

**Couples' Forum**  
**Annual Report-2007**  
**Binny Cherian, Coordinator**

Genesis 1: 27–28. God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.

This verse that comes to my mind, when I think about the structure of a family, that began with the creation of human kind, Adam and Eve, in the very image of God himself, with his blessings and instruction to be fruitful, increasing in number, enjoying the best of his creation and controlling the balance of everything. Let us now, each one of us look into the mirror of our hearts and ascertain, as to how often we partake in the original plan intended for us by God.

Firstly, are we appreciative of the image of God?

We can answer that question more sincerely, if we were to answer another question, Are we glad with our own appearance? If so, then why is there so much prejudice in the world against people, apart from other things, on the basis of race, color, or appearance?

Secondly, God has blessed us abundantly, but are we keeping it up. Have we fallen from the Grace of God?

To answer that, let us respond differently this time and ask ourselves, do we really deserve blessings from God? Undoubtedly, our God is merciful and forgiving, the result of which is the, abundant blessings we receive each day. However, is there any justification for the request, on our behalf?

Thirdly, God said, be fruitful and increase in number. Nonetheless, importance, to being fruitful and increasing in number, what do we do protect the living ones, including the oppressed, suffering, and are we aware enough, to realize the inhuman acts of the killing of fetuses around us, and all over the world.

Fourthly, Restraint, be it in the context of preservation, control, or being responsible, is another area that all of us have to put in a lot of effort. Mostly, it makes sense to us not in our own context, rather it applies to others more effectively, and our input to that is, that we can pass judgments with ease.

Having said all that, I know that being Critical is easy, so let us find ways, as to how we can overcome obstacles in our daily life and try to be what God originally intended us to be, and try to fit into the mold of his original creation.

I would like to start with a Premise, St. Paul in his letter to the Romans (3:23-24) wrote as follows " For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Intent of the verses mentioned above, is not an expression of discouragement that we are all sinners, instead, it is an advice to acknowledge our own faults and work towards

betterment, through the redemption that came by the shedding of the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Acknowledgment, realization and a personal intent to turn away from sin is the most important aspect and to rectify ourselves we have to regularly read the Holy Bible and try to understand it and follow it. However, to follow the teachings of the Holy Bible, a Leader who understands and explains the Bible, rightly, is required, to follow the teachings, fellowship with likeminded people, who share the same ideology, is a positive step in the direction.

Hence under the Leadership of our priest Rev. M. K. Kuriakose, we meet as Couple forum members, at our church every other Sunday, to discuss issues and concerns affecting us, as well as those around us. We start the session with an opening prayer, by one of the members, sing hymns, read the Bible and start the discussion that had been previously decided, for the day, and end it with a closing prayer.

We have a main speaker who shares his thoughts on the topic and after the discourse; the floor is open for Q & A, personal experiences related to the topic discussed, and as to how the issues were resolved personally.

During the course of the year, we discussed topics such as Anger Management; Child rearing etc., which I am sure was very helpful to the members, in terms of personal enrichment and later helping those around. During the discussions various situations were discussed, wherein experiences of priests, senior members and others were shared, as to how each of them learnt from their experiences. The context of the solution in regard to the Holy Bible is the most important part. Apart from that, it is very important to realize that we are Christians and our actions and reactions have to be as per the teachings of the Holy Bible. Undoubtedly we believe that the Holy Bible has the solution to every kind of our problems. To make sure that it is not wrongly interpreted, we have our Achen guiding us in all the ways possible.

I believe that, we can definitely make difference in the world, and shine the beacon of light of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, through our intent, knowledge and actions, starting off as a single light and eventually growing as a huge multitude of God's people, helping all those around us in every way possible.

I am also confident that we would grow to new heights under our new coordinator, Mr. Thomas George, and pray that our Almighty God strengthens his mind, soul and body for the mission.