

# *Nepal Consultation on Child Theology*

1—7 July 2007

**Child  
Theology**  
MOVEMENT

*Jesus placed a little child among them.....*

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# **Report of the Nepal Child Theology Consultation:**

**1-3 July 2007**  
**Kathmandu**

**Editor: John Collier**

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## Preface

The Child Theology Movement has roots in Asia. Our first meeting was held in 2002 in Penang, Malaysia and we have returned there several times since. But Asia is a particularly diverse continent: large ethnic groups; extremes of wealth; populous formal religions; etc. So when we were invited back to Asia we were particularly delighted to be invited to Nepal for our first Child Theology consultation in south Asia.

The consultation also seemed timely when we read headlines in a local newspaper on the first day of our meeting: “Ten women gang raped”; “Eliminating bonded child labor”; “Most dangerous disappearing act” (about child trafficking). All appeared in the same edition of the paper. The raped women were all from the Dalit ‘untouchable’ caste. It was reported that there are 1.98 million child laborers in Nepal. Although forcing children into bonded labour is illegal in the South Asian countries, it was estimated that there are 33,000 children suffering this form of exploitation in Nepal alone. The report stated that an estimated 5000 Nepali girls are kidnapped and sold to brothels in India annually. Poverty, lack of education, gender and caste discrimination all make women and children vulnerable and more helpless.

This is not to say that these problems only occur in Nepal; far from it. Such evil is encountered in every part of the world. But the stories do serve to show both the relevance of the church and the particular ministry of Child Theology to the church.

Women and children were also marginalized when Jesus walked on earth. In fact, we know from the New Testament that Jesus encountered some such. He welcomed and accepted them: the foreign woman in Tyre with a sick daughter; the outcast promiscuous woman at Jacob’s well; the broken woman with the fractured jar of precious ointment. And Jesus also welcomed children into the centre. The key text for Child Theology is Matthew 18:2 when Jesus brings a child into the group of disciples and asks them to consider this child as they go about their serious (and, in their case, grievous) theologizing. In each of the consultations organized by the Child Theology Movement – nine at the time of this consultation – we try to bring a child into the midst of our theologizing, not usually literally but in our imaginations. We did this again in Kathmandu as we spent time considering the Christian doctrine of Salvation.

The tree is a potent religious symbol. There is the mythic notion of the ‘world tree’ binding together heaven and earth. Hinduism has long revered the tree as a powerful symbol of abundance and many villages in South Asia have prominent trees that act as meeting places, offering shelter from sun and storm. Trees are also important symbols in the Christian story, from Genesis: “*but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.*” (2:17) to Revelation: “*On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations*” (Revelation 22:2).

We appropriated this symbol of salvation and used it in a somewhat different way. We attempted to draw the ‘Tree of Christianity’ in Nepal (see page 13). There were many different interpretations! But each one recognized the complexity, the false starts, the dynamic growth, the roots and the branches. We didn’t find the final shape of this tree, not even a clear picture of how it is now, but we are assured that the tree is growing and will grow. And it is a tree whose fruit brings strength and healing, not just to Nepal but to many other nations.

So, we did something to tend this tree – a little pruning perhaps and a scattering of fertilizer!

*He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither.  
Whatever he does prospers.*

Ps 1:3

John Collier



## Saturday June 30th

### Welcome dinner

After a welcome to all the participants by Mr. Dhan Raj Ghimire and prayer by Rev. Samuel Sodemba we commenced the consultation with a short time of worship led by the choir group of Binaya Church. This was followed by a short welcoming address by Hari Gurung, chairman of Carnet Nepal. He welcomed all the participants and thanked Dr. Keith White and Dr John Collier from the Child Theology Movement. He said Child Theology might be a new concept for Nepal. In response, Keith emphasised that we had not come to teach anything at all but to facilitate a process of learning. We are empty and have come to be filled. This process – *how* we work together – is as important as *what* we do. We are particularly grateful that the participants have agreed that we can use the English language for much of the consultation. Child Theology has roots in Asia and we are excited to think of a new child theology developing in Nepal according to Nepali culture.

The meeting got going with an ‘ice-breaker’ game between participants which involved reuniting two halves of a Bible verse. After sharing the full verse, the pair of participants introduced the other to the group.



### Personal Introductions

The following accounts give some idea of the stories of many of the participants. There were other participants whose stories are not available and some took part in the consultation only from time to time as other commitments allowed<sup>1</sup>.

#### Buddhi Ratna Bajracharya



I am from a Buddhist background and was baptized as a Christian in 1986. I am married to Pushpa and we have two children, a son and a daughter. I have been blessed with one grandson and one grand-daughter.

We have been involved in children's ministry since 1983 through our Pushpanjali Secondary School which is situated in Godivari, Lalitpur. It was started by my wife and her cousin with five students in the nursery class and now we have 350 students. I have worked for the UMN from 1985 to 2001 as the guest house manager.

<sup>1</sup> The Child Theology Movement strongly discourages this practice because the consultations are not conferences. It is quite usual in large conferences for participants to come and go, even to 'pick and choose' the sessions they prefer to attend. However, a Child Theology consultation is an extended conversation between a single group of people who are committed to learn from each other. This means that if one is absent for a while, not only do they themselves lose the 'thread' but all participants lose out. At the same time, we recognise that on occasion, temporary absences of particular participants are unavoidable.

I am also the National Field Coordinator for the International Gideons ministry in Nepal. Last year, we distributed 56,300 copies of the Bible to students in schools and colleges in the Kathmandu valley.

### Ramesh Chhetry

I am married to Latika. I am an education consultant at the Early Childhood Learning Centre which aims to help children reach their best potential. We work with pre-school children, teaching through play.

I completed my Master's degree in English literature at Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu. I serve in an Assembly of God church as a Sunday School coordinator. I am enrolled in the Institute for Theological Education by Extension in Nepal to study pastoral theology.

### Yubraj Devkota



I originally came from a Hindu priestly family. After my conversion to Christ when I was 16 years old, I studied and gained an MA in anthropology and MDiv in Bangalore. I am an elder of Nawajeevan church. I worked for three years as a staff member for a theological college in Kathmandu. I also used to run a VBS, teach in Sunday School and was the children's ministry coordinator for Scripture Union Nepal. Now I am a faculty member of the Nepal Theological College.

### Deepak Dulal



I was born and brought up in a Brahmin Hindu family. God entered my life in 1994 when I was 14 yrs old. After few years my whole family came to the Lord. Now I am running a school with 500 children and a children's home with 13 children. I am also a youth leader of my church and co-ordinate Sunday school activities. As God has showed me a vision, I have committed my life to serve the helpless and needy children of Nepal.

### Dhan Raj Ghimire



I am the coordinator for CARNET Nepal. I am married with one son, Ayup, age five years. I have been doing this job for two years and before that I was a schoolteacher. I have always been involved in children's work.

I originally came from a Hindu family and I came to Christ after God healed my wife from a heart condition. At that time, my wife was a nurse at a Christian hospital and I was involved in persecuting Christians. A Korean doctor at the hospital told her to believe in Christ and she would be healed. He gave her a Bible but we didn't look at it. At that time we didn't know anything about Christ but one night, when she was in great pain, she asked me to get the Bible and put it on her chest. We did that and after ten minutes the pain disappeared and has never returned. Later, the heart specialist confirmed the healing.

### Jivan Gurung



I have been involved in church ministry since 1981. I did Bible training in the UK from 1982-4. I started church ministry at the Ramghat church in Pokhara, which was the first church in Nepal. I served there as an elder for 13 years. In 1997, I moved with my family to Gorahi in the mid-west of Nepal in response to God's calling to make our base there. Now I am one of the leaders of the Pratapi church in that town.

In 2004, we started an NGO to become more involved in social work but with the aim to reach the spiritual, physical and social needs of the people. There is a high incidence of child mortality and malnutrition.

I have four children and we recently moved back to Kathmandu for their education but I still serve God in the western part of Nepal.

**Hari Gurung**

I serve as the pastor of Dhapkhet Baptist Church, Lalitpur. I am originally from Pokhara in the west of Nepal but have lived in Kathmandu with my wife and three children for 12 years.

I received Christ in Nagaland, India and there received the call to come and plant churches in Nepal. I am one of the founder members of the Nepal Baptist Church Council. One of the ways I serve the church is in the training of church leaders, having seen the need as I travelled around Nepal for NBCC.

I am the chairman of CARNET Nepal and I have a concern for children at risk. We have been taking care of some of the child victims of the armed conflict in our home.

**Nokdang Jamir**

I come from Nagaland in the northeast of India. I was born and brought up in a Christian family but only came to a personal faith at the age of 30 in 1989. In my youth I lived a very worldly lifestyle, including addiction to drugs. God called me to himself through a miracle and so I decided to serve him with my whole life. I studied at a seminary for a BTh and went back to Nagaland to work in the local church.

In 1999, I got married and God opened the way for us to come as missionaries to Nepal. I am now working in Tansen church, mostly among the youth. We now also have a beautiful daughter of 3 years old, called Prashana.

**Kaji M Kandangwa**

I was born in Terathum East Nepal and brought up in Limbu family. I was in disagreement about my culture. I did not have any peace so I started to go to church. God changed my heart through his word and I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal saviour in 1992. After that I got peace in my heart. Thank God for his peace! I studied at Impact Bible (D.T.H) in Kathmandu, 1996. I married my wife, Binu in 1998 and I have two sons.

God called me to work for him. I was not sure but then God told me again: "my son listen and believe I want to do a work in your life." So I started to work in Sindupalchowk on the Tibet border. Our church is called: 'Listen and Believe Church'! At the same time I started an orphan ministry.

**Madan Kirati**

My wife's name is Manohara (Manu) and we have three children: Dan 15, Dina 13, and Dip 10 years old.

I was born into a Hindu family but brought up in a Christian family. I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal saviour in 1980 and was baptized in 1987. Since 1989 I have been involved in voluntary ministry at Ashish Church in Kathmandu. From 1990 to 1994 I served among the youth as youth leader. Since 1995 I have been serving as leader / deacon at the church. In 1995 God called me to serve the children. Since then I and my family serve children who are at risk and in need. We have 55 children altogether, including our own children. I am involved

in CARNET Nepal as a board member/ treasurer. I teach in different Bible training institutes. God has given me a heart for teaching, caring and counselling those who are in need.

**Rinzi Lama**

I was born and brought up in a Buddhist family. I accepted Christ as Lord in 1977 as a result of which my family rejected me for 15 years but I felt the unfailing love of God. Although I had had a poor education, I was able to start studying English when I was 17 and went on to study for a Master's degree in Ministry. I have a wife and two grown up children.

I am involved in various Christian ministries, including pastor of a Nazarene church since 1994, and I am the founder director of the Jabez School of Ministry.

**Tik Bdr Magar**

I was born in east Nepal. I heard the gospel for the first time as a young man from my uncle who was a believer and read several Christian tracts. Then a few years later in 1983 while in India, I met some Christians. They shared with me about Jesus and I committed my life to Jesus, making a commitment to serve the Lord. I stayed in India and attended a Bible School there for three years where I continued to grow in my knowledge of the word and relationship with Christ.

Following Bible School, I worked with an OM (Operation Mobilization) evangelism team for nearly two years there in India. Later, I returned to Nepal and worked with my local church in church planting prior to returning once again to India for further Bible training for Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.). After my training, I returned to Nepal and worked in the same church planning ministry. After doing two years ministry, I met a young lady who was already working with YWAM named Bina Tamang.

**Bina Tamang**

I grew up in a Christian home in central Nepal. My family included some of the early believers in Nepal, and due to intense persecution in their village they had to flee to another area. My uncle was a powerfully anointed evangelist in the early days of the spread of the gospel in this nation. I served in my church as a teenager prior to doing a DTS (Discipleship Training School) when I was 19. I worked in YWAM as DTS staff, did a 3 month SBS (School of Biblical Studies) and then was involved in a church planting team for some time. It was after returning to Nepal, I met Tik and we were married.

We continued to work in ministry as support staff to church planting teams in east Nepal with our local church. God blessed us with a son Roshan and a daughter Roshani. Now Roshan is 10 years and Roshani is 8 years old.

In 1998 we felt that God would have us rejoin YWAM's ministry as a couple, so we both did a DTS - for Bina it was my second DTS. We both have a deep burden for reaching the unreached and church planting and have been blessed with much experiences and training. My heart is to serve the work of church planting from behind the scenes through visiting and encouraging, doing Pastoral Care and starting new churches in the future.

We are currently doing church planting ministry as well as social services. We started a small orphanage home and our future vision is to keep up to 50 orphan children. Also we are praying to start a "old age home" to provide shelter and food for very old people those who don't have any one to care and look after them, because many old people are beggars, roaming here and there without proper care and food.

**Devendra Yasmali Magar**

I am Devendra Yasmali Magar. I was not born into a Christian family but when I was about one year old my family accepted Christ as Lord and Saviour. That's how I got the chance to grow in the Christian Community, which helped me to build my spiritual life.

Still, it wasn't until after Grade VIII that I believed in him as my own Lord and Saviour and got baptized. After that I slowly became involved in church activities. In 2002, I got involved in church youth ministries as a committee member. In 2005 I worked in Nawajeevan Assemblies of God Church and from 2007 I became involved in CARNET Nepal. This gave me the chance to work with children.

**Abdiel Mukhia**

I come from a Christian family but due to some family problems, I myself never had any interest in Christianity. At the age of 30, I started to work in a travel agency as a tour guide. It so happened that during my career as a tour guide, I met with a Christian couple who had come to Nepal to investigate how many Christians and churches there were but they had a hard time finding any Christians or churches at all. Fortunately, they were assigned to me and when they heard I was a 'Christian' they invited me to go to the USA for training with the Navigators.

I went to the USA in 1970 and spent three and a half years doing the course. When I returned to Nepal, despite several difficulties, I eventually started a ministry training others. Some of these have gone on to plant churches and lead others to Christ.

I am married and I have two sons. My wife works in the church among ladies and children. I hope that Child Theology will help me in the training of Sunday School teachers.



**Bishnu Parajuli**

I was born in 1965 in a Hindu priest's family. Jesus saved me when I was 13 years old and called me in 1980 to work with children at risk (Jm 1:27). Later, God told me to open a home for homeless, uncared and unloved children. Now we have 57 children in Morning Star Children's home, where we aim to treat them with Christian love and to respect their rights and dignity.

I am on the board of CARNET Nepal and am a deacon of a large church in Kathmandu, where I supervise the house fellowships. I am also involved with the Red Cross in Nepal and an organization to help girls who have been trafficked.

**Manohar Pathak**

I am the director of Promot-Nepal which has been providing training for Nepali churches and Christian organisations since 1995. I grew up in Gorkha and trained at the Butwal Technical Institute run by UMN. After coming to faith in Christ, I worked in finance and administration. While attending a workshop, I became aware of the value that this kind of training would provide to Nepal. I am married with two teenage children.

Promot-Nepal addresses the problem of management training for churches and organizations across Nepal by means of workshops of 20 to 30 people.

**Subash Pradhan**

I was born in Burma, now Myanmar, in a Hindu family. In 1983, my parents moved back to our homeland, Nepal. I received Christ when I was 15 years old. I studied for a business degree and went on to do a M Div at the MBTS in Penang.

I have worked among children as a teacher for 7 years. I love children and love to play and be with them. While in Penang, I served as a pastor to migrant Nepali workers. Now I am a part-time lecturer in Bible Colleges and Seminaries in Kathmandu.

**Kalpna Shahi**

I come from the west of Nepal from a town called Jafarkot. I am the middle child of five. I have two older brothers and two younger sisters. I was a Hindu until the age of 18 when I accepted Christ as my personal saviour. My parents also accepted Christ and now my father is a pastor of the Believers' Church.

My father encouraged me to enter the Christian ministry and so I studied for a BTh at Kerala in South India. First, I taught at the Bible College in Pokhara for a year. Now I work in the Believer' Church Network for the 'Bridge of Hope' which helps poor and oppressed children in Nepal. One way is through 31 schools all over Nepal.

**Dinesh Babu Shrestha**

I work with Nepal Campus Crusade for Christ as an evangelist. I am also an elder of Prasoon church in Lalitpur and a member of Micah Network in Nepal. I am not directly involved in ministry to children but I have a burden to see children built up in a Biblical faith in their formative years.

Child Theology is a new concept for me and I'm excited to be a part of this consultation.

**Shova Shrestha**

Being born into a Hindu family I only knew about Hinduism. It was at the age of 11 that I first heard the gospel of Jesus Christ from my mother's friend. It made me think about the path which I needed for my spiritual growth. Then I accepted him as my Lord in 2000.

I began to be involved in Christian activities which helped me to grow in my spiritual life. In 2002, I was involved in teaching Sunday School Children and in 2004 was also involved in the Christian Student Fellowship as a committee member. My vision is to work with children and God gave me a chance to work with children through CARNET Nepal.

**Samuel Sodemba**

I have served as a pastor since 1992. My wife is a trained nurse but for 10 years has been taking care of a children's home. We have a daughter and a son. At present the children's home has 18 children from 5 to 18 years, all from very poor situations and some from parents with leprosy.

The church also presents a challenge as our members come from very different backgrounds – some uneducated and some educated, but it is our privilege to serve them in the name of Christ. To this end, I have trained in pastoral care, biblical studies and leadership.

I am vice chairman of CARNET Nepal which aims to bring training and awareness about the situation of children at risk to both the church and government level organizations.

**Prem Subbha**

I work with World Vision International, Nepal as the Staff Care and Spiritual Nurture Coordinator. Prior to this I worked as a Health and HIV/AIDS National Coordinator with the same organization. I also worked for 19 years with The Leprosy Mission and 10 years with the United Mission to Nepal in a rural district hospital as a Hospital Director.

I have 3 sons and I am a first generation Christian. My father was enrolled in the legendary Gurkha Army. I studied theology through the Sovereign World Trust, UK from where I continue to update my theological knowledge. I have also worked as an Assistant Pastor in East Nepal.

**Gajendra Tamang**

I am the national director of Awana Nepal. Awana stands for: "Approved Workmen are not ashamed" and its goal is to reach boys and girls from age 6 to 9 with the Gospel of Christ and train them to serve him. I have worked for this organisation for 8 years.

I am married with two children.

**Mosa Tamang**

I was born into a Christian family and I learned to do Christian ministry from my childhood as a teacher in Binay Church Children's Fellowship in Gorkha Nepal. I began to work as a youth President as I grew and later. I was ordained as a Pastor of Binay Church. I work as the Facilitator of Discipleship Training Programs. These programs are locally owned and sustained by the clusters of local churches. I am willing to facilitate any group or cluster of churches that has a passion to train their young Adults for World Mission..

**Silvanus Tamang**

I am married to Martha and we have one son, Abiel. I serve Jesus in Nepal with the Believers Christian Church. I am in charge of 31 schools which teach children from poor backgrounds. We not only teach them from textbooks but also from the Bible and by our lifestyle. At present there are over 4,000 children enrolled in the schools. I am also involved in running Vacation Bible Schools in different parts of Nepal.

**Indra Thapa**

I am married to Leena and the Lord has blessed us with three daughters: Rebekha, Knipa and Namzata. I have been involved in church planting and am now the senior pastor of Grace Christian Church. My leadership also covers Grace Academy, a school for poor children, and Grace Rescue Home.

**Sundar Thapa**

I was born into a Hindu family who neglected me. I was sent to an orphanage and then to India where I became a Christian aged 17. In 1983 I studied for a BTh and later also did some discipleship training. I became involved with a network of churches that has grown from 15 to 165 over the last 20 years. I had two children of my own by this time but also 17 others living with me. Fortunately, one of the adopted children accepted the challenge to start a children's home where there are now 70 children.

I went from training at Master's level and started to teach others at the Nepal Bible College. Each student has to start three new fellowships before they graduate.

Another angle on our ministry is the work we do to be self-supporting. I have a real estate business and for the children we run a small farm, with chickens and pigs and a greenhouse for vegetables.

**Sareeta Thapa**

I was born into a Hindu family who sent me to a Christian school. They did not preach to me but I accepted Christ when I was 11. After training as a nurse, I studied for an MDiv and went to help in a home for the destitute. I did further nursing studies in Europe and also worked part-time as a nurse to help with finances. When I married the founder of the home we struggled financially. We had 85 people living with us and could only afford a bowl of soup a day,

In 1992 I studied and received an MTh. Now, I help my husband in his ministry as a senior pastor, I teach in different Bible schools, conduct family seminars for leaders and wives and I also write articles for a Christian magazine on children, youth, women and family issues.

**Abraham Tamang**

I was born and brought up in a Christian family. I have been serving with Youth With A Mission (YWAM) since 2000. I am involved in Children's ministry.

My vision is to work in the community through children's ministry and to share the Gospel through Godly principles and values for personal, family, marriage, community, nation and other areas of life. I believe the principle challenge for Christianity today is living according to Biblical values, and transforming our culture into a Biblical culture.

**Introductory Remarks**

*Dr Bal Krishna*

Until now there has been no intentional attempt to address Child Theology in Nepal but I think it is already beginning to develop here. Let's read Mk 10:13. We've all heard this story and know this verse. We believe that God is on the side of children. The mothers were bringing their children to Jesus but the disciples tried to turn them back. People always think that children are too small to understand and so they are usually marginalised. But Jesus shows that this is a wrong understanding of children.

I've heard that about 50% of the Nepalese population are aged less than 14 years. We must remember that the most important age, the most formative years, are up to five years. We need to have a holistic understanding of children. All the aspects of being a human are present in the child – emotional, spiritual etc. The challenge to us is to find ways of helping children to grow, not just giving knowledge out of textbooks, but helping them to grow spiritually, socially, emotionally and morally. These things are not covered in most schools. These are issues we need to bring to the church.

**Sunday July 1****Personal Expectations**

Keith read from Matthew 18:1-14 which, for us, is the starting point for Child Theology. What does it mean for us to change and become like little children? Jesus said to the disciples who thought that they were already in the Kingdom, not to the crowd, that they needed to change and become like children.

So, let us be ready to change. This very hard when we think we have already ‘got it right’. We, from CTM, cannot come and tell you in Nepal what is right. We don’t understand Nepal. But God is ready to teach us.

One of the problems for Child Theology is: how can we bring ‘a child in the midst’ of our discussions, just as Jesus did in this passage, without in any way threatening, boring or patronizing them? One way we do it is to make a child present with our imaginations – do you know any children personally? Can you remember when you were a child? Another way is to listen to children’s ‘letters to God’ – a book of profound theology. Here are some extracts:

*“Dear God, how did you know that you were God?”*

*“Dear God, on Halloween I’m going to wear a devil’s costume. Is that alright with you?”*

*“Dear God, did you mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident?”*

## A Task

Keith asked participants, as individuals, to ponder the following questions and then write down their answers:

- What do I hope to learn from this consultation?
- What questions do I have about Child Theology?

Participants then discussed their answers together - firstly in pairs and then in groups, prioritising the responses and highlighting the top three concerns in each group. These priorities were shared with the whole meeting.

- ❖ If the Lord is a loving father why does he punish us?
- ❖ Why did my father die?
- ❖ Why am I alone?
- ❖ Why is there discrimination between genders?
- ❖ Why should I pray?
- ❖ Why do my fathers punish me?
- ❖ Where is God?
- ❖ Why is my family poor?
- ❖ Why I am in the street?
- ❖ If God knows everything then why should we pray to god?
- ❖ Why were missionaries killed if God is working?
- ❖ A disabled child thinks: why should God create me like that?
- ❖ What does God look like?
- ❖ Why should we all need to die?
- ❖ How do we create?
- ❖ Where do we go after our death?
- ❖ Where does the Lord live?
- ❖ Why do I need to go the Children’s fellowship?
- ❖ Why should I be sorry for my sin?
- ❖ Why should my mum and dad die?



- ❖ Why should God punish the child, if he loves the child?
- ❖ Is the child a sinner?
- ❖ When will the second coming of Jesus Christ happen?
- ❖ Is Jesus the only God?

## Child Theology Distinctives

*John*

Child Theology is a special approach to theological reflection which involves:

- An international network of theologians and practitioners;
- A distinctive approach for putting a child “in the midst”;
- Recognition that child theologies will be diverse.

There is not one infallible ‘Child Theology’. The diversity is a result of the varying sources which contribute to the reflection, such as:

- The Bible;
- Authoritative texts in particular traditions;
- Research in social and natural sciences;
- Experience in specific cultures and faith communities.

When Christians first hear the term “Child Theology” they often assume it is one of the following:

- A Theology of Childhood;
- A Theology written for children;
- A Theology done by children;
- Children’s spirituality;
- Children and religious education.

There is good reason for the confusion because there are several common features, such as:

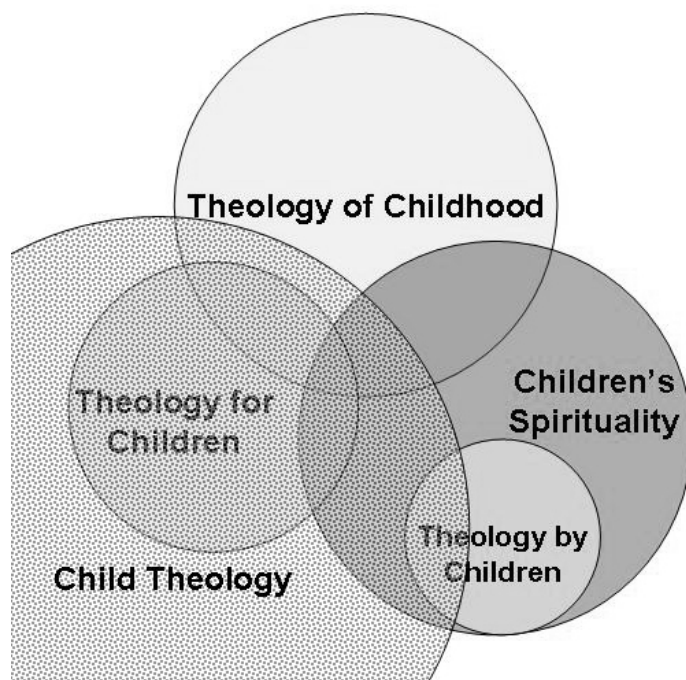
- They both put children at the centre of serious theological reflection;
- They both encourage action on behalf of children;
- They both have implications for the church and children themselves, especially in the areas of :
  - Children and family ministry;
  - Religious education and faith formation;
  - Child advocacy.

However, Child Theology is a distinct approach. We can illustrate this by taking one of the theologies and comparing it with CT:

Theologies of Childhood	Child Theologies
Provide sophisticated theological understandings of children and childhood and our obligations to children.	Build on theologies of childhood.
Should take into account various perspectives on children and childhood from the Bible and the Christian tradition.	Re-examine fundamental doctrines and practices of the church using the “lens” of the child.
Should honour the dignity and complexity of children.	Provide new insights into central themes of the Christian faith.

Another way of comparing the theologies would be by means of a Venn Diagram which shows the areas which overlap and the areas which are distinct for each approach. In the consultation, each participant was encouraged to try to construct Venn diagrams to describe the inter-relationships

between the theologies and disciplines relating to children. There is no ‘correct’ diagram and the results were quite diverse. The following is one example.



### The Nepal tree of Christianity

*Keith/All*

All theology should be located in an appropriate context. To improve the chances that our reflections in Child Theology would be contextually relevant, we spent some time exploring the context in Nepal – the situation of Christianity, the church and individual Christians, and of children. We were joined for this session by Eileen Lodge who was one of the first if not the first modern Christian missionary in Nepal when it opened to such work in 1953.

At a meeting in Nepal the previous week where Keith was teaching some aspects of the Holistic Child Development course which is being sponsored by Compassion International, some of those present attempted to draw a tree of Christianity for the whole world. This is part of Keith's normal teaching method. As Child Theologies are contextualized, indigenous theologies, we decided to ask the participants to attempt to produce similar diagrams focused only on Christianity in Nepal. To introduce the idea, Keith reviewed the 'global' tree produced at the earlier meeting. An immediate question was: Is the tree for 'Nepal' or 'Nepalis'? We decided to let each group decide this for themselves. We also agreed to start the history in 1698, when Capuchin missionaries arrived on their way to Tibet and settled for a while in the Kathmandu valley and made some converts. But this 'tree' was cut down, so it is represented as a stump on the diagram.

The soil includes Buddhism, Hinduism and Animism (called Kirati in Nepal). The mallah dynasty was also important.

Roots include the early Catholic missionaries, prayer warriors in the border area (mostly Nepalis and Indians). Indians were praying hard before 1950 for the doors to open (Nepal Border Fellowship). No-one was able to say if there had been any Christian converts among the Gurkha regiments recruited by the British Army.

A useful reference book is "A Biographical History of the Church in Nepal"<sup>2</sup> by Cindy Perry.

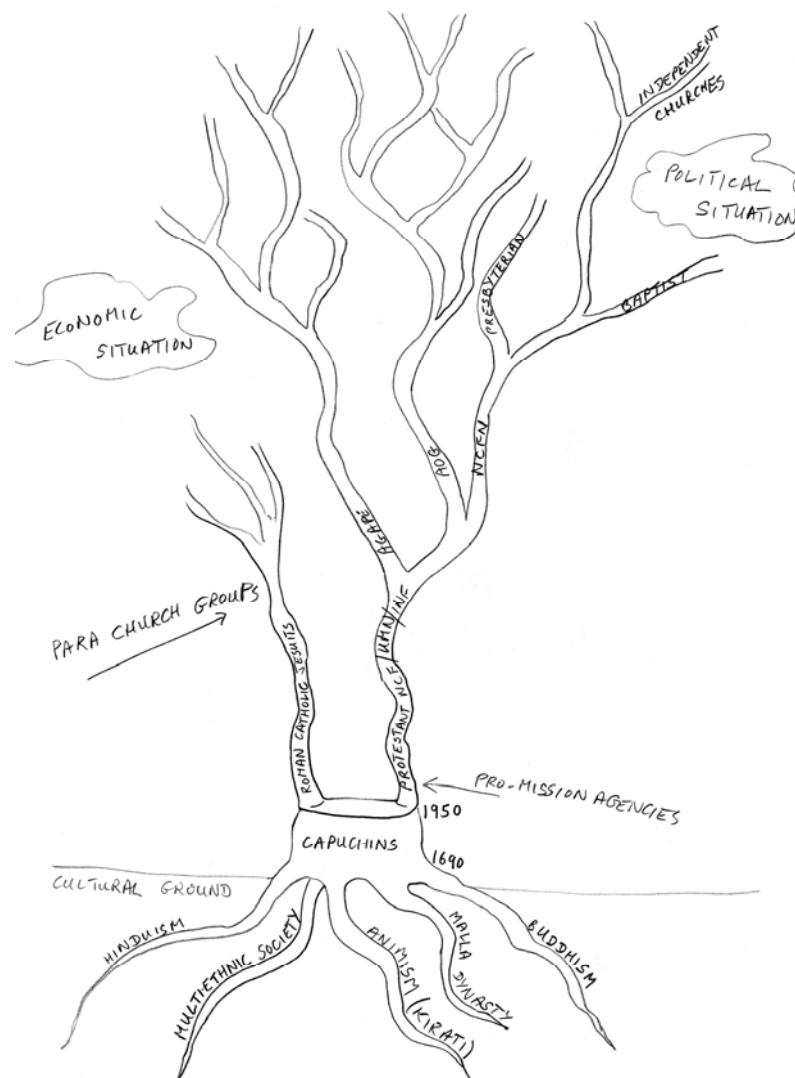
<sup>2</sup> MA Thesis to Wheaton Graduate School, 1989; 3rd edition, 2000, Nepal Church History project, Kathmandu, Nepal

**1950s** – 1952 the Nepal Evangelistic Band (NEB/INF) came into Pokhara. Raxaul a mission hospital on the border was much used by Nepalis. Pastor Barnabas, a Nepali, started a church in 1952 in the west of Nepal. Eileen entered Nepal in 1953 with NEB.

In 1956 United Mission to Nepal (UMN) started. 1959 start of the NCF. Whatever the labels, this was a movement among people.

**2000s** – by this time, there were many groups – AOG, Baptists, Agape, BCN, Nazarene, ECFN etc

**Group work** – four groups spent time creating their own versions of this tree and then brought this to the whole group. The ‘trees’ were very diverse and the diagrams were unable to do justice to the full complexity of the development. We also recognized that there was much that we did not know, that interpretations of history, even Christian history, can be intensely politicized as a result of the limitations of our perspectives. Nevertheless, the exercise served to raise some important cultural issues and to raise awareness. The following diagram is a simplified compilation of several groups and is included to illustrate the concept. It should not be taken as a statement of Nepal Christian history, not even as an unauthorized history!



## Issues facing the church and children in Nepal

*Keith/All*

We discussed the following two questions in four groups:

- Issues facing the church in Nepal today
- Issues facing children in Nepal today

The context was the whole of Nepal, not just the personal or local church situation. Each group selected three issues in each category as the most important and reported them to the whole group.

### Issues facing children:

1. Broken families and the lack of parenting skills
2. Children's rights are not respected or given priority
3. Family poverty means poor access to poor health care; trafficking etc
4. Inadequate infrastructure means that school buildings are of poor quality
5. Gender discrimination against girls
6. Child labour
7. Child sexual and physical abuse
8. "Children should be seen and not heard" means they are often marginalised
9. Street children

### Issues facing the church:

1. Lack of unity
2. Dependent on outside support
3. No succession plan for leaders
4. Not allowed to register with the government
5. Poor governance in the church
6. Insensitivity to the culture
7. A generation gap
8. "Rice Christians" – false conversions to achieve economic help
9. Seen as an agent for foreigners

## Monday July 2

Participants reviewed the previous day, forming 'ad hoc' pairs to do so. They tried to identify and share what was special in the meeting on the previous day.

### An example of a Child Theology Experiment

*John*

In the consultation we held in Cape Town, the small group gathered there joined in a theological reflection on the doctrine of Sin. This is a subject that the church is rather expert at! The reflection is described quite fully in the report of the Cape Town meeting but these were the essential key steps in the process:

The **first step** was for each one to identify where they were starting from in a discussion of sin by writing down three phrases to indicate what they understood by sin. These were private statements: markers for our own use. This took about five minutes.

The **second step** was by an act of deliberate imagination to place two children in the middle of our circle:

- A girl of 13 forced into prostitution
- A boy of 12 forced to be a soldier

We paused for five minutes or so to enter as well as we could into their situation.



In the **third step**, participants shared stories from African experiences which helped to make these children more vividly present to us. Everyone had some story or experience and from these stories, we were able to identify several themes:

- Adults who train and prepare children for evil
- Poverty – evil offers short cuts to riches
- The withdrawal of parental protection
- Children's desire to please allows them to be easily controlled by adults

The **fourth step** was to ask explicitly how the doctrine of sin interprets these children for us and how the children speak to our thinking about sin. These questions were discussed and there was intense consideration of freewill and original sin, of social conditioning and moral responsibility. So there had to be hard work and constructive new thinking in order to have a serious understanding of sin, which would not be cruel or insensitive to the children or deny the Gospel of Jesus Christ for them.

With the help of a moderator, we constructed a diagram to express some of our new understanding of sin in the light of this reflection.

## **A practice workshop in Child Theology: Anthropology**

*Keith*

By anthropology we mean our understanding of human beings. The participants wrote down three statements in response to the following question and then shared in pairs what they had written. The aim was to be real rather than right.

- What is your biblical or theological understanding of human beings?

The pairs were asked to agree on three statements.

Keith then revealed subjects that a theological textbook covered. How many talked about God is our maker? How many talked about our human origins? How many talked about human beings in community? How many talked about sin? How many talked about the image of God? (most did). How many talked about the destiny of human beings or Christ?

Most of these subjects were covered by the pairs. In addition, there was a reference to humanity as the 'crown' of creation.

In imagination, the participants brought into their minds two children from Nepal:

- A boy given to a Buddhist monastery to be a monk
- A teenage girl who lives in the city, wanting a western lifestyle, clothes etc, and causes a lot of pain to her parents

In feedback the following key themes were identified. Most issues grouped into two main areas:

### *Autonomy*

- No freedom to choose;
- The need to take responsibility.

### *Relationships*

- The generation gap - the need for recognition by young people and the need for social dignity by the parents;
- The lack of trusting relationships;
- The tradition and cultural beliefs of the parents;
- The lack of parental guidance.

In addition the economic situation and social dignity of the families were mentioned.

## Child Theology in Nepal: Salvation; Workshop 1

*Keith/All*

The particular doctrine chosen for detailed reflection was the doctrine of Salvation.

The process was developed over four workshops.

### Understanding salvation in Nepal outside the church

In groups of four, the participants discussed this question: what are the cultural, religious and political understandings of salvation in Nepal outside the church?

For Hinduism, salvation means coming out of the re-birth cycle. This can happen in three ways: karma marg (doing good deeds); bhakti marg (devotion, such as doing religious rituals, chanting mantras, making animal sacrifices); gyan marg (knowledge). The most popular way is by doing good works. When the soul gets out of the re-birth cycle, perhaps after 8.4 million (or 84) rebirths, that soul is saved.

In Buddhism, salvation means to be free from desire, the craving for physical satisfaction from worldly things. This type of freedom from worldliness is achieved through constant meditation, by which the soul reaches the highest state, called nirvana. This also means freedom from the re-birth cycle. But, in some ways, there is no salvation in Buddhism.

In politics, traditionally the king was worshipped as the incarnation of Vishnu.

### Personal Stories

In pairs, the participants told each other their own personal story of salvation. They were asked to reflect particularly on what they were saved from and what it means. The following are examples of what was shared:

#### *Story 1*

When I was fifteen, in my final year of school, my family suffered an irreparable loss in the death of my father. He was the sole wage earner and the source of all our basic needs. He left nothing apart from the responsibilities and liabilities. My burden was too heavy for my age. Every night there would be a quarrel in my family. Every hope of joy and the dream of my youth melted away like a burning candle. I was searching for peace for myself as well as my family.

One day I had an unusual dream. I dreamt I was sick and all my relatives came to visit me and to witness my last breath. Suddenly I saw someone unfamiliar peering at me through the window. In my dream I got up to look out of the window. I saw the person, dressed in white, a little further off. A white lamb was following him and, as I watched, he bent down to pick up the lamb, held it in his arms and turned to me and smiled. He disappeared and I woke up wondering what the dream was about.

It wasn't until a friend took me to church that I realized that the man in the dream was Jesus. I was impressed by the church – the young people, the music, the happiness that people seemed to have. Most of all I was impressed that there were no idols. I continued to go to the church and get involved in its activities. Gradually I realized that there could never be another like Jesus. I accepted him as my saviour and was baptized.

When my Mum discovered this, she burst into anger and the home turned into a battlefield. My family and neighbours mocked me. I felt it was a great crime to follow the truth. Finally, I ran away to another city to get peace but that night I couldn't sleep and God whispered to my heart and told me to go back home. In frustration at all the problems, I asked God to speak to me. I opened the Bible and began to read Matthew 11:28-30. The words jumped out of me and I realized that I had been depending on myself to overcome the problems and had never allowed Christ to intervene. I burst into tears and knelt down to rededicate all of my life to Christ.

From that day, the burden was lifted and I began to experience God's peace in my heart. I was changing every day. It took three years before my Mum and sister responded to these changes but now we share our joy in Christ and peace has returned to the family. God became real in our lives.

#### *Story 2*

I am from a Hindu family in Nepal. I believed in all religions. In 1993, I was studying at a college in Darjeeling, India. I was 19. One day, two of my friends came to visit me and asked me to go with them to church on the next Sunday. I wondered why these people were so devoted to their religion. I decided to go to their church out of curiosity but every time, something happened to stop me.

Finally, one Sunday morning, I made it to church. I felt the presence of God there and started to go regularly. After about two months, I accepted Christ as my saviour. This was a turning point in my life. When I had

finished my education and returned to Nepal, I was baptised. The very same year, my parents also turned to Christ.

I became involved in a local Baptist church, where I worked in Sunday School and as a leader among the youth. In 1996, I was called to serve God more fully and I went to Bible College in India for further training.

### ***Story 3***

I was born and brought up in a Buddhist family. I am the youngest in my family and I have three sisters and an elder brother. As I grew up, I used to worship the Buddhist god of Gautam Buddha, the founder of the Buddhist religion and many other goddesses of the Buddhist religion like the guru Rempoche, the Dalai Lama, etc

Actually, we were eight members in the family. The fact is I am not the youngest by birth role. There was a lot of plague and sickness in the family and we had no peace. Many of our domestic animals died. Eventually my younger brother also died.

In trying to save him, we tried every remedy according to my father's religion and beliefs. We travelled from one Temple to another, from one god to another, in search of healing. We made many kinds of blood sacrifices and listened and obeyed many witch doctors and monks but nothing happened. All the family members were quite restless and hopeless in worshipping the gods of our forefathers who had been unable to help us. All our family members were completely restless and hopeless in. The goddesses whom our forefathers had been worshiping were unable to give us peace or to save my younger brother.

But at this time the Lord Almighty showed us His loving grace by sending His servant to our house. He is my own Uncle who had been beaten many times and persecuted in the village, even by his own brothers including my father, because of his new faith in Christ. He had migrated to Gorkha district a long time before due to the severe persecution. But he came to us and began to tell us who Jesus is and his faith in Him. He was bold enough to say this time that 'Jesus is the Way to Eternal Life and source of every Peace and only the Saviour of all sinners like us we the human beings'.

After hearing all these things from him I experienced a kind of Joy and Peace entering into my heart. So also it began to work in the hearts of all our family members. As a result it was in 1992 I confessed all my sins and accepted Jesus Christ as my Personal Saviour and Lord. I was baptized in the name of the Father, Son and in the Holy, Spirit in 1993. It has brought great changes in my life and also in our family. From that time on we are completely away from such plague and sicknesses in the family. We have real Joy, Peace and Eternal Hope in Him for Eternal Life.

### ***Story 4***

I was born into a Hindu family and according to the palm reader my birth was a disgrace to the family. He said that if I lived my father would die. So, my family neglected me and I became malnourished. My elder brother and cousin were in India where they received a Bible and some Christian literature. When they came home, they compared the Bible to the Hindu scriptures and accepted Christ. This led to them being expelled from the village.

My elder brother tried to help me when he saw my condition. He prayed and sent me to a Christian orphanage in Kathmandu but the police shut the home down and I returned to my village. Eventually, I also went to India and there when I was 17 I became a Christian and was baptised.

I immediately started to work in the church and found that I had the gifts to be an evangelist There were many who were poor or who had been thrown out by their families who came to live with me. I taught them and sent them out to serve God too.

### ***Story 5***

I was born into an orthodox Hindu family. Both my grandparents were Hindu gurus so I learned all the names of the gods and the various duties very thoroughly. My parents sent me to a Christian school because there were few schools only for girls. Still, I was told not to read the Bible, pray to Jesus or go to church. I mixed there with the children of the elite, even royals.

Even so, I became a Christian by accepting Christ as my own saviour when I was 11 years old. On that day I was also called to become a nurse. At that time, nursing was not as well respected in society as it is now. While I was a student (1980) I was baptised, it was illegal in those days, and got my very own copy of the Bible. God honoured my obedience and I graduated well with the gold medal awarded by the queen of Nepal and also received a scholarship. However, I turned down the scholarship because it didn't fit in with the way God was leading me.

**Story 6**

In 1980 my wife and I were in our work place attending the customers and then came a phone call saying that our daughter who was about 4 years had fallen from our 3 storey building and was unconscious. She had been taken to the hospital. We rushed to the hospital and found that she was still unconscious. The doctors tried all they could but failed to prevent her death. Now during those days I was not a Christian but my wife was, so her Christian friends came to our home to comfort us in those sad moments. They prayed for us and spent several days with us to share our sorrows.

Afterwards, my wife and I decided to have another child, but it did not work out, so we consulted a doctor. The answer was negative. He told us that my wife could not conceive. This matter came to be known by our Christian friends, so again all of them prayed for us. One fine day my wife came to know that she was pregnant and we all thanked the Lord. Finally she gave birth to a girl, who is with us happily married and is mother of a son.

During those sad days and then the joyful news of her being pregnant my thinking and understanding of Christianity changed and I started going the Church services. I met many good friends who had been praying for us. I was very much moved and touched by the Love of Jesus Christ and His Father towards human beings. Then in 1986 I accepted Jesus Christ in my heart as my Lord and Saviour and was baptised.

**Child Theology in Nepal: Salvation; Workshop 2**

*Keith/All*

The task in this session was to answer the following questions in groups:

- What are your understandings of salvation from biblical and systematic theology? What do we most commonly preached or hear preached?
- What are the key passages of scripture that inform these understandings?
- Are we talking about individual or group salvation or both?
- How do my understandings of salvation relate to that of other religions?
- Where does the church fit in?

Saddhu Sundar Singh was asked, “What is the philosophical and theological difference between Christianity and Hinduism?” He replied, “Jesus”. They repeated the question but the answer was the same. In response to a similar question, C S Lewis replied “Grace”.

**Key Bible Passages**

Ex 15:2 “God has become my salvation”

Ps 62:2 “He alone is my rock and my salvation”

Ezk 18:3-4; 17, 20

Mk 10:15 Children and KOG

Lk 19:9 Zacchaeus and his household

Lk 23:39-43

Jn 3:16 “For God so loved the world....”

Jn 14:6 “I am the way, the truth and the life ....”

Ac 2:38-39 Repent and be baptized

Ac 4:12 Salvation in Jesus

Ac 16:31-33 believe, be baptised and be saved

Rm 1:16 the gospel is the power of God

Rm 3:23 and 6:23

Rm 5:8

Rm 8:1

Rm 10:9-10 confess, believe and be saved



2 Cr 5:18-19

2Cr 7:10 Godly sorrow works....

Ep 1:13 having heard of the truth

Ep 2:8-10 not by works but by grace

## Group Responses

- Salvation is free gift free gift of God through Jesus Christ.(Eph 2 : 8,9 , Rom. 6: 23)
- Salvation is an individual belief on Christ ( John1: 12)
- The Church can play a vital role to reconcile every one to God (2 Cor5: 19)
- The Church should reached the unreached
- The Church should be aware of the need of the community.

## Child Theology in Nepal: Salvation; Workshop 3

*Keith/All*

Forgetting about theology and the earlier discussions about salvation, the time has come to bring a child in the midst. In fact, we bring two children:

- The girl Kumari
- A boy who has joined the Young Communist League

Our job is to try to enter into their experience by our imagination. The questions were:

- What makes you have hope and what makes you despair when you think of these children in Nepal?
- What can they give and what do they need?

Most of the reflection was around the girl 'kumari'. This person is a young girl chosen as a 'living goddess' until puberty. Although highly respected – even the king salutes her – she is a virtual prisoner, denied a home life and any education. At the first menstruation she is discarded and sent away to a village where she is provided a home but men are afraid to marry her and most turn to prostitution.

### *Hope*

- ☺ She is not 'kumari' forever
- ☺ The possibility of knowing the truth
- ☺ Time changes the situation
- ☺ Trying to find God

### *Despair*

- ☹ A culture of victimisation and torture
- ☹ Living in bondage
- ☹ Politically victimised
- ☹ Ignorance
- ☹ Power of Darkness

### *How we can help*

- ☺ Through prayer and supplication
- ☺ By sharing the Gospel

There were also some comments on the Maoist boy, noting the importance of peer-pressure, the security and economic benefits provided. Some might also have good motivations with a desire to change society for good. At the same time, the position of a Maoist fighter is uncertain and there is an opportunist element in the decision to join.

#### *Hope*

- ☺ He is after all created in the image of God and valued by God
- ☺ He also can receive grace
- ☺ An opportunity to share Christ's love
- ☺ He is a dedicated committed person who can be 'good soil' for the gospel

#### *Despair*

- ☹ So much of his life is wasted
- ☹ He depends on a weapon
- ☹ He is exposed to abuse and is led by misguided people
- ☹ He becomes hard-hearted, rude, rebellious and full of vengeance

## **Tuesday July 3**

### **Child Theology in Nepal: Salvation; Workshop 4**

*Keith/All*

The saddest book in the Bible is probably the book of Lamentations. It reminds us how bad things can be for children - in 2:19-21, for example:

*Arise, cry out in the night, as the watches of the night begin; pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children, who faint from hunger at the head of every street. Look, O LORD, and consider: Whom have you ever treated like this? Should women eat their offspring, the children they have cared for? Should priest and prophet be killed in the sanctuary of the Lord? Young and old lie together in the dust of the streets; my young men and maidens have fallen by the sword. You have slain them in the day of your anger; you have slaughtered them without pity.*

But he goes on to say "...because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed for his compassions never fail..." 3:19-27. In Isaiah 1, we tend to focus on verse 18 but overlook the preceding verse, 10-17, where God denounces religion which cohabits with injustice and oppression. Micah 6:6-8 says much the same.

The task for the groups this morning was to re-write their understandings of salvation with Nepal's children in the midst, their gifts and their holistic needs.

The responses can be grouped in the following way:

1. Understanding Salvation
  - a. With children in mind – we need to understand their needs holistically
  - b. The root cause of the need is Sin. Salvation is a free gift of God for children too
  - c. Mk 10:15: Salvation means changing
  - d. A teachable attitude helps salvation
  - e. Obedience leads to salvation
2. What can children offer?
  - a. A humble spirit
  - b. A spirit of forgiveness
  - c. They challenge us
  - d. We need to understand their divine potential
  - e. They are readily accepted in society – can be used as evangelists
  - f. They have a potentially longer life than adults so can oversee more changes

- g. They are valuable to God, made in his image and are gifts from him to us
  - h. Readily accept change
  - i. Willing to be active participants
3. Holistic needs
- a. **Physical:** Mt 15:40; food and shelter
  - b. **Social:** Lk 9:10-18; build their confidence; secure parental care; become good citizens
  - c. **Emotional:** Mt 22:37-38; love, care and trust
  - d. **Mental:** education; developing a right understanding
  - e. **Spiritual:** Dt 6:2-9; teach God's law; moral values

## Reflection on the process and content

*Keith/All*

Participants were asked to reflect on the whole consultation and try to identify “three pearls” that they had found, first in relation to the process and then in relation to the content. The following summarises the responses:

### *Process*

- The way we started with our own backgrounds
- The method of posing and answering questions
- The group discussions with children in the midst
- A good understanding of the aims of the learning process
- Rediscovering our doctrines as we read scriptures again with the child in the midst
- Reading children's letters to God
- The cascading process of discussion: from groups of 1 to 2 to 4
- The discovery and transformation of our understanding of CT

### *Content*

- Foundation containing salvation
- Biblical perspective looking at children as Jesus looked
- Jesus is our focus
- Children can play a vital role for salvation
- The gap between church issues and child issues.
- Children are the most important in heaven
- God's heart and attitude towards children

## Commitments and Action Plan

Participants were given a task using the vision described by God in the following passages: Isaiah 9:1-7; 11; 66:1-16; Zechariah 8; Revelation 21. Divided into seven groups, the task was to write letters from the whole of the consultation to the following groups of people:

1. The churches in Nepal;
2. The denominations in Nepal;
3. The FBOs<sup>3</sup> in Nepal;
4. The seminaries and Bible training institutes in Nepal;
5. To the CTM;
6. To parents, carers and practitioners in Nepal;
7. To the children of Nepal.

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<sup>3</sup> Faith Based Organizations

**Letter to the churches of Nepal**

*"Greetings in the name of Christ.*

*We are living in the exciting high-tech world. There are many good things on the face of the world which have made an impact in the life of the people. As we observe the world, one of the most challenging factors is population growth which has been carrying social, political, moral and economic crisis. Also we see family conflicts in many ways and children have been subjected to victimization.*

*As we see the body of Christ, we see in 1 Cr 12:25 where it says 'God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it so there should be no division in the body'.*

*Churches of Nepal, the time has come to open our eyes to the pathetic condition faced by many children who have been compelled to live at high risk. As Jesus Christ had a great concern and compassion for the children, it is a serious matter to respond to those crying children of the street at the doorstep of the churches so that they might have a hope of provision that will let them survive and have hope for the future.*

*So, we pray and request all you church pastors and leaders to think seriously of the children at your church and around as we are God's instrument to respond to the need of children. Jesus has compassion and love for children. We should bring each child in the midst and give priority for the kingdom of God.*

*Your prayer partners"*

**Letter to the denominations in Nepal**

*"Brothers and sisters in Christ, we express our warm greetings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ from the children of Nepal.*

*It is our great privilege to address denominational issues from our own point of view. As we are all children of one God Almighty so do we need to have denominations to worship and serve the one and only God? Are we not doing the same things in his sight? Can we divide Christ? (1 Cr 1:12-13)*

*We small kids only know that God loves everyone equally and sent his only son for us all as written in the Bible. Can any denomination save us from sin? We believe that good fellowship and worship is important rather than denominations.*

*Lastly we want to ask: when Jesus will come, will he ask 'Which denomination are you from?' or 'How much did you love me'? Thank you."*

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**Letter to Faith Based Organisations**

"Sub: Children must be cared for by putting Jesus in mind  
May the peace and joy of our Lord Jesus rest upon all of  
you!

We would like to inform you that the Child Theology  
Movement Consultation was held during 30th June to the  
3rd July 2007 at the Greenwich Village Hotel, Lalitpur,  
with CARNET Nepal. The consultation focused on the issues  
that children are facing in Nepal and the value of children  
in God's eyes.

The consultation was based on Christian Theological  
perspectives and an analysis of how children are treated in  
Nepal, with the influence of various religions and culture.  
The consultation also identified the need for child salvation  
apart from addressing their mental, physical and political  
issues. Moreover, our children have undergone difficulties  
over a period of time due to the conflict. We believe and  
urge you brothers and sisters to identify this core area and  
work for the betterment of Nepali children by putting  
Jesus in your strategic alliance

We duly appreciate the good work that you are doing for  
the children of Nepal and pray God to grant his rich  
blessings upon you so that the lives of children in Nepal  
might experience positive changes.

We give you warm Christian love and regards."

**Letter to Parents and Care-givers**

"Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are writing this letter to share our vision towards the children of Nepal. We just want to say that children are important to Jesus. We are thankful to share our hearts to you in this letter. The Bible says that God is our Creator and that he is just. We have hope in God. The Bible says that there will be a new heaven and a new earth. God will be dwelling with men and he will live with them. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain. (Rev 21) Your past will not be remembered, you will rejoice and enjoy (Is 65:41). One day Jesus will come again as King. The Bible says that kids are a gift from God. Are you preparing your kids to meet God? Are you sure that your children will be there in the 'New Jerusalem'? Let us remember that Jesus loves children and they need Jesus. Let us think about how we are influencing our kids."



**Letter to the Children of Nepal**

*“Greetings in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Grace and peace to you from God our Father who gave himself for our sin to rescue us from the present evil age according to the will of God our Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever.*

*It is our great pleasure to tell you that you are an important part of God’s Kingdom. We know that you have been called by God and your name has been written in the book of Life. As you have been chosen to change Nepal and you have been faithful there is always a day after night.*

*We also know how you suffered in the past because those were the dark days. The prophecy has to be fulfilled that in the last days there will be much persecution but above all, you have remained faithful. There is a good news for you.”*

*Therefore, the old Nepal has passed away and the new Nepal is coming up. God will wipe away every tear from your eyes and there will be no more death, mourning, crying or pain. Our heavenly God is going to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit through your works.*

*May God richly bless you!*



# *Nepal Consultation on Child Theology*

1—7 July 2007



Child Theology Movement