



Beginnings

Theodore Williams was born on 24th February 1935 in the town of Nazareth in the Tutucorin district of Tamil Nadu. His grandfather was an Anglican Priest and his father was a school teacher. He was the eldest of four children and being born in a strict Christian family, he attended church services and Sunday school regularly and was made to memorize Bible verses.

He finished his SSLC honours at the age of 14 and since he was too young for college, he started learning type-writing, book-keeping and Hindi, all of which helped him in the later stages of his ministry. He then pursued college studies and had a deep affinity towards Dravidian politics and also wrote stories in a Tamil monthly magazine. Slowly disorderliness started creeping into his life but his craze over his political heroes started diminishing when he came to know more secrets about their personal lives..

It was about this time, in the year 1954 that he was enthralled with a fresh understanding of the holiness of God. The rearrangement of his priorities as a result of that special revelation led him to plunge himself in teaching Sunday school, open air preaching and many other activities. A deep desire to serve God took hold of him.

After completion of his studies he gained a clear understanding that God was calling him into ministry. Subsequently, he joined the first batch of students to learn Theology at SIBI, Bangarapet in 1955. His scholarly brilliance shone through in the Bible college. He learnt some life changing lessons sitting at the feet of Jesus. His faith became unshakeable as he experienced that the Lord who called him is faithful! His understanding of holiness was deeply affirmed in his life. He was also gripped with a Missionary zeal to reach the nation.

After studies, he joined SIBI as a teacher. He became an accomplished teacher as well as a versatile preacher. The whole SIBI community was challenged with his soul stirring messages on the need for the Saviour in this perishing World. Today a number of his students are making a mark for God in various corners of the globe as pioneer missionaries or mission leaders.

Missionary

Statesman

Rev. Theodore William's life work was to build up the people of God by imparting the Christian vision of the mission of God, inspiring those he touched through his uncompromising Biblical teaching and writing. As an effective evangelist he inculcated Kingdom values and principles in the lives of thousands as they came to know Jesus Christ and accepted the commission to make Him known to others. At the annual conference of the Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI), he presented the challenges of India. He suggested that an Indigenous Mission be formed to confront these challenges. So at the age of 30, the commitment to seeing Indians mobilized for cross-cultural mission led him to found the Indian Evangelical Mission (IEM). Beginning with just one mission worker in 1965, the mission grew rapidly under his capable and dedicated leadership. As the first General Secretary and then later as a senior adviser, Dr. Williams saw the IEM grow into a major mission force within, and beyond India, by 2010 employing over 900 mission workers.

Alongside his work with IEM, Dr. Williams also played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB), the India Missions Association (IMA) and Vacation Bible School (VBS). On a wider canvas, Dr. Williams also served as the President of World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) for a number of years and through that body ensured that new missionary enterprises were established in a number of countries in all continents. In semi-retirement, Rev. Theodore Williams served as a pastor at Richmond Town Methodist Church, Bangalore continuing to preach and to mentor mission leaders.

Bible

Expositor

Rev. Theodore Williams was an excellent Bible expositor and preacher. His knowledge of the Word and his preaching skills were well known worldwide. He had an English Broadcast of back to the bible and "Satyavasanam" a Tamil programme through which he influenced many people to turn away from their lukewarm faith. He has further authored many books which were published and translated into many languages.

Theodore

Williams

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Man

Rev. Theodore Williams was known for his compassion. Numerous people bear witness to his generosity as well. He was very concerned for the welfare of people. He was also a man of great faith. He looked to God in all circumstances to sustain him.

He married a Canadian missionary named Esther Faulkner in 1971 after knowing that she was the God destined woman for him and with whom his aspirations and visions matched. She was excellent in preparing Sunday school materials and with her husband prepared a 3 year VBS course curriculum. Mrs. Esther also had a passion for writing. One such book was 'Esther: A Shining Star', the story of a young girl who dies of leukemia.

Nevertheless, Theodore Williams had his times of weaknesses and failures. The moral lapse hurt his life and ministry to a great extent. In the midst of that, he repented and followed Christ, looking forward and not behind. His strength was in accepting his vulnerability. His focus on eternal things was undiminished till the end.

Farewell

On the night of December 29th, 2009, Rev. Theodore Williams breathed his last, a few months after Esther, his wife, had passed away. His funeral on December 31st 2009 had many leaders and people from all walks of life bearing witness to the influence Dr. Williams had on their lives. Dr Williams was prepared for his end and knew "it is well with (his) soul."