherever possible I've given links to related Outlines. The Scripture Index (Pages 1108-1142), Subject Index (Pages 1143-1160), Character Index (Pages 1161-1164) and Quotes Index (Pages 1165-1166) will help in your own sermon preparation. Wherever there's a blank space at the end of an Outline, dotted lines are given to add your own thoughts to the Outline under

study. Even on regular pages, there's ample marginal space to jot down your points or comments. Do not hesitate to write on the pages. It will become an asset to you and the future generations, if the Lord tarries. Feel free to point out mistakes if any.

Several of you who now read this book would have listened to these Sermons on various occasions. I never hesitate to repeat my sermons, not to the same audience of course! (Acts 13:42). But I dare not climb on the pulpit without a fresh anointing. Mere letter kills; only the Spirit gives life! (2 Cor 3:6; Lk 4:18). My advice to young preachers: "Whether you use a readymade Outline or one of your own, dare not go to address the congregation before you have heard from God in the dark" (Mt 10:27).

During the preparation of any Sermon, I had been the first beneficiary (2 Tim 2:6). As I was blessed, I became a blessing to others (Jer 31:14; Gen 12:2). Everytime I sat before God to prepare a Sermon, the truths I learnt transformed my belief and behaviour. These Outlines will do the same for you.

My previous book of 832 pages, "*Bible Treasures*," published in 2013, contains 200 Corrective Bible Lessons from the beginning of Christian Life, which is "Repentance," to the end of Physical Life, which is "Death." I praise God that it has become a Reference Book to Bible Lovers and Pulpit Preachers. This book, "*Bible Pearls*," is a sequel to it. The testimony of Apostle Paul has been my chief motivator to take up such voluminous works: "I kept back nothing that was helpful ... I have not avoided declaring to you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:20,27). Pray for me that I may continue to serve people in my generation by the will of God till I fall asleep (Acts 13:36).

July 2016

— R. Stanley

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