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**GREETINGS & MINISTRY REFLECTIONS FROM REV. EDWIN LAM, PRESIDENT OF APBF**

Dearest beloved family members of the APBF,

Warm greetings in the glorious name of our God and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ!

It’s been quite a while since we last communicated through the APBF Digest. I must say that since then, much has transpired. The year began with a visit to Melaka for the APBF TEAM meetings which was very well attended for our leaders involved with APBAd, the Theological and the Mission Commissions. We thank our Malaysian brothers and sisters, especially those from Melaka for being excellent hosts. Then in spite of being rather unwell due to my severe neck spine condition, I was privileged to speak at the First Baptist Church of Kuala Lumpur with Dr. Peter Ng being such a gracious host.

The Excom members then flew into Taipei, Taiwan for our annual meeting. It was wonderful getting to know the new leadership team of the Chinese Baptist Convention forging better relationships for partnerships ahead as well as thinking and praying over what God would have us do. Reached home just in time for the Lunar New Year celebration but on the same night flew to India again to be with the Manipur brothers and sisters to celebrate 125 years of God’s goodness and faithfulness towards them. Not forgetting also the trip to Bangladesh with our BWA General Secretary, Dr. Elisha Brown to an unforgettable 100th anniversary of the Bangladesh Baptist Churches Fellowship. We are amazed at what God is doing through the church planting strategy there, Myanmar was my next destination with fellow Christians to minister at a Theological Seminary and to visit what God is doing in this new economy.

March saw us meet in Washington for the annual leadership meeting of BWA but very much looking at leadership succession for the years ahead. April, I was in Taiwan again to explore new avenues of ministry together. May saw many of our young leaders and people in Bagulo, the Philippines for our APBAd Conference with the theme of Making and Multiplying Disciples. What an amazingly electrifying time with almost 600 coming from our region studying the Word and learning and growing together, singing, dancing and having a great time. These are the future leaders of APBF.

Though writing from Mongolia on my own church exploratory trip, I am also thinking how God can lead us to greater involvement with the land of Genghis Khan, the only Asian conqueror who conquered from the East to the West and I trust the spread of the Gospel will be the same through our Mongolian family members. Of course June is a tremendously busy time for me with trips to South Korea, Malaysia, Hong Kong and then Australia. Coupled with BWA’s Annual General Meeting in the Bahamas from 7-13 July. The plate may be full, but the ministry is so exciting because it is about touching and transforming lives on earth for eternity. There will be much more exciting days ahead as we bring in the person of God’s choice to helm our APBAd as well as continuing to strengthen the many relationships and partnerships forged with TAI, BMS and many of our brothers and sisters in North East India during the visits of our GS Vee and Ronnie Chiu, the APBAd Chair.

In order to fulfill God’s mandate with us, we need to be stronger together through prayer, strategic partnerships, constant meetings and fellowship and responding to each other’s needs.
The word ‘Miglat’ means ‘Shelter, Refuge’ in Hebrew. Miglat Ministry is a Social Ministry under the Nagaland Baptist Church Council Women’s Department, committed by love, to reach out to, rescue and restore girls/women who are negatively impacted by substance abuse, sexual exploitation and trafficking. Miglat Ministry runs a safe home and also offers rehabilitation program to both rescued/referred victims. Miglat also provides livelihood skill trainings, counselling, outreach services, medical assistance, trauma care therapy, Education Support especially to children of the women the ministry reaches out to. Miglat Ministry is also an enterprise that promotes Freedom through Business.

Over the last 14 years since its inception, the ministry has come across so many girls/women whose lives and stories tore us, shook us and forced us to see and go beyond. The ministry has also witnessed God’s supernatural power at work in the lives of so many of the girls/women. We have seen lives turned around completely for God.

Rose (name changed) is one such person who God turned around from nothing, useless, homeless, rejected, despised, disowned to someone very resourceful, talented and now meaningfully contributing to the apolo of Rose. In her late 40s. She grew up in a family community where drugs and alcohol was easily available. She came to Dimapur many years back after her husband and son both expired. To soothe the pain of her loss and loneliness, she sought solace by taking more drugs and alcohol. Her life became totally dependent on drugs. With no money and very less option, she started to trade her body to meet her drug needs. She had no place to stay, no friends and family to take care of her but she least bothered about it. As long as she get drugs she was happy. She did all the unimaginable things not to survive but to meet her drug needs. She was thrown into prison even by strangers as that was the only place she can be send. Nobody wanted her. No one had any business to do with her.

Finally the drugs took a toll on her health. As homeless as she was, she was also left hungry, weak and tired.

The railway platform became her home. And that is where we found her. She was brought to the ministry and for over a year, the ministry took care of her, tended her sickness, provided all medical assistance and slowly her health came back to shape. She was enrolled in the training program and she turned out to be a very smart and crafted lady. But as she gets better each day, she was scheming and waiting for a chance to go back to the only life she knew. So she left. We often saw her in the streets and joints. She was enjoying that life all over again. After a year, she came running to us again black and blue to escape from the big mob coming after her. She took someone’s money to treat herself with drugs and when caught, the angry mob nearly took her life. The ministry settled the matter on behalf of Rose with the angry mob and ask for time to pay back the money. Rose was again taken in and cared until she was strong enough to help in chores and make some money to pay back the people they promised will pay.

Rose was strong enough now to leave again. So she left again and went back to the same place. This time her fall was worse than other years. But we prayed and waited for the Lord’s time to bring her back for good. It took two years for her to realise and come back. This time she recovered stronger, better and more determined to start afresh. As much as she struggled to start a new life, the ministry struggled together with her in her journey of restoration and redemption. Today she is a different person. Almost all the people she knew and took drugs together are all gone but she is still alive and she also knows that she is alive for a reason. Today, she is an asset to the Ministry and to the people around. She is also a very skilled worker and also a mentor to many young girls/women who walks or is walking similar paths like she once did. Her life is a testimony of God’s transforming power of Ashes to Beauty.
All together 716 delegates, 30 workshops and plenary sessions speakers, 17 countries represented from the Asia Pacific, came together at Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary, Baguio City, Philippines to worship, fellowship and be challenged through the theme: Making and Multiplying Disciples taken from 2 Timothy 2:2.

What a blessed time it was. The worship band led us into what can be called a “powerful praise and worship” that drew delegates to God’s presence, workshops that were spiritually instructive and informative, family groups where friendship was forged and circle of Baptist family were formed.

Through May 21-24, we were blessed during the morning and evening worship hours. Message in songs brought by the choirs, God’s message spoken through the speakers helped the delegates renew their spirits. Messages brought spiritual insights, and expositions of the word of God called the youths to make serious commitments to follow Jesus. It was indeed a blessed time for all that gathered at the 17th APBY Youth conference.

Now as the 17th APBY conference in Baguio city, Philippines is over; I look back and remember the different assignments that were carried out faithfully by all team members, and thereby making MD2 conference a memorable and blessed conference. May we sincerely thank the COLA committee for their tireless efforts in completing the different tasks assigned within the time frame. What an excellent work they have done. Sincere appreciation goes to COLA members, special mention to Chairman Rev. Joel Idrot and the Disciple team of Luzon Convention of Southern Baptist Churches for doing an excellent job. Praise be to God the Almighty for His leading hand. Let us rejoice and be glad for God’s mercies.

Over the year, as we progressed in the planning, it was a pleasure to engage with our General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Veselko/i Telseo (Vee), to pick up workshop speakers, plenary speakers, plan the whole program of the conference. Bro. Vee as he likes to be called, and indeed a brother in Christ, has been there since day one when we met in the Philippines in 2018, along with our APBF President Rev. Edwin Lam to meet with the COLA team. Throughout the year, Bro. Vee has never let us feel lonely, even when we had too many assignments to work on it. We thank God for the guidance they provided throughout the planning and the execution.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank everyone of you for being part of the 17th APBY conference. Your participation as a delegate and as a resource persons has made it a blessed youth conference. It give us immense joy to see how the delegates respond to the call of making disciples.

The 17th APBY CONFERENCE
making & multiplying disciples | 2 Timothy 2:2

What A Blessed Time It Was
by Dineshetti Loharivra

I thank God for the hundreds of youths who re-dedicated their lives, committing once more to be a true disciple, and to multiply disciples. As young people came to the front during the altar call, I saw how God was going to use these young people who will serve as leaders in the 63 conventions, 22 countries, among the 30,000 churches and 5 Million believers we have in our APBF family. We continue to pray that the Lord will empower APBY to reach the millions of people in the Asia Pacific region to “Making and Multiply Disciples.”

Serving the APBY was truly a blessing, I have reaped an immeasurable spiritual harvest during the 17th APBY Conference. On behalf of team 2015-2019, I want to thank all of you for allowing us to serve you. I thank the Lord for a united team YHan, Ardi, Ashley, Franco, Prem and Suka. As the new team comes up to replace us at the APBYYouth Execom team, our outgoing team would like to thank every one of you for praying with us, working with us diligently for the growth of APBY. Whatever we have achieved together it is because of the Lord. We thank God for His guiding hand.

Finally, we praise God for all the friendship we cultivated and the rich spiritual blessings we experienced under the theme “Making and Multiplying Disciples.” Let us all thank the Lord for the great success of the APBY conference, Now, may I invite members of APBY to pray for our new team as they lead us. Let us continually work with our leaders as we move to the next APBY conference in Malaysia 2024.

See you in Malaysia.
"YOU CANNOT MAKE AND MULTIPLY DISCIPLES IF THE GOSPEL HAS NOT TRANSFORMED YOU."

FRANCO FERRER
IBC MANILA

The 17th APRHY Conference was themed Making and Multiplying Disciples to champion the call of Jesus for every believer to be a disciplemaker in the context of the local church—wherever God leads and calls. MD2 is rooted in 2 Timothy 2:2, "And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (ESV).

The plenary sessions were centered on the gospel of Jesus as the bedrock on how we can make and multiply disciples of all nations. This main thing, as 1 Corinthians 15:3 would often remind us, that the gospel we received is not just applicable in the past (salvation) but even in the present (sanctification) as we grow in Christlikeness, in discipling the nations and the very thing that will save (glorification) us when Christ comes.

Plenary session 1 started with Gospel Clarity (Romans 1:1-17). In order to make and multiply disciples that is God-glorifying, Christ-centered and Spirit-empowered, disciples need to have a 20/20 vision of what the gospel is. We need to know the realities of the gospel so that God is what He has done through Christ, and why the death and resurrection of Christ is so important in the gospel message. When the realities of the gospel are understood, we respond by allowing the Holy Spirit to transform us from the inside out. Finally, we commit to God to advance the gospel of Jesus to the lost, to the unreached people groups and to the unregenerate flock inside our local churches.

Plenary session 2 is Gospel Mission (Luke 5:1-11). In light of the finished work of Jesus on the cross and the empty tomb, we respond to Him by leading the best things and opportunities in life. It demands a daily dying and denying of one’s dreams, ambition, plans. And starting to pursue God’s holy dream, ambition and plan for every believer. That’s to become a fisher of men: a disciplemaker.

Plenary session 3 is Gospel Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). Pursuing God’s mission to make disciples can be a daunting task but Jesus provides us two massive and powerful bookends that will make His commission possible. First, His authority gives us courage and boldness to evangelize, reestablish disciples in the faith and equip them to entrust the gospel to faithful men. Second, His presence is our assurance that we make disciples not in our own strength, power, wisdom, or skills but in the presence of Christ, that is in the Holy Spirit.

Lastly, plenary session 4 is Gospel Power. None of our disciplmaking efforts, methodologies, strategies, and plans will work apart from the empowerment of the Spirit. To make and multiply disciples is never our plan. It is God’s plan to reconcile people back to Himself through Jesus Christ, transferring His people from the domain of darkness to the Kingdom of His Son. Therefore, we desperately need the power of the Holy Spirit.

We need the Spirit’s wisdom, leading, and enablement to go to places where the gospel needs to be preached—both for Christians and the lost.

Disciplmaking is wrapped in the gospel of Jesus. It is the very thing that marinates and shapes our little hearts to embrace the God-given mission of discipling people all for His glory, for our joy, and for the joy of all nations.
A YOUTH CONFERENCE FOR THE NATIONS

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall commend your works to another, and they shall declare your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.”

Psalm 145:3-5 (ESV)

There are few things more overwhelming than being asked to do a humongous task when you’ve never done it before. As far as I can remember, the Philippines has never hosted the Asia Pacific Baptist Youth (APBY) Conference before, which made it even scarier for us at DISCIPLE Philippines. Less than a year ago, Dr. Vee Tetteo, General Secretary of the Asia Pacific Baptist Federation (APBF) asked us if we – the DISCIPLE PH team – could help organize the 17th APBY Conference as the local team that would prepare all local arrangements for the conference.

I was thinking that with the lack of manpower of our team and the enormity of the tasks to be done, surely, no one in his or her right mind would say yes to this, right? Yet, I was wrong.

The Local Team

I’ve been working with DISCIPLE Philippines for over 9 years now, I was initially drawn to this ministry because of its commitment to making Gospel-centered disciples in the youth of the local churches in the Philippines. My wife and I have fallen in love with the people in DISCIPLE, and we have invested our lives in this vision – that we will be able to train the generations after us, for them to find Christ as their ultimate satisfaction and the reason why they will make disciples of the generations after them.

In this light, it seemed like the team was tailor-made for putting out the 2019 APBY Conference, with the theme being “Making and Multiplying Disciples.” It seemed like a perfect match. But I for one was hesitant mainly because of the size of the tasks to be done and that DISCIPLE Philippines was still a small organization in terms of manpower and volunteers.

But with the help of our Committee on Local Arrangements director, Pastor Joel Iriod, we were able to muster enough courage and trust in God to say yes to the task. We signed the memorandum of agreement and that was that.

It was time to work, and trust in God for what he can do. It was time for God to show his supreme capability in pulling us through.

Multitasking

Since DISCIPLE was seriously understaffed, most of us were taking on multiple tasks in the preparation. Some people were preparing and screening volunteers while making other arrangements for the conference. My wife and I were busy answering emails from international delegates about their travel arrangements and accommodations when they arrived in the Philippines. I was also working with Pastor Uziel Iriod in getting the official documents needed by international delegates for their visa and entry to the Philippines. Some people were juggling their 8-to-6 day jobs and dealing with bus and van contractors for the official transportation of international delegates from the airport to the conference venue in Baguio City.

Kal – my beautiful wife – was also communicating with the hotel and seminar accommodations to make sure everything was perfect. Needless to say, there were many sleepless nights leading into the conference dates, and not a few tears shed. In moments of being overwhelmed, I would embrace my wife as she needed to cry it out. We would pray, and we would rest for the night, and we would trust that God was still sovereign in the days to come, even in our weakness and lack.

Putting Out The Music

Amidst all of these tasks, I was also asked to write the conference theme song, and put together the local band who would serve in the conference. In different circumstances, that would seem easy enough to do. Except it wasn’t.

I needed help in writing the song, so I asked one of the young men in the team – RM Rodriguez – to write it with me. After a number of all-nighters, we finally had the best version of the lyrics approved. But I had to go on a weekend-long mission trip, so the recording was scheduled as fast as possible. The mixeddown was sent to me as I was traveling to the mission point. By God’s grace, we found a great arranger and sound editor to help us lay down the instrumentation to the song. And the local band... well, it wasn’t easy getting them together. Because of the dates of the conference, most of the usual DISCIPLE musicians were not available. We had to find good musicians from other churches, and by God’s grace we did.

From the reaction and feedback we received about the theme song and the music in the conference in general, we can only thank God that he put it all together. Early morning and late night rehearsals with the international music team did its job, after a fashion. We were able to lead the conference delegates and point them to Christ, the one most worthy of all their worship.

Seeing It All Come Together

The conference days were a blur to me, but if here was one thing that I remember, I remember the wonder I felt when I saw the volunteers just seemingly running on automatic. They knew what they had to do, and they did it with smiles on their faces. I felt their joy as they were serving, and I could only praise the Lord for that. It was the joy of serving the delegates and making the nations glad in Christ.

I used to end my conference days sitting down at the patio of the Philippine Baptist Theological seminary (the conference venue) and observing the volunteers smile with gladness, even when they were at the end of their wits and strength.

I realized that I was seeing in living color what the apostle Paul was saying in 2 Corinthians 5:18 – that we were all given the ministry of reconciling people to God. But the amazing thing was that he prefaced that with this amazing phrase – “ALL THIS IS FROM GOD.”

If there is any reflection worth sharing, it is this. All of what transpired in the conference was from God. It was him drawing his children unto himself. It was God showing us that he was sovereign. It was God reminding me that he can use small and broken things, unskilled organizations, weak sinners like us to bring glory to his name.

In the end, it does not depend on us. It depends wholly on what God can do – and I believe that he can do immeasurably more than any of us combined. This is what he did at APBY 2019, and we stand in awe at all the things he did.

STEVE DIXON
AUSTRALIA
Chair of APBY

JACOB KHINGTE
INDIA
Vice Chair of APBY

LAUK SANG
MYANMAR
Member

FRANKO FERRER
PHILIPPINES
Member

IREINA RUTH SERENA
INDONESIA
Member

MEET THE NEW APBY TEAM
I served at APBY conference as a workshop leader of “Dance As Ministry”. It was a big challenge for me because it was my first experience, but now I am really proud and happy for this blessing. Because it was singing voice to Asian boys and appreciated to see how Lee Jin works through the conference. I believe that God opened the door of the dance ministry, and the students will see the teachers dance to our sympathy God!

—Hana Furukawa
JAPAN

As a Workshop Facilitator and Chair Leader of the Nagaland Baptist Council of Churches (NBCC) at the 7th APBY Conference, it was indeed exciting, inspiring and fruitful to meet, share and pray with fellow leaders. God has blessed us with such a great experience. The words of the Apostle John 1:10 says, “He was in the World, and the World was made through him, and the World knew him not.” This was the experience of every delegate who attended the conference. APBY has given us an opportunity to see how the Holy Spirit is working in our midst and how we can bring the church together to worship together.

—Andrew Ngele
INDIA

Unity in diversity, bound by one faith and one God. I have known this meaning a global family for a long time. God has its own way of putting you in places you never thought you’d be. My family has been a blessing to me and they are the best part of the conference. Hearing stories of faith from each and every delegate in the conference. Despite our different cultural backgrounds, there is indeed no race, age, culture, tradition nor language that could ever divide us. We are united in praying for our with the same God. May we all continue to walk boldly in faith as we multiply it.

—Christ Ann Arcante
PHILIPPINES

\**Where to begin?**

This was my first APBY Conference and I leave blessed! Truth be told, I had never heard of APBY or APBF until Pastor Vee reached out to me last Fall asking if I could participate and lead a workshop on “Writing God-centered Songs”. In the US, outside our many Baptist conventions and associations, we don’t really talk about Baptists internationally. So to be a part of this conference was an eye-opening experience.

Getting to see all the various nations and cultures in the Asia Pacific gather in one place to worship God and have fellowship in Him was like a dream come true. Surely, living in the States I get to witness the plurality of immigrant churches existing in our neighborhoods. However, it is rare to see immigrant churches come together to worship together. Even in a racially-ethnic diverse church, it is rare to celebrate diversity in cultural representation. I was therefore amazed at how the Holy Spirit created unity in a gathering that is complex considering cultural boundaries and differences. In the States, some have become desensitized to the fact that cultures exist and that not one culture is above others. We don’t talk about the Holy Spirit as well. On the flip-side, some have become too sensitive to not offend other cultures. Hence, generally in American churches, American Christians do not know how to let the Spirit create unity within us as Christians as we celebrate the different cultures in our congregations. I was therefore extremely blessed to witness the coming of nations into one place to celebrate and worship our Almighty God. If I could, or if I was a Missions pastor, I’d like to convince my American church to join in on one of the APBY conferences to experience what it is like to worship God in a unified body outside our American context.

As a Korean-American, it was odd for me at first. I was not necessarily coming from an Asian-Pacific nation. Though I identify myself as a Korean, I was coming from South Korea but the States. So when the different countries were being called out, I was like, "Do I represent my Korean peoples or not?" To my thought, culturally, I could have. When I saw the different tribal clothings on Friday evening, I thought to myself, "I could have bought my Korean hanbok." I was reminded on how often I would wear the hanbok as a kid on important holidays/special occasions. Though, I am sure I would have sweated a lot on stage had I worn it and led praise. BUT I loved and enjoyed every moment of APBY Conference 2019.

Aside from worship leading alongside gifted worship leaders and musicians, I was privileged to lead a workshop on writing God-centered songs. When Pastor Vee initially asked me if I would like to lead this workshop, I had my joy and concerns. I am a mostly Christian singer-songwriter based in the United States. I have been writing songs of worship and testimony for 10-years.

Unfortunately, Asian Americans are not known of or heard of in the American Christian Music Industry. So leading up to the conference, I would go to the LORD and say, “LORD, I really have nothing to offer or give to the delegates of the APBY Conference. I am highly unqualified to talk about writing songs that are God-centered. Yet I am your Will, then so be it.”

I was going into unknown territory of what worship and praise music looked like outside the US/Korean context. I remember telling the delegates that my way of writing was different because of the cultures I grew up in. Because I grew up singing both Korean and English worship songs, my influence of writing comes from there. Theologically, Korean worship songs are focused more on suffering and hope in Christ, whereas English songs (outside the hymns) are more focused on the glory and praise of God. And so, I hope that the delegates who attended the workshops understood that writing God-centered songs reflect foremost on God and then creatively crafted by one’s culture. As we were writing our "group" song per session, I told one group, "My way of writing is not the same as your way of writing." We have a lot of good praise songs written by international Western Christians. However, God have given those of use to write new songs to Him rooted in His Truth and creatively expressed through our own culture. It would be a great loss when we stop writing songs for our people that glorifies God through the culture He has given us in order to cultivate into His own.

Overall, I thought the workshops went well! I pray that those who attended the workshops got something from it. I hope to hear more songs rise from local congregations in order to bring glory to God and impact their respective communities.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of this conference and community. It means a lot for me to be able to witness Asia-Pacific Christians and Asian Americans like myself praise God in one accord. I pray and hope we all will use the gifts God has given us all to make genuine disciples and multiply throughout the earth for His Kingdom’s cause.

—Dwight Rye

\**"LET GO. LET’S GO. WE’LL NEVER KNOW UNLESS WE GO"**

Archi Wiriadinata
FBC Bandung, Indonesia
After more than a year of prayers and preparations, Asia Pacific Baptist Youth Conference 2019 has ended. The Lord has allowed me to witness Him at work in so many ways during the conference that it finds it difficult to put it in words. I have considered giving up writing about it, then I read Psalm 77:12-14: “I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds. Your ways, God, are holy. What god is as great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.”

This encouraged me so here I am, 5 days after, attempting to pen my thoughts.

APBYCon2019 happened in Baguio from May 21-24. The theme is Making and Multiplying Disciples. “And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2

Here are some of the things I’ve seen and experienced:

God at Work #1
I volunteered to work as staff and I was assigned in the Program Committee. I was blessed to serve alongside men and women who love the Lord and who joyfully serve God’s people even if it meant making sacrifices, losing sleep, getting physically exhausted, etc. It is God who put together these people from different places and churches and seeing them united in Christ is just amazing. One can’t help but praise God who orchestrated everything.

God at Work #2
People from 19 different nations came to attend the conference. It is such an encouragement to see people from different parts of the globe, with different cultural backgrounds, who speak different languages, come together to worship the one true living God. Despite barriers, a strong fellowship was formed because we are one in Christ. Seeing them and talking to them (specially people in my family group) allowed me to go beyond my restricted perspective which is focused on my own circumstances and my immediate surroundings and see God’s work on a global scale. I learned about the circumstances of my brothers and sisters outside the Philippines. We were able to pray for one another and encourage one another and show our love for one another which is a rare opportunity. For this, I am very thankful.

God at Work #3
As part of the program, some of the delegates were able to perform and share some of their culture. I didn’t get to see the dance performances because I was stationed in the chapel where choral and instrumental performances were done. I was struggling to hold back tears the whole time. The delegates sang and played instruments beautifully. They were so good. You can see their heart in their performance. At that time, I was thinking, “If they are this good, how much more awesome is the Giver of all these gifts and talents?” I was in awe.

God at Work #4
God’s Word was proclaimed. The gospel was preached. Our hearts were pierced and convicted. I need not say more. I can only say praise God for His powerful Word that transforms hearts, ignites God-directed passion, builds faith, enables trust and obedience, and propels people to let go and go!

God at Work #5
The Lord was working in my heart during the whole conference. He was developing in me a heart that looks to Him alone and is dependent on Him alone. As stage director, I was constantly running around, communicating instructions to other people, checking the time and program flow throughout the plenary sessions. During that whole time, I was fighting to make sure that while I do my tasks, I do not miss the opportunity to sing praises and to hear God’s Word. He keeps telling me that more than my service, He values my heart that beholds Him. He was also dealing with my self-reliance and pride. When performing my tasks, I was constantly checking my heart and battling with the urge to rely on what I know and what I can do, overuse the authority that goes with the task that was given me, and take pride in what was accomplished. At the last minute, I was given the task to read the scripture and lead the prayer. I was hesitant at first because I did not want to add to my duties the price that comes when you are placed under the spotlight. But God is good and merciful to me. He corrects me and despite my weaknesses, He uses me. He puts me in situations that allow me to act according to my faith, looking unto Jesus, and not be dictated by my fears, worries, and weaknesses. My prayer is that I will grow in my love for the Lord, joy and satisfaction in Him, and that I will go and obey, by God’s grace, not in my terms but in His terms.

These items don’t cover everything. God is also seen at work in the approval of visas by foreign delegates, safe travels, safety during the conference, financial provision, and grace in the lives of people who went through something very difficult during the conference.

Thank you, Lord and praise you, Lord! You are so good!
**My Journey with APBF**

**Maker Kasungh**

It all started in the year 2012 when I was asked to be part of the APBF Congress worship team. I had just begun my ministry then as a Music Minister at Shilling Baptist Church. It was a great opportunity for me to get some ministry exposure, or so I thought. Little did I know that this was the beginning of a journey that would change my life in so many good ways.

Different musicians from across Asia Pacific came together to form the Congress worship band. The band became family and grew bigger each passing year.

In 2013, the band gathered again for BWA Youth Conference "Reach" in Singapore where we were reminded and challenged to reach out more to those in need.

APBF Conference in 2015 was remarkable too as we saw hundreds of young people and youth leaders come together for the conference at Bangkok Christian School. Here, I took part in one of the craziest rehearsals I have ever been on. The band could not meet earlier for rehearsals and we had just one day before the start of the event. Hence what followed was a non-stop jam of over 17 songs right from the word go at our drummer’s studio. Thankfully, each one came prepared with their parts. That was a memorable day.

In 2017, when I was asked whether I would be attending the APBF Congress in Indonesia, I had given a pass mainly because of financial constraint. However, I really wanted to be part of this one because it was a special one - Rev Bonny Resu was retiring. As mentioned in my earlier article, he has been my mentor and guide in my spiritual journey. Naturally it would have been awesome for me to be there during his retirement. However, as I was preparing to face this ‘unfortunate’ moment of not being able to be there for the event, I received a text just a week or so before the Congress from our then Youth President, Vee asking me if I’d be willing to join the worship band as a fill in for another leader who could not make it. To make it short, I went to the Congress and what a meaningful and an emotional farewell it was for the man who had served at APBF for over 15 years.

Finally, it’s 2019 now and I just got back from Baguio, Philippines after attending our APBF Conference where over 700 delegates from all over Asia Pacific gathered at PBTS, my alma mater, under the theme Making & Multiplying Disciples (MD2) 2 Timothy 2:2. What a refreshing time it was for all of us as we reminded ourselves of our Christian mandate – the great commission and the need to step out of our comfort zones more often and be a witness of the gospel. We know so much already, and it’s time for us to actually just go and make disciples, to make bold decisions, and to impact and build those around us with the message of love and hope, the gospel!

I truly thank God for all the blessings. All these conferences helped me renew and refresh my spiritual life. My passion and love for God and his people get rekindled. What a joy it is to get connected with our brothers and sisters from around the world and share stories and testimonies of joy, struggles, faith and miracles. I am greatly indebted to APBF for the opportunities given me to be partners in this ministry. God willing, see you all at our next conference.

So Deo Gloria!
Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention (KABC)
The Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention, comprises of 13 Association with 335 local churches and baptized membership is 37,481. KABC is a member body of ABPF.

Lower Assam Baptist Union (LABU)
Reports made available by Rev. Prosenjit Basumutary, President of LABU states that LABU has 335 congregations, 33,786 baptized believers, 123 missionaries of which 61 are home missionaries.

Lairam Jesus Christ Baptist Churches (LJCBC)
A member of ABPF, Lairam Jesus Christ Baptist Churches reports a total of 29, 277 members (19,407 baptized believers, and 9,859 associate members), LJCBC’s has a total of 117 churches with 181 missionaries. 12 overseas missionaries sent to Myanmar, Bangladesh, China and Ghana, 13 missionaries sent to India, and 65 native missionaries.

Tripura Baptist Christian Union (TBCU)
Tripura Baptist Christian Union which came into being in 1938 has a total of 1050 churches with 80,000 baptized members within the Union. Rev. M.J Eade from New Zealand Baptist Missionary Society is known to have been the first missionary to the Tripura Baptists.

North East India Baptist’s Mission Passion
Talk about Baptist passion for missions. There was not a single doubt that the conventions we visited were any less passionate in the work of the proclamation of the Gospel. The conventions were more than willing to look at how they can be potentially engaged to send more missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission. Talk about human resource. It is not just hundreds, but thousands who are ready and willing to go. How can we strengthen the local conventions to send their missionaries to the rest of the World?

As Rev. Ronne Chiu reports, “The few conventions we visited are ready to be engaged to do more than what they are currently doing.”

He adds: Every convention has their own theological seminaries and their lecturers are constantly being upgradad in various overseas/local seminars. There is a pool of potential already qualified personnel that could be invited/mobilized to help play a role in ABPF Theological training and equipping. In terms of mission work, the conventions are already very active in the local and overseas missions. Given their geographical location, there is a lot of potential to engage them for missions work in Bangladesh, Myanmar, Bhutan, and maybe even in the Yunnan (China).

As Jesus prayed for unity of his followers in John 17:11, “that they may be one as we are one,” it is the prayer of ABPF that the 63 member bodies of ABPF will not waver from this union Jesus so desirably prayed for us. The phrase of ABPF ‘Stronger Together’ seeks unity in the work of the Lord, that we are stronger together when we work together.

Our goal as ABPF in visiting member bodies in the North East was to introduce the ABPF/ABPFaid to convention leaders, share the vision of “Stronger Together,” and to identify potential partnerships that will ultimately strengthen both ABPF and local conventions. But as we went, we were more than challenged to just share the vision. We were challenged in the face there is a ‘Baptists’ force ready and waiting to fulfill Matthew 28:19-20, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

There is an unwavering faith and an unbreakable passion that is ready and willing, Asia Pacific is not just the mission field but also the sending force that when strategically engaged there will be an unimaginable harvest awaiting. As Jesus commissioned His disciples to go, we, ABPF, who call ourselves His disciples must ‘GO’. ‘GO’ into all the world and preach the Gospel of Christ.

Arunachal Baptist Church Council (ABCC)
The ABCC, formed in 2009, is the youngest in the ABPF family but it is the fastest growing despite persecution and hardships. It is now estimated that 35% of the population are Christians. More and more ethnic tribes in Arunachal Pradesh are coming to Christ. The ABCC consists of 19 Associations, 1129 local churches and 13,228 baptized members.

Baptist Churches of Mizoram (BCM)
Jacob Coblea, the newly elected Vice Chair of ABPF informs, “Rev. F.W. Savidge and J.H. Lorraine, were the first missionaries in Mizoram who were firstly sent by Arlington Mission in 1884. They left Mizoram in 1897 by handing over the mission field to Welsh Mission only to return back as BMS missionaries to Mizoram in 1903.”

The BCM now counts 1,20,129 baptized membership within the BCM with 968 full time Missionaries sent to Kenya, Thailand, Ghana, Cambodia, Arakan (Myanmar), Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal, Bhutan.

Boro Baptist Convention (BBC)
Based in Assam, India, BBC has more than 52,000 baptized believers with 864 congregations as of 2014. The Boro Baptist Convention is headquartered at Harisinga in Udalguri District of Bodoland, Assam. Boro Baptist Convention is a member body of ABPF.

Garo Baptist Convention (GBC)
The Garo Baptist Convention has 18 Krimas (Associations), 2,536 local churches, with a baptized membership of 3,26,075 and 93, 512 Christian families. 62 local evangelists, 142 cross cultural home missionaries, and 20 overseas missionaries supported by GBC.

States in India. God is also using NMM to send its missionaries to Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, China, Thailand, Mongolia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Krygystan, Philippines, Estonia, Uzbekistan, East Timor, U.K, USA, Singapore, and Japan.

While Ronnie, Kabi and we were able to cover only three conventions during the period of two weeks, towards the last week of April I had the privilege to attend the 69th Annual General Meeting of the Council of Baptist Churches in North East India, held from April 26-28, 2019 in Diphu Baptist Church, Karbi Anglong, Assam. The assembly was hosted by Nihang Karo Baptist Association, Karbi Anglong Baptist Convention, AM CSBNEI member bodies are member of ABPF. The Council of Baptist in the North East India, (CBCNEI) brings together six regional conventions, (minus Baptist Churches of Mizoram, Lairam Jesus Christ Baptist Churches, Lower Assam Baptist Union and Boro Baptist Convention), and has 1.2 million baptized members in 7,516 congregations. During the 69th CBCNEI Council, CSBNEI bade farewell to the outgoing General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Solomon Rongpi and installed Rev. Dr. Akheto Sema as their new General Secretary.

Due to time constraint and distance challenges, the ABPF/ABPFaid team to North East India was not able to visit other member bodies of ABPF (ABPF hopes to visit them soon). Nevertheless, in light of member bodies in the North East India, here is brief update of the conventions.

Assam Baptist Convention (ABC)
The Assam Baptist Convention consist of 6 Associations, with 340 local Churches 34,673 baptized members and 39 full time workers. The first missionary sent to the Nagas was an Assamese by the name ‘Godhula’ a member of Sisibag Baptish Church, Assam, Assam remains the most un-reached state in North East India. 67% of the population are Hindus and 28.43% are Muslims.

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How Do We Respond To Global Instability & All It Is Creating?

There is a Jewish proverb that I have loved for many, many years. I have seen it tattooed on backs and arms, painted as graffiti, written on inspirational posters. However, when I stop and think about this proverb it is an extraordinary ask. To speak up for those who cannot speak up for themselves, to defend the rights of those who are destitute. Many associate this proverb with those living in poverty. The World Bank says 735 million people are living in poverty and that figure is only those who live in extreme poverty. It does not include all those who are called poor. If it is just those who live in a situation where they cannot be sustained. Others would link this proverb to those who are experiencing human rights violations. In today’s world nearly 66 million people from all walks of life are forcibly displaced due to war, persecution, consequences of climate change and crushing poverty. In 2016 alone, 22 million people, half of them children, registered as refugees. Many of these people cross borders with alarming risk, not knowing if they would ever return to their homes. They face starvation, illness, human trafficking, violence, rape and an ever-haunting intolerance for their presence. Others would think of women living in highly vulnerable situations or marginalised people groups that experience relentless persecution due to their race, religion or simply their facial features that show they are the other. It is overwhelming to think how we might speak up for such a volume of suffering souls. All of these tragic circumstances are a symptom of an increasing level of global instability. Whether it be corruption, war, exploitative behaviours of global corporations, economic exploitation of powerful countries over emerging nations, changing climates, racial and religious intolerance, rampant and unchecked corruption, among many other challenges, they create a complex web of powerlessness that creates these incomprehensible statistics. Let alone imagining the consequences of the children that make up at least half of the hundreds of millions of people. Children growing up without hope, without prospects for the future, without any sense of being able to make something of their lives or to simply feel, safe.

It can render you feeling hopeless, wondering how to speak up for so many. Margot Waddell once wrote about the experience of being a bystander. Often the bystander, of say a car accident, feels overwhelmed and fearful which leads to helplessness. They freeze and end up doing nothing but watching on. In many cases someone, whether an emergency services person or a ‘good Samaritan’ eventually acts and becomes someone who ‘stands-by’. With whatever resources they have, they dare to be touched by the situation and come alongside those suffering. This raises an important principle for those who wish to be people who ‘stand-by’. It raises the principle of compassion. Unlike pity, which is just an emotion, compassion is a feeling and a decision - to be touched, to empathise and to share in the suffering. At times like this - the start of the year - we often feel most courageous about the year ahead. Whether about some personal goal we want to achieve or simply the sense of a fresh start on those things we have felt helpless about. If we are going to make our best response to the ask in this proverb to speak up, to defend, then we must allow ourselves to participate with compassion and to be courageous in our disposition.

We can turn this tide of suffering around. We can contribute to a shift in a world where those same children referred to before can flourish if we can contribute in significant ways. This is actually not about money. This is about a change of heart, a step of courage, a willingness to be touched as we engage. It can look like this:

Become aware of changing climates and the effect they are having on those most vulnerable to those changes.

Dare to seek opportunities to engage with events that care for our environments.

There are some many ways you can engage with those who are destitute…

Dare to be informed through the numerous resources available to better understand the experience of a refugee or asylum seeker.

Open your heart to those who face barriers to their own inclusion in a brighter future because they live with a disability, a disease or stigma like leprosy, HIV/AIDS. Dare to imagine what it would be like to be in their shoes and what you would hope from those who have the power to stand by you.

Dare to believe in them, support work that focuses on local communities being active partners in tackling the root causes of instability and are best placed to inform and shape their future.

Dare to invest in them, be courageous and invest in social enterprises that are challenging local, national and global markets by pushing the majority of the profit to people living in poverty contexts.

Have faith. Don’t undermine the power of faith to impact global issues and shape global perspectives.

Dare to find a way to soften your heart. The more immune we are to people’s suffering the more indifference and a sense of powerlessness grows.

Dare to let yourself believe otherwise and imagine “What if I knew them and care for them. How would I act?”.

Our solutions must hit at the root causes not the symptoms to global instability.

Dare to learn about the companies you purchase from and engage with. What role do they play in solving or deepening global instability, exploitation and power imbalances?
APBF is a regional organization of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). We represent over 33,000 local churches and 60 conventions in 22 countries across Asia Pacific.

APBF...
...promotes fellowship, cooperation and service amongst Baptists.
...stimulates and coordinates evangelism.
...assists in consultation and planning for various ministry programs.
...to function as a regional organization of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA).