



Serving Christ and His Suffering Church



Confident Christian Hope

A slightly shortened extract from *Lifting Up the Downcast* by Patrick Sookhdeo, Isaac Publishing, 2021, pp.12-14. The whole book is available at <https://tinyurl.com/nr2z9whv> or scan the QR code on the back cover of this newsletter.

If hope is defined as the joyful expectation of good things to come, then *Christian* hope is the *confident* and joyful expectation of good things to come. Our hope rests on the promises of the God of hope (Romans 15:13) and therefore what we look forward to is certain to come about (Hebrews 10:23).

Hope should fill the lives of Christ's disciples. We can lean daily on the promises in the Word of God, whether for us as individuals, for God's people as a whole, or for all creation.

This world is in the hands of God, who is working out His purposes, and His ways are higher than our ways. Disasters that may seem to a materialistic and atheistic society purely negative can be used by God to draw people back to Himself in repentance and faith. A habit of trustfully seeking God's wisdom and perspective gives us not only hope but also peace and joy, even in the midst of chaos (Romans 15:13). We wear "a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair" (Isaiah 61:3). That is why the psalmist, determined to lift himself up from his spiritual depression, says to his soul: "Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God." (Psalm 42:11)

As redeemed sinners, we have a sure and certain hope of heaven when we die. This hope makes us pilgrim people, no longer of the world (John 17:13-16) but merely passing through it. We are

temporary residents here, and we do not really belong: our permanent citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20). Hope is the first main theme of Peter's letter to persecuted Christians, whom he addresses as scattered exiles, pilgrims, or strangers in the world (1 Peter 1:1-3 NIV, NKJV, KJV). This hope changes our values, for our treasure is in heaven and our hearts are already there too (Matthew 6:19-21). It affects how we choose to use our short time here on earth.

Another aspect of Christian hope is the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although we cannot know *when* this will happen, we can be sure that it *will* happen, and we must be prepared and ready. Therefore, this too is a hope which affects how we live.

... we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure. (1 John 3:2-3)

Hope gives us strength and courage (Psalm 31:24). It enables us to be "valiant and steadfast", in the words of the Dutch theologian Brakel, who, writing in a time of persecution, encouraged faithful believers to stand firm and be ready for martyrdom if necessary. Hope gives us endurance (1 Thessalonians 1:3). As W.E. Vine has said, hope "finds its expression in endurance under trial, which is the effect of waiting for the Coming of Christ".

What TBF Trust is doing by God's grace and with your gifts

The projects on this page both help Christian young people in Pakistan but in different ways. One gives practical skills to some who have had little opportunity for education. The other gives spiritual nourishment to those who have managed to get to college or university and could be the church leaders of the future.

Apprenticeships give livelihood skills to *bustee* Christians

Twenty-two young people from poor Christian families living in *bustees* (slums) in Islamabad and Rawalpindi will soon have skills with which they can get decent jobs. The young people are apprentices, learning their skills "on the job". They are not paid by their trainer but our project partners give them a monthly stipend of 2,000 rupees (about £5.30).



◀ Our project partners hand his monthly stipend to an apprentice

This money, which comes from TBF Trust, means the young people can travel to their workplace and buy something for lunch, without being a financial drain on their families while they are training.

TBF Trust also pays the salary and expenses of a supervisor who visits the apprentices in their workplaces to make sure all is well. He organises monthly fellowship meetings for the apprentices, where they study the Bible and pray together, talk about their experiences, and get counselling and advice.

When they have learnt the skills, the

young people will be able to help support their families financially. The 22 are training in eight different skills including car mechanics, bumper repairs, motorcycle mechanics, audio-video recording and editing, and hairdressing.

Strengthening the faith of Christian students

It is hard for Christian young people to get a place in college or university, but some achieve it. There they may face hostility and discrimination as well as other tests of their faith. That's why TBF Trust supports the work of Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students (PFES).

One of the ways in which PFES builds up the faith of Christian students is an annual general camp. The 2026 camp, held in Murree in July, was attended by 104 students. Every day was filled with teaching, Bible study, prayer and discussions on the theme "Saving Faith".

Students and PFES leaders at the 2026 general camp ▼



Mobile medical clinics for poor Christians in Egypt



Mobile medical clinics, run by the Church, are providing healthcare for impoverished Christian communities in Egypt who are remote from government healthcare facilities. Each community is visited once a month, and has access to three clinics which run simultaneously in different sections of a specially equipped vehicle: general medicine, ophthalmology and dentistry. TBF Trust is providing financial support.

Without these clinics, the patients would just have to endure their symptoms – toothache, back pain, fatigue, failing eyesight etc.

Two Christian women from Cairo commented:

“I had been suffering from knee pain for several months, but visiting a specialist was an expense I kept postponing. When the medical convoy came to our area, I was able to see an orthopaedic doctor who examined me and explained what I needed to do to manage the pain. Having access to a specialist and receiving the care I needed without worrying about the cost was a great relief.”

“My daughter had been unwell for several days, and I was worried because I could not afford the consultation and medicines she might need. At the medical convoy, the doctor examined her carefully, explained her condition to me, and we received the prescribed medication free of charge. What I appreciated most was the patience and kindness of the medical team. They made both of us feel safe and cared for.”

A Christian man in Giza said,

“I brought my son to the medical convoy because he had been feeling tired and weak for some time. After examining him and conducting the necessary tests, the medical team identified signs of anaemia and advised us on the treatment and follow-up he needed. I had thought his tiredness was normal, so discovering the problem early was a great relief. I am very grateful that the convoy helped us understand what was wrong and what we needed to do next.”

The budget for the mobile medical clinics includes the costs of a team of nine medical personnel covering the necessary areas of expertise, along with medications and other materials, plus transport and subsistence costs for each day they are on the road. Spectacles and laboratory tests are also provided free of charge. The clinics not only provide diagnosis and treatment but also promote health awareness and screen for various conditions.

In 2025 the cost of a one-day visit by the medical convoy was around £415 for communities in northern Egypt, but a little more for communities in southern Egypt because more fuel is needed to drive the longer distances. In 2026 inflation and other issues have caused the costs to rise to about £460. Around 500 people are treated on a typical one-day visit by the clinic.



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Remembering Dr Patrick Sookhdeo



▲ Pastor Daniel Ho, Malaysia

Thank you to all who came to the Service of Thanksgiving for the life and ministry of Dr Patrick Sookhdeo in Oxford on 2nd September. Many came from distant parts of the UK including Cornwall, Yorkshire and Scotland. It was a special joy for Rosemary and the family to meet some they had known when they lived in Plaistow, east London. Others travelled from overseas including from Lebanon, Kenya, South Africa, Guyana, India, Singapore, Malaysia and The Bahamas.

Thank you also to those who watched on Livestream from countries as diverse as Germany, Nigeria, Chad, Australia and even from New Zealand where the service began at 12.30 a.m.

There were speakers from the Brethren, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, Pentecostal and three Orthodox denominations. An Armenian choir uplifted us with their beautiful traditional melodies.

Thank you all for joining with Patrick's colleagues at TBF Trust and other organisations to remember him before the Lord. His life and remarkable ministry were reflected in the diversity of the 220 people who came together for the service, half in person, half virtually.

We would value your continued prayers for the work of TBF Trust as we seek to continue the vision, priorities and aims which Patrick established.

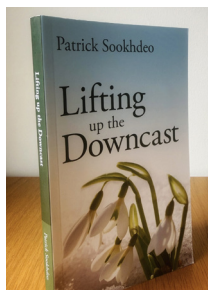


▲ Mary Cole, 2000 Prayer Group

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Lifting Up the Downcast

by Patrick Sookhdeo
Isaac Publishing, 2021
130 pages

Scan to access the full text of *Lifting up the Downcast*. An extract from the book can be read on page 2 of this newsletter.



Have you got your TBF Trust prayer diary for September-October 2026?

Please contact the TBFT office (see page 7) to request your copy or for extra copies to give to your Christian friends.

Do you know someone who would like to receive our newsletter and prayer diary regularly?

We will be happy to add them to our mailing list by post or email. Please phone or email the TBF Trust office with the person's contact details (after you have got the person's permission).



Front cover: Suneel is one of a group of 22 young Christian apprentices in Pakistan, who receive a small monthly stipend donated by TBF Trust during their on-the-job training. When they have learned the necessary skills they will be able get a paid job or start their own business. Turn to page 3 to read more.