

September 2022



Canning Garden Methodist Church

FAMILY FOCUS

**GROWING DEEPER IN CHRIST,
IMPACTING &
TRANSFORMING LIVES !**

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, 18 in everything give thanks; for
this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

WELCOME BACK TO CGMC
in PERSON KIDS
(7 – 12 years old)
SUNDAY 11AM – 12.30 PM
SHEKINAH SANCTUARY



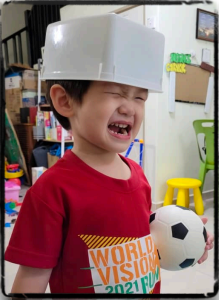
From 12 June * Contact person: Mimi (013-5219850)

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**Together
Again!**

WORSHIP IN-PERSON | LIVESTREAM
SATURDAYS 8:00 pm | SUNDAYS 8:45 am
BULLETIN HAS THE LINK TO REGISTER ATTENDANCE

MESSAGE from the Editor...



Shalom brothers and sisters in Christ,

I came home one day to an amusing sight of my little boy Joel. He was running around holding a football, with an ice cream box over his head like a helmet, chasing and charging at something invisible.

This reminded me of Pastor's sermon series recently about putting on the armour of God.



There are 6 important pieces as depicted in the book of Ephesians.

1. The belt of truth - having a belt around the waist gives a person confidence and 'readiness'. We ought to belt ourselves with the truth of Jesus Christ, as Jesus Himself said in John 8:31-32 (NIV) "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
2. Breastplate of righteousness - Breastplate is worn over the chest covering the back and the front of the body, protecting a soldier's major vital organs. Righteousness refers to justification, God clothed us with His righteousness through Jesus Christ. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV) Putting on this breastplate gives us assurance that if God is for us who can be against us, (Romans 8:31, NIV) thereby shielding us from the slandering accusations from the evil one.
3. Shoes of the Gospel of Peace - Boots give a soldier firm footing, firmness from the Gospel of Peace. We who have been justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (Romans 5:1, NIV) we can stand firm and remain peaceful even through life's storm. Another interpretation is being ready to proclaim the Gospel of Peace. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossians 4:6 (NIV) We must be ready at all times to share the Gospel, our testimonies and our lives with others.
4. Shield of Faith - large rectangular armoury measuring 4ft x 2.5ft, specially designed in the Roman days to put off all flaming arrows. God is the shield Himself, for Proverbs 30:5 says "Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him." If we run to him Him, He will shield us from the fiery arrows of desire, misfortune and etc.
5. Helmet of Salvation - Helmet covers the whole head, cheeks, and also the neck, exposing only part of the face. It is a symbol of Salvation, an assurance of our Salvation. This gives a hope, and confidence during battle, knowing that victory is on our side, for the battle is the Lords. (1 Samuel 17:47)
6. Sword of the Spirit. It is the Word of God, and likened to a double edged sword, used for both defence and offence. Christ used the written word of God in defence during his encounter with Satan in the wilderness. "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. They are not just idle words for you—they are your life.... Deuteronomy 32:46-47 (NIV) The word of God is also used as a weapon of offence, but need to be well equipped to be ever-ready to wield it at appropriate times. "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Hebrews 4:12 (NIV) Therefore we need to constantly read, meditate, memorise and study the Word of God.



So, it is important for us to don this armour at all times for it represents Christ himself.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12 (NIV)

Li Fan

CANNING GARDEN

Methodist Church

Worship Celebrations

SATURDAY

08:00pm English

SUNDAY

08:45am English

09:00am Chinese

11:00am Sunday School (*English*)

02:00pm Bahasa Malaysia

03:00pm Youth Fellowship (*English*)

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About Family Focus...

Family Focus is published 3 times a year (in January, May & September) under the Membership & Evangelism (M&E) Committee of CGMC, Ipoh.

It seeks to fulfill the church's theme of "Growing deeper in Christ, Impacting and transforming lives" by sharing Christ with each other and strengthening the community of Christ through writings and testimonies.

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We welcome you to submit your articles & testimonies to us for the coming issues.

Each article should preferably be less than 1500 words and can be submitted to any of the editorial team members above, to the church office or emailed to cgmcpoh@gmail.com.

All articles should be accompanied by the author's full name, contact number and cell group where applicable.

We reserve the right to edit the articles, keep the articles for subsequent issues, or withhold the articles from publication.

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MESSAGE from Rev. Dr. Andrew Tan

Why We Need to Worship in Person?

When the Covid-19 pandemic struck us and MCO was enforced, the life-saver was the online service and later the live-streaming services. We were then all told to switch to the online mode because there was no other way to attend a worship service. However, when the MCO was lifted what was once the life-saver now becomes a convenient alternative to in-person worship. With the in-person worship now fully implemented, we should seriously consider coming back in person. What are the reasons we do so?

A church is never less than a gathering. Gathering together is the essence of a church. Gathering isn't merely a nice thing to *do*; it's part of what a church *is*. A local church is an assembly (ekklesia). If a church never meets, it is not a church. So, it is my hope that you are not only coming back in-person to worship regularly as before the pandemic because you are the church.

Someone may ask, "But online service was just equally a service, wasn't it?" Yes, it was a worship service which we had no choice, but it wasn't the ideal service even then. An illustration will help here. Just as a husband and wife are still married when the husband is deployed for a six-month military duty, a church is still a church even when it cannot gather temporarily. But such a circumstance as Covid-19 pandemic is historically abnormal. And just as the married couple longs to be reunited, so members should yearn to assemble again. So, I think there is some spiritual abnormality if members do not yearn to come back in person worship but prefers the convenience of online worship.

Meeting, however, isn't just something a church *does*. A meeting is, in part, what a church *is*. God has saved us as individuals to *be* a corporate assembly. Think of the nation of Israel, rescued from Egypt and gathered together at Mount Sinai to hear God's law. Moses later referred to that moment as "the day of *assembly*" (Deut. 9:10). At other important events, the nation similarly gathered as an "assembly" before their covenant Lord (Judg. 20:2, 1 Kings 8:14, 1 Chron. 28:8).

The word "assembly" when applied to the church, it carries the rich Old Testament connotations of standing together as God's chosen people. That is why when the New Testament writers refer to these OT assemblies, they use the word "ekklesia." The word is also used for the New Testament church. When applied to the church, it carries the rich Old Testament connotations of standing together as God's chosen people.



REV. DR. ANDREW TAN

Pastor-in-charge
Canning Garden Methodist Church

So, what does the New Testament teach us about the local church gathering?

First, we see that churches regularly gather in-person as a norm. Paul uses phrases like “when *you come together as a church*” and “*if the whole church comes together*” (1 Cor. 11:18; 14:23). We have multiple examples of the church coming together in Acts. The disciples “joined together constantly in prayer” (1:14); “were all together in one place” (2:1); “believers were together” (2:44); “meet together in the temple courts...ate together” (2:46); “raised their voice together in prayer” (4:24); “used to meet together” (5:12); “gathered all the disciples together” (6:2); “gathered the church together” (14:27, 15:30); and “came together to break bread” (20:7).

Second, the New Testament writers instruct churches to do activities that can only be done by meeting together: “teach and admonish one another... sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Col. 3:16); “public reading of Scripture” (1 Tim. 4:13); “encourage one another” (Heb. 10:24–25), and sharing the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 10:17, 11:18, 33). None of these can happen in a vacuum. And while it’s true that many of these items can take place in smaller groups (such as the Cell Groups and Bible studies), all the references apply first and foremost to the main congregational gathering.

The next question I want to raise is why the gathering is such an important part of a church’s identity?

First, the gathering makes the church visible *to itself*. When we worship online, the church is not visible. It is not visible to the world and not visible to itself. This is how theologian Everett Ferguson puts it: “In assembly, the church... becomes conscious of itself, confesses itself to be a distinct entity, shows itself to be what it is—a community (a people) gathered by the grace of God, dependent on him, and honoring him. The assembly allows the church to emerge in its true nature.”

Second, the gathering makes the church visible *to the universe*. Why did God join Jew and Gentile together into one body? He did this “*so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places*” (Eph. 3:10).

Finally, there are practical considerations for our coming together to worship. It protects us from the forces that tend to weaken our worship today. What are they?

First, a strong understanding of gathering resists *formalistic worship*. Since the gathering is a supernatural event in view of the watching cosmos (Eph. 3:10), it doesn’t make sense to simply “go through the motions” out of a sense of duty. Rather it calls on us to “do worship rightly.” The most important person who witness our worship is not the rulers and authorities but God Himself!

Second, a strong understanding of gathering resists *individualistic worship*. The service is a gathering of those who have committed to help each other persevere to the end. This reminds us to serve for the good of others, and it prevents us from seeing church as a “program” to meet my inspirational needs. Rather, it helps us to see the church as a “people” to whom I belong.

Third, a strong understanding of gathering resists *consumer-oriented worship*. What God's Spirit wants to do in the whole church is more important than having my convenience met. Worship is not an act to enrich "me." It is a corporate act that strengthens the "body". We must take the focus off self and put it on others.

With the pandemic coming to its tail end and the MCO lifted, we should in a concerted way move towards in-person worship. While there are some who still feel unsafe to mingle in a gathering and others who are homebound, the live-streaming will be carried on for a while more. But churches are aware that live-streaming has to stop at a certain point. But even when it is provided for, members of the body of Christ should prefer and make it a point to worship in person.

MESSAGE from Rev. Richard Leow

Pelayanan Pastoral Bagi Pesta Menuai Sabah dan Sarawak.

Setiap tahun pada tarikh 30-31 Mei dan 1-2 Jun, kita merayakan Pesta Menuai iaitu Kaamatan di Sabah dan Gawai di Sarawak. Pesta Menuai merayakan berakhirnya musim menuai dengan perayaan kesyukuran bermasyarakat. Sebagai umat Kristian, kita merayakan Pesta Menuai dengan memanjatkan kesyukuran kita kepada Tuhan dalam Gereja.

Semasa pastor di Sabah dan Sarawak, telah mengajar pastor tentang kitaran penanaman padi setiap tahun, membersihkan, membakar, menanam, membuang rumput-rumpai, menuai, mengasingkan kulit padi, kesyukuran dan terutamanya mengasingkan benih untuk penanaman seterusnya. Banyak kerja berat dilakukan sebelum kita disajikan dengan nasi yang masak di atas meja makan. Patutlah nenek-nenek dan ibu-ibu selalu menyuruh kita untuk makan nasi sampai habis, terutamanya apabila ini adalah hasil kerja kasih dan peluh. Pastor ingin berkongsi beberapa perkara yang kita dapat pelajari dari Pesta Menuai.



REV. RICHARD LEOW
Associate Pastor
Canning Garden Methodist

Kita dapat belajar dalam Pesta Menuai : Kesyukuran kepada Tuhan

Bumi kita diciptakan oleh Tuhan yang menyediakan matahari, tanah, air dan hujan untuk kita bercucuk tanam. Di Pesta Menuai, kita memanjatkan kesyukuran kepada Bapa Syurgawi, yang kita percaya akan memberikan keperluan harian kita. Sebagai orang Kristian, Perayaan Pesta Menuai kita bermula dengan doa untuk mengucapkan terima kasih kepada Tuhan dalam semua gereja: “Bersukacitalah senantiasa, tetaplah berdoa, mengucap syukurlah dalam segala hal.” (1 Tesalonika 5:16-18).

Kita dapat belajar dalam Pesta Menuai : Hubungan Kekeluargaan

Pesta Menuai adalah masa untuk pertemuan semula keluarga. Lapangan terbang serta terminal bas dan bot penuh sesak untuk perjalanan pulang ke kampung masing-masing. Ini adalah panggilan untuk kembali ke budaya asal usul kita sendiri, dengan peluang untuk berhubung semula dengan ahli-ahli keluarga dan sahabat-sahabat. Pastor ingin merayu kepada ibu bapa untuk membawa anak-anak kamu, terutamanya mereka yang sudah membesar di kota dan bandar untuk pulang dengan kerap ke kampung asal kamu. Berilah peluang kepada anak-anak kamu untuk mempelajari, menghargai dan berhubung semula dengan budaya asal usul mereka. Pastor pasti mereka akan mengalami keramahan, sambutan daripada komuniti

kampung, belajar daripada kesederhanaan hidup dan kesediaan untuk berkongsi. Kita mengajar anak-anak kita tentang keprihatin yang ikhlas terhadap satu sama lain dan rasa syukur kepada ibu bapa dan datuk nenek yang begitu banyak berkorban demi kita. Seringkan balik kampung apabila ada kesempatan peluangnya.

Kita dapat belajar dalam Pesta Menuai : Kehidupan Komuniti, Kerjasama dan Perkongsian.

Dunia pada hari ini meletakkan kepentingan yang amat tinggi kepada pencapaian individu dan menekankan keuntungan kewangan. Pada hari ini kita menghadapi dunia yang materialistik dan individualistik, di mana manusia dieksploitasi untuk keuntungan peribadi dan material. Sebaliknya, Pesta Menuai merayakan kepentingan perkongsian dalam komuniti, gotong-royong, sama-sama bekerja dan menuai di sawah. Pastor amat menghormati penduduk kampung, yang tidak memiliki banyak harta benda, tetapi bermurah hati untuk membahagikan apa yang mereka miliki. Pastor pernah mengalami perkongsian Kristian dan keramahan yang ikhlas di kampung-kampung.

Kita dapat belajar dalam Pesta Menuai : Komitmen, Pengorbanan dan Usaha Gigih.

Hasil padi diperolehi menerusi pengorbanan, usaha gigih dan komitmen selepas menjaga sawah selama setahun. Kita merayakan martabat atau harga diri kerja dan penghormatan bagi setiap pekerja, sama ada di sawah atau di bandar. Ini mengajar kita tentang martabat kerja dan sikap menghormati manusia. Maka itu marilah kita bersedia untuk bekerja dengan tangan kita dengan melayani keluarga kita dan bekerja untuk kebaikan bersama dalam komuniti, masyarakat dan bahkan negara kita, Malaysia.

Kita dapat belajar dalam Pesta Menuai : Simpanan Untuk Masa Depan.

Selepas menuai, padi baru, disimpan untuk masa depan. Pastor pernah melihat lumbung (tempat menyimpan padi) besar. Juga dalam bentuk dengan diameter lima kaki, yang diperbuat daripada kulit kayu bulat dan diikat dengan rotan untuk senang dibawa berpindah. Pastor menyedari jika berlaku sebarang bencana dan kebuluran, penduduk kampung ini akan selamat, manakala kita, di bandar raya, akan kelaparan kerana kekurangan makanan. Lumbung bertindak sebagai “bank”, di mana padi disimpan sebagai bekalan untuk masa depan.

Satu lagi pengalaman yang tidak dapat dilupakan dalam Ibadah Pesta Menuai adalah melihat keluarga mempersembahkan benih padi yang diletakkan di hadapan altar. Pastor bertugas akan memanjatkan doa pemberkatan bagi benih padi tersebut sebelum pastor itu memberinya kembali kepada keluarga. Benih yang terpilih ini akan dijadikan benih untuk penyemaian dan penanaman seterusnya.

Pada waktu ekonomi yang sukar pada hari ini, Pesta Menuai mengajar kita untuk menyimpan hasil tuaian kita atau pendapatan kita, dan membuat bajet dan perancangan dengan teliti untuk komitmen kewangan kita sepanjang tahun. Ia adalah seruan untuk mengawal diri daripada konsumerisme dengan membeli telefon terkini, gajet dan mengikat perbelanjaan yang tidak perlu semata-mata untuk mengikuti trend kehidupan moden. Pesta Menuai mempelawa kita untuk mengubah hati. Kita tidak mahu diatasi gaya hidup materialistik, keseronokan dan kenikmatan yang ditawarkan oleh dunia. Pastor merayu kepada semua ibu bapa untuk memberikan komitmen kepada usaha menyediakan persekitaran keluarga yang baik, setia kepada satu sama lain, membuat bajet dan menabung atau memperuntukkan simpanan untuk pendidikan anak-anak kita pada masa depan.

Terakhir kita dapat belajar dalam Pesta Menuai : Mengambil Berat Tentang Ekologi

Penanaman padi banyak bergantung kepada keadaan cuaca. Perubahan iklim baru-baru ini benar-benar menjejaskan hasil tuaian. Pastor ingin menyeru kepada pendekatan pertanian yang terdiri dalam usaha kita menggunakan tanah, sumber air dan sebagainya. Kita perlu memberi perlindungan dan penjagaan yang lebih baik kepada persekitaran dan ekologi kita. Sebagai orang Kristian, marilah kita mencari gaya hidup yang menuntut tanggungjawab bagi semua penciptaan, untuk melihat diri sebagai saling berkaitan dengan satu sama lain dan persekitaran. Paling utama sekali, kita mahu berada dalam perpaduan Kristian dengan golongan miskin.

“Kuasa Tuhan telah menganugerahkan kepada kita segala sesuatu yang diperlukan untuk kehidupan dan kesalehan, supaya menerusnya kita dapat terlepas daripada korupsi yang ada dalam dunia kerana nafsu, dan boleh menjadi seorang yang bersifat Tuhan. Atas sebab inilah kita mesti berusaha sedaya upaya untuk menyokong iman kita dengan kebaikan, dan kebaikan dengan pengetahuan, dan pengetahuan dengan penguasaan diri, dan penguasaan diri dengan ketekunan, dan ketekunan dengan kesalehan, dan kesalehan dengan kasih bagi sesama, dan kasih bagi sesama dengan cinta kasih.” (2 Petrus 1:3-7)

MESSAGE from Rev. Yu Chiew Song

REV. YU CHIEW SONG
Associate Pastor
Canning Garden Methodist



耶稣对他们说、来跟从我、我要叫你们得人如得鱼一样。(太Mat 4:19)
若有人要跟从我、就当舍己、背起他的十字架来跟从我。(可Mak 8:34)
若有人要跟从我、就当舍己、天天背起他的十字架来、跟从我。(路Luk 9:23)
若有人服事我、就当跟从我。我在那里、服事我的人、也要在那里。
若有人服事我、我父必尊重他。(约Jhn 12:26)

神的要求

献上最好
不是凭你认为最美
不是凭你认为最好
而乃是神
亲自对你要求的呈献
虽然你觉得埋没人才

献上最好
不是凭你自己所爱
不是凭你认为神悦纳
而乃是神
亲自对你要求的呈献
虽然你觉得心受委屈

献上最好
不是凭你拟定等次
不是凭你评鉴价值
而乃是神
亲自对你要求的呈献
虽然你不觉最好

忠于所献上
诚于所献上
不要辜负主恩典

勤于所献上
专于所献上
不要忘记神的要求

尤秋松牧师 共勉之 10/9/2022

Testimony ~ A 21ST CENTURY MIRACLE

~ Cheah Kok Wah (CG28)

2022 has been a very 'painful' & costly year for me. Two weeks before Chinese New Year, my cervical spondylosis came back to haunt me with a vengeance. The pain from my neck down my left shoulder blade & arm was so excruciating I could not even lie down to sleep or lean forward to eat. There were nights I sat up in the sofa till morning in the position that hurts the least. In March when I could no longer endure the pain, I consulted a specialist & had an MRI done. I was directed to physiotherapy & given pain killers, steroids & some other pills which I took for months without improvement.



About this time my dear wife had an X-ray which showed she needed a knee replacement surgery to be done as early as possible because of pain & bow-leggedness. Her surgery was delayed for a month, waiting for me to recover so that I could look after her post-op; but this was not to be. Her surgery went ahead after one month's delay in the midst of my unbearable pain. Taking care of her post-op, enduring the pain & dizziness; loosing sleep, coupled with my erratic BP took a toll on me.

On June 20, feeling dizzy & unstable with a BP of 79/47, I was rushed to emergency. Then on the morning of 23 June, having not been well past three days, I woke up at 7.00am feeling my heart trying to run away from me. My pulse was beating very fast. My wife called Dr. Mee Li to seek advice as my pulse went up from 90 to 140. Dr. Mee Li came over & helped send me to hospital where my pulse went up to 170. At the hospital, Dr. Philip attended to me. I was then moved to HDU for monitoring overnight. I couldn't sleep a wink here. Next morning, when Dr. Philip checked on me, I asked to be discharged.... and now there were two helpless old folks at home. But God is good, very good indeed! Many church members came to our aid & offered help & prayers... May's brothers & sisters & our son & daughter-in-law too. By the grace of God, we made it thru. Thank you, church. Thank you May's family & my very own family.

By this time, I had given God an 'ultimatum' in my daily prayer & pleading with him... I said, 'heal me or take me home God....otherwise I'll come back to you by the back door.' The thought of suicide was very real because I simply could not take it anymore & I had already made some preparations for it. Again God is good & God is real. Sometime in July, I massaged my neck & other acupressure points with a newly acquired massager. To my surprise, when I woke up the next morning, the pain in my neck, my arm & shoulder blade was almost gone!!! I woke up with only a very tired neck & heavy shoulder. The pain in my arm, chest & shoulder blade has vanished! Today 90% of the pain which had plagued me for 24 years has disappeared. This is truly a 21st century miracle only God can perform. I pray God will sustain me like this for the rest of my days so that I can continue to glorify Him till my last breath for His goodness.

All Glory to God. Amen!

Testimony ~ GOD IS INDEED GOOD ALL THE TIME

~ May Cheah (CG28)

On Monday 23 May this year, I was admitted to the Kinta Medical Centre for a total knee replacement (TKR) surgery. I had delayed the surgery for more than a month waiting for my hubby, Cheah to get well from his cervical spondylosis condition but to no avail. The surgery could not wait anymore. It has to be done. This is the first time in my 70 years on earth that I have to be admitted to a hospital for my first major surgery. I was afraid & filled with anxiety. I was afraid to sleep alone in the ward. I asked my hubby to accompany me while I was in ward, to which he agreed without second thoughts. My hubby spent three sleepless nights to accompany me in the hospital although he was suffering extreme pain in his neck & torso. I thank God for my hubby's love & dedication. We also celebrated our 51st wedding anniversary in hospital... haha!

Upon returning home, he nursed me and took care of all my daily needs to make me comfortable to help me recover. By the grace of God, many church members, brothers & sisters in Christ called to offer help. During the time that I was immobilised, many church members brought breakfast, lunch & dinner for us. Many visited, including some church doctors. Dr. Sene Kar even provided me some post-op equipment for my use during this recuperation period. We were never short of anything. The Family of God is indeed good & very caring, Praise The Lord! Even my own brothers & sisters & daughter-in-law came to offer physical help. Cheah's brothers & our sons helped with the finance.

Today with all the prayers from our prayer warriors, I am recovering well. This experience has shown me the goodness of God & His people & also the goodness of our own blood brothers & sisters who helped us a lot. We'll never be able to thank God enough for His goodness. We'll never be able to thank our church enough for their love & care. To express our gratitude, Cheah & I will pray for our church ceaselessly & serve till our last breath.

ALL GLORY TO GOD THE FATHER! THANK YOU
VERY MUCH, CHURCH. THANK YOU VERY
MUCH OUR VERY OWN FAMILY MEMBERS!
GOD BLESS YOU ALL!



CGMC 欢乐家庭日

~ 徐秀慧

CGMC 欢乐家庭日

徐秀慧

一场突如其来的疫情肆虐全球，使人的生活造成巨大的影响。两年多以来，许多人的日子大部分都宅在家里，如失去自由的笼中鸟。感谢神，如今疫情逐渐趋缓，我国也逐步解封。今年四月份防疫限制开始松绑，教会也开始实体崇拜。教会牧者领袖们体会到会友们受困之苦，便安排在 6 月 6 日举办家庭日。

6 月 6 日早上七时许，弟兄姐妹如飞出巢的鸟儿，雀跃万分地到达 DR 公园。八点多人到齐了，由汉波弟兄带领祷告后就开始晨运——赞美操。赞美操的三首歌是主祷文、万民都要拍掌、活出爱。大家在阳光明媚，清风吹拂的树荫下，以诗歌和舞姿赞美神。有几位老人家坐在椅子上，在后排也跟着手舞足蹈，精神可嘉！

赞美操后，我们每人分得一盒早点，有蛋糕和烧饼，也有饮料。大伙边聊边吃边欣赏大自然，看着久违的青葱草地、蓝天白云、高大树木，身心舒畅极了，不禁惊叹造物主的伟大！



吃了早点后，我们移步到对面的日本花园。三五成群，有的散步赏景，有的坐在凉亭聊天。有一群爱拍照的美女（自以为是☺），把园中的小桥流水、湖景、莲花、树木，连石头也不放过，统统摄入手机，抓住了美好，留下了回忆！

游览了日本花园，我们再回到聚会地点，坐在树荫下听见证。当天分享见证的是汉波弟兄、钰蓁姐妹、尤牧师和 Mr. Lee。感恩上帝在他们生命中作奇妙的工作，带领保守渡过疫情困境，并彰显神医治的能力，感谢神！

分享完毕就是游戏时光。大伙们分两组，从一个装满杂物的箱子取出玻璃珠。大家都很努力的狂捞乱抓，欢呼声此起彼落，把在 MCO 期间沉睡了许久的花草都唤醒，刺激又开心！

第二个游戏是传盒子猜谜语。这个游戏可让我们动动脑筋，猜对的还有礼物，真是皆大欢喜！

在 DR 公园逗留大约三个半小时，我们便到怡保花园孖宝餐馆继续交流，并享用丰富的午餐。

感谢筹备委员精心妥善的策划，让所有参与的弟兄姐妹尽兴而归，将一切荣耀颂赞归给全能的天父上帝！



感恩感言：

回来一年多，去年 6 月生日第二天就入院！又进又出、进进出出，共进出医院十次，数次去 KL 就医，疲惫不堪！依然感恩，因为回到祖国才生病入院，是神莫大的恩典啊！今年新年病情好转，疫情缓和，社交距离措施因此放宽，我庆幸能重回教会实体崇拜，重返缺席许久的赞美操，也开始我的日常活动。神赐我充满喜乐的六月：Praise Dance 生日会、GCT 生日会、中文部家庭日、Praise Dance 槟岛一日游。去年六月病痛之苦，今年上帝补偿失去的欢笑，感谢神！

藉此机会感谢老伴照顾，Rev. Andrew Tan 医院探访，Dr. Su 夜晚打针止痛救命，CG9，CG13，CG29，Praise Dance Group 探访，祷告帮助，还有还有许多弟兄姐妹的问候和关心！最最爱我的是主耶稣，是祢再次赐我重生的机会，带领我奔向恩典之路，继续前进！

“你从水中经过，我必与你同在；
你趟过江河，水必不漫过你；
你从火中行过，必不被烧。
火焰也不着在你身上。
因为我是耶和华你的神，
是以色列的圣者你的救主。”（赛 43:2-3）



我的退休 见证 上帝的奇妙恩典

~ 陈奕明 (CH7)

我是在 2016 年七月 1 日正式退休。

坦白说，这是一个我认为「非出自我意愿」，也「非按我所规划」之下的退休时间，所以当时的心情难免有“不舍”；“不解”和“不乐”之感。

然而，世事无绝对，正如人生变化无常，因一场突如袭击我国的瘟疫而让我恍然醒悟，当初我看为“憋屈”的退休时间，但神的意思是好的，因里头隐藏上帝的“祝福”，是上帝为我量身定做的恩典时间表。

「然而你们的忧愁要变为喜乐。」（约 16:20）哈利路亚，感谢神！

「耶和华说：我知道我向你们所怀的意念，是赐平安的意念，不是降灾祸的意念，是叫你们末后有指望。」（耶 29:11）

犹记得在 2016 年正月某个晚上，我在家里作个人灵修。此时，圣灵把「要我作出准备退休」的意念放进我心里。

当时虽有些愕然，也不确定是否错觉，我仍如此回应：

“主啊，若这真是出自你的旨意，那就为我预备一个接替者作为印证吧！”

「在耶和华的山上必有预备。」（创 22:14）

三月的某天早上，我结束当天的营业并准备回家之际，有位相熟的同业近前打招呼，在寒暄间，他问我说：

“老陈，听说你有意在近期里退休享清福吗？若是，届时请优先第一个知会我一声，我有意接手。”

我听了为之一怔，也猛然想起年初圣灵给我的“感动”及我的回应。

虽然过后我有认真去思考“退休”这事，无奈心里被太多的“顾虑”及“不舍”牵掣着，就一直“胶着”。

「体贴肉体的就是死，体贴圣灵的乃是生命平安。」（罗 8:6）

来到四月尾，忽然接到一通来自某家银行职员电话，对方声称我在半年之前向他们提交申请由国家财政部提供给国内的中小型企业低息贷款已获批了，并嘱咐我在五月二日上银行签署相关文件。

这通电话让我原“摇摆不定”的心此时变得更加「举棋不定。」

在短短的三天，，我必须在「鱼」与「熊掌」之间作出选择，二者不可得兼，但哪一个才是“上好”的呢？我决定寻求上帝的带领。

“去思考雅各因恋栈示剑城最终所付上的代价。”这是上帝给我的回应。

当我读了《创》33~34章里头记载有关雅各在示剑城所发生的变故后，我的门额冒汗，也明白上帝的旨意。

我知道拦阻我退休的关键症结其实是担忧退休后那进入「零」收入状态，我坦诚向上帝倾吐我内心的忧虑。

「你们看那天上的飞鸟，也不种，也不收，也不积蓄在仓里，你们的天父尚且养活它，你们不比飞鸟贵重得多吗？」（太6:26）

上帝的回应让我彻底卸下心里的最后一道防线。此刻也不多想，我即时联络之前的那位同业。

在见面洽谈时，对方首先说道：“老陈，我没有想到你真的准备退休，那天早上我其实只是”随感“问你吧了！”

他的话让我惊讶，同时也笃定「他」就是上帝为我预备的人选及印证。

我估计需三个月收回账面上的赊账，就立八月31日为“交替”日期，孰不知在六月结束前却已全部“奇迹回笼”，我惟按照上帝定下的日期离开职场。

「你们必欢欢喜喜而出来，平平安安蒙引导。」（赛55:12）

在2019年肆虐全球的新冠病毒蔓延至马来西亚，除了造成巨大人命伤亡外，并在国内掀起海浪式的倒闭及解雇潮。

目睹国家当时经济陷入近乎“瘫痪”的状态，我反复自忖，倘若我从开始就拂逆上帝的美意，坚特留守职场，而后再度忽视上帝的示警，执意签下贷款，如今面对这股来势汹汹，锐不可当的经济风暴，我能抵挡得住吗？

从开始的全面大封锁演变到后期的断续“开”又“封”这段期间，我的财力承受得住吗？届时我又将会面临一个怎样的局面呢？

我想结局绝对会是；即使我侥幸不被这场风暴完全“吞噬”，也难免会是「虽然得救，乃像从火里经过的一样。」（林前3:15）

全赖主赐下的怜悯及祂的庇佑恩典带我“及时”离开险境，我方能安然不受亏损。感谢主。

「并且你们是我的见证，除我以外，岂有真神吗zeng？」（赛44:8）

回顾2008年六月我初次踏上信主的道路，曾悖逆受主的管教，软弱蒙主的扶持，也曾三次经历危及生命皆蒙主保守得安然无恙，这些过程都逐渐帮助我认识这位「又真又活」的创造主，在信仰的道路上，从起步“蹒跚”至“稳定”；从“疑信”到今天的“笃信”。

信主至今14年，如今我确知我所信的，所跟随的是「亚伯拉罕所信的，是那叫死人复活，使无变为有的神。」（罗4:17）

写至此，我不禁要说：「我这一生最美的祝福就是能够认识主耶稣，最大的祝福就是能信靠祂，因为无论走在高山或低谷，这位又真又活的主都时刻与我同在，祂是我一切事上平安的源头。」

愿一切的尊贵，荣耀及称赞都献给上主。。阿们！

陈奕明（CH 7）



Our worth in Christ Jesus

~ Paddy Teh

**“YET, TO ALL WHO RECEIVED HIM, TO THOSE WHO BELIEVED
IN HIS NAME, HE GAVE THE RIGHT TO BECOME CHILDREN OF
GOD”**

(John 1:12)

I remember in my primary school days -

it was drummed into me the necessity for academic excellence. My classmates and I used to wait anxiously for the end-of-year examination results to see who would clinch the FIRST place in that year's cohort. I grew up believing that academic excellence was “the” way to be admired – acknowledged – accepted – loved by family and friends.

I remember in my working life -

a colleague who starved herself for days so that she could wear her tight-fitting dress for some high-flying, celebratory event with TV stars. She was adamant to look stunning for the occasion. She desired to be wowed, admired, applauded for her slim figure in a new outfit.

I remember in my retirement years -

a good friend who slipped almost unnoticeably into depression after her children's marriages and mother's death. She lost and missed terribly her “roles” as doting mum and filial daughter. She felt “useless”, “unneeded” and alone. Suddenly she felt her worthiness diminishing.

This is how the world measures the “worth” of a person. We become “valuable” because of our academic/professional achievements, the positions (roles/status) we hold, our external appearances – and – wealth. *(This has been the norm for ages. Remember how Daniel and his three friends were chosen to serve in King Nebuchadnezzar's palace? They were handpicked because they were “young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well-informed, quick to understand.” (Daniel 1:4)*

BUT – as believers, shouldn't we be more concerned with how God sees us?

I learn from the Bible that God sees me worthy and precious enough to send His only Son to die for me, a sinner. Jesus' crucifixion tells me that God loves me despite my failings. He accepts me as I am without the trappings of education, status, beauty, wealth. Whenever I read about Jesus' brutal death, I echo the psalmist's query to our Sovereign, Almighty God,

*“What is man that You are mindful of him, the son of man that You care for him?”
(Psal 8:4)*

Yet – John 1:12 gives me this blessed assurance,

“Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His Name, He gave the right to become children of God.”

Unlike having to slog hard to be recognised as a person of worth, I only need, with the moving of the Holy Spirit, humbly “receive” and “believe” in Jesus as my Lord and Saviour, and God then “gives me the right to be His child”.

Do I in my sinfulness deserve this? NO.

But, our good God, who has created me wonderfully and uniquely, considers me “worthy” enough to send His Son to die for me so that I am able to have a relationship with my Father in heaven.

My identity as God's child is a privileged one. My “worth” lies in being God's child. As God's child, how then can I please my loving Father? How can I, as God's precious child, steer and stay away from the world's (mis)perception of a person's worth?

I realise that I need to be close to my heavenly Father, to lean on Him so that I can hear His heartbeat and voice – and know His purpose for me.

Questions flood my mind as I reflect on my relationship with my Father.

- a) Do I really KNOW my heavenly Father intimately? Or, do I just know ABOUT Him from sermons, books and songs?
- b) Do I intentionally desire to know Him and His Word? Or, do I get waylaid by other daily responsibilities and distractions the moment I wake up?
- c) Do I make Him the priority in my life? Or, is my cell phone my first port of call when I open my eyes every morning?
- d) Do I genuinely want to please Him by being obedient to His commands? Or, do I allow myself to live a life of compromise and wilful sin?

Attempting to share my thoughts on our “worth” was not simple. But, I was bent on grappling with this issue because of

a much-needed examination of my spiritual health

and,

a growing awareness of self-esteem issues and the like in our world.

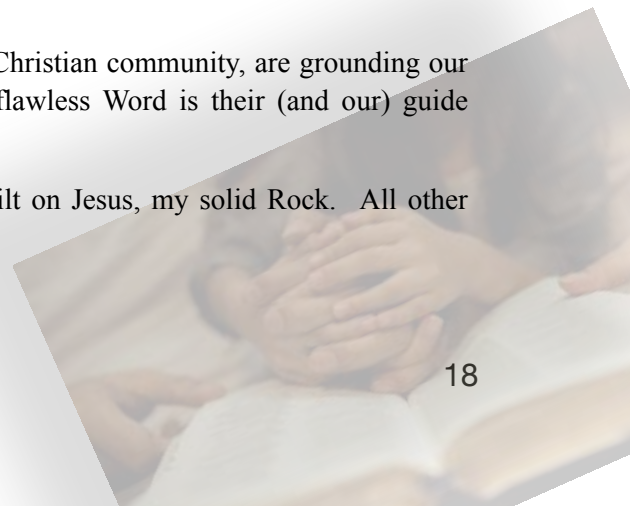
In line with the two reasons above,

I ask myself whether I have the steadfast faith and Biblical integrity NOT to conform to the standards/ expectations of “worth” set by the world

and,

I ask myself too, whether we, as parents, the church and a caring Christian community, are grounding our children and young people firmly in God's Word so that God's flawless Word is their (and our) guide always.

In sharing my thoughts with you, I realise that my “worth” is built on Jesus, my solid Rock. All other ground is sinking sand! (*as the song goes*).



Marriage Vow Renewal Ceremony

17th September 2022 will always be a very special date for both Choo Suai and I. That was the day we both had our marriage vows renewed in the church. It was a simple yet meaningful service that truly marked the faithfulness of God.



Our children Caleb, Hannah and Joseph witnessed this, all dressed up to play very important parts in this ceremony. It was also the first time my eldest son, Caleb played second keyboard and my beloved husband co-worshipped during the worship session. We are so thankful to God that He gave us the opportunity to proclaim the goodness and faithfulness of God in our marriage and our family. We are also thankful that Pastor Andrew gave us his time to have this service to celebrate our 10th wedding anniversary and renewal of our marriage vows. Two other couples joined us to renew their marriage vows - Edmund & Li Fan and Wan Chuan & Lay Goon. As they testified at the pulpit about their marriages, I felt strongly that God has been so real in all the seasons of our lives, blessing us and guiding us despite all the challenges that we faced in our marriages.



We were also blessed with our friends and families who made time to join us for this service, being our witnesses as we renewed our marriage vows together before the Lord and with each other.

All glory to God for everything that He has done in our lives. We are truly perfectly imperfect as we have a Perfect God who loves us deeply and intimately and only wants the best for our marriage and our family.

Siow Jin

Today (17th September 2022) is a very special and memorable day, for it is the first time we said our Christian marriage vows. We've been married for 11 years. We are Christians but we didn't manage to have a church ceremony and only invited a pastor from my former church in Taiping Methodist to pray during our wedding dinner.

The ceremony went well and smooth. It has been 11 years since I had hair and makeup done and dressed nicely. It was such a joy to prepare myself and my family for this special and beautiful day.

In our preparations for this marriage renewal, God touched my heart when I read the vows, especially the last part of it - until the day we are separated by death.

It's definitely not easy to have gone through the past 11 years. Our marriage is not smooth and we've had miscommunications and misunderstandings in the beginning of our marriage. But God is the only One who can mend everything, including the broken part of our marriage. God is a merciful and gracious God. He is so good that He blessed us with 2 handsome children, Alan and Daniel.



I'm very thankful and grateful to God also for giving me a good husband. When my sons and I were down with Covid, he tenderly cared for us. He never blamed me, but indeed he showed his unconditional love for me. He took good care of me and my children, always on 24 hours standby regardless of anything whenever I needed help. Even in the middle of the night, despite feeling tired, he came and helped me give medicine to little Daniel. He never complained or grumbled for his sacrifice. His unconditional love and kindness touched my heart.

Today, our children and church are our witnesses. Alan, Daniel, papa and mama will make a promise to God together. With God's blessing, we'll continue to love and support each other, and to bring joy, happiness and peace to the Tan family.

Last but not least, I am so thankful and grateful to my CG brothers and sisters for arranging the marriage vows renewal ceremony, and for their support and encouragement. We are thankful to Pastor Andrew too who conducted the ceremony with great joy.

Wan Chuan & Lay Goon





This year's wedding anniversary was a most memorable one for me. Like most people celebrating their anniversaries with a romantic dinner or an exciting getaway trip, we had a nice family trip to Penang all planned out and all the bookings made. Excited as we were on the day itself, our plans were thwarted by a well known villain - none other than COVID! We ended up having to undergo home isolation instead, facing each other continuously in the same room for 7 days in a row!! Talk about for better or for worse! Definitely a good reminder for our marriage vows.

During this ceremony on 17th Sept 2022, we said our marriage vows to each other once again in the presence of God, with our family members including our own children as witnesses.

I am very thankful to God for giving us this opportunity to celebrate our 10th wedding anniversary in this manner.

Praise God!

*For the Lord is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.*

Psalms 100:5

Li Fan



I would like to take this time to accord thanksgiving to our Lord Jesus Christ for blessing us tremendously through this marriage. When the idea of having a marriage renewal was first mooted, I honestly found it a little unnecessary. Like most couples would say, "lou fu lou chai", which means "old husband old wife", there is nothing very romantic still needed in the relationship. However, when I thought a little deeper, there is no better time than now to show my appreciation and love to my partner.

Marriage is not an easy thing, as some of you who have more experience than us would attest to. There are times when things are tough and don't go according to plan. If I can choose one word to describe marriage life juggling work and family with 3 kids in between, the word would be "messy". Tempers may flare when we don't share the same opinion over something. Nonetheless, one thing which always pulls us back together is God. The desire to honour God in our marriage is what enables us to lower our pride and submit to each other in love.

Hence, through this ceremony, we appreciate each other as a gift from God and reaffirm our marriage. As we can see in this picture, it begins with love but more importantly with Christ in the center. May it endure to the end!

Edmund



Through the Bible Through the year summary series ~ Part 2

~ Dr Philip Ho

Summary of “Through the Bible Through the year”

by John Stott Part 2

Joshua and the Judges

Deuteronomy ends with the death of Moses who laid hands on Joshua, appointing him as his successor. One question we may ask as we read about the Israelite conquest is “How can God have ordered this?”

There may be 3 reasons put forth.

1. God had made a promise to the Patriarchs to give this land to their descendents. Possession would not be possible without dispossession of the former inhabitants
2. God abhorred the wickedness of the Canaanites. It was not because of Israel’s righteousness but on account of the Canaanites’ wickedness that Yahweh would give the Israelites the land.
3. The danger of corruption. God did not want the Israelites to imitate the Canaanites’ detestable idolatrous practices.

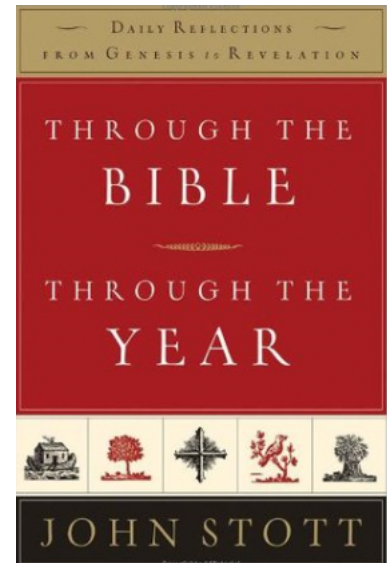
The cycle of Judges went on for 200 years. Firstly the Jews forsook Yahweh and worshiped gods, then they worshiped gods of other people around them. Secondly Yahweh handed them over to raiders who plundered them, defeated them in battle, and oppressed them. Thirdly, in answer to his people’s cry, the Lord raised up judges who delivered them from their oppressors. The Judges had several functions. They were military leaders, spiritual leaders and administered justice in Israel.

Ehud delivered the Israelites from the Moabites, Deborah from the Canaanites, Gideon from the Midianites, Jephthah from the Ammonites and Samson from the Philistines.

Samuel did duties as a judge as well as a priest. He was the last judge as Israel demanded for an earthly king.

Saul was the first king. He started well, and the Spirit of God came upon him in power and changed him into a different person (1 Sam 10:6). But later he fell into anger, bitterness and jealousy. He is one of the examples of people who did not end well.

Saul, who had been told to wait in Gilgal for Samuel took matters into his own hand; and he failed to obey God who told him to destroy the evil Amalekites. Then he consulted a medium which was forbidden by the law of Moses.



The Monarchy (Samuel, Kings, Chronicles)

This covers a period of about 500 years from the death of Saul to the fall of Jerusalem. The story is told from different perspectives in Samuel, Kings and Chronicles.

The Spirit of God came upon David after being anointed by Samuel. He unfortunately had lust for Bathsheba which led him to murder, commit adultery, covet, steal and bear false witness. Later on he insisted on taking a census of men capable of bearing arms, manifesting a weakness of putting confidence in the arm of the flesh rather than in the arm of the Lord. But in spite of his weaknesses, he is described as a person after God's own heart and unlike Solomon his successor, his heart did not turn aside to other gods but was fully devoted to the Lord (1 Kings 11:4)

Solomon was young when he ascended the throne but he asked God for wisdom to govern his people with justice. He started well, building the temple in Jerusalem, built a standing army and founded Israel's merchant Navy for trade. He divided the country into 12 regions under 12 royal commissioners. The country enjoyed peace and prosperity and he had a reputation for wisdom, splendor and justice. But Solomon did not end well. He did not love God with all his heart. He kept a harem of princesses who turned his heart after other gods (1 Kings 11:4). He maintained his grandiose lifestyle by imposing high taxes and forced labor.

When Solomon died, his son Rehoboam ascended the throne. He followed the poor advice of his young inexperienced counselors to increase taxes further. As a result the 10 Northern tribes proclaimed independence from the dynasty of David.

The Northern kingdom was Israel, under king Jeroboam. He set up alternative sanctuaries so that the people would not try to enter Jerusalem in Judah, the southern kingdom. These were in Dan and Bethel, where golden calves were installed for worship. After a succession of kings who did not lead well, king Ahab married a Phoenician princess, Jezebel. She actively promoted the worship of Baal within the royal court and beyond. Elijah was God's prophet who challenged the prophets of Baal to a public contest at Mount Carmel proving Yahweh as the true living God. Finally the Northern kingdom fell to Assyria in 722 BC resulting in a mixed population known as the Samaritans.

Amos was a prophet of God's justice in the mid 8th century BC. He saw evils that needed to be exposed, and profound social and moral decay. He insisted that privilege brings responsibility, not immunity to the judgment of God.

Hosea was the prophet of God's love also in the mid 8th century BC. Israel's unfaithfulness is called her lack of *hesed*. ***Hesed refers to covenant faithfulness and steadfast love.***

After the fall of the northern kingdom in 722 BC the Southern kingdom Judah lasted another 135 years. During this period there were 2 religious reforms. ***The first was led by King Hezekiah with encouragement of the prophets Micah and Isaiah. The second was led by King Josiah, his grandson, with the encouragement of the prophet Zephaniah and Jeremiah.***

Lamentations describes the sorrow felt when Jerusalem the Holy City was ruined and the Temple burned to the ground, and the people were taken into captivity.

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The wisdom literature (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs)

These books are all concerned with what we call meaning. What does it mean to be a human being? How do suffering, evil, injustice and love fit in with this meaning?

Ecclesiastes emphasizes the futility of human life if it is imprisoned in time and space, ignoring or denying the reality of God. ***Only God can give meaning to life and wisdom begins with an acknowledgement of the reality of God.***

Job teaches us that the right attitude towards God is self surrender. We must trust God whose wisdom and power is demonstrated in all of creation, and His love and justice have been revealed in the cross.

Proverbs was written by Solomon.

A fool is one who lacks self discipline for his folly is often more moral than intellectual. We are especially reminded that the tongue can be a source of a foolish person's downfall.

The mocker is one who denies the seriousness of sin, guilt, judgment, and treats too lightly the need for reconciliation and forgiveness. The mocker neither seeks advice nor takes it if it is offered for he resents correction.

The sluggard is a lazy person and does not do what even animals do by instinct (like the ant) such as looking after his fields and vineyards and providing for his family.

The Song of Songs describes what a genuine passionate love can exist between the bride and the bridegroom. This beautiful celebration of conjugal love reminds us that marriage and sex is part of God's plan and gift to us.

The Psalter

The Psalms act as a mirror for it reflects all the moods of our human experience-joy and sorrow, excitement and depression, confidence and doubt, triumph and defeat.

Psalms 1-The righteous will prosper-although not always materially. They choose their company carefully and whose counsel they seek

Psalms 19-God has made himself known to all humankind as Creator, to Israel as the Lawgiver, and to individuals as the Redeemer.

Psalms 32- Two basic problems confront human beings everywhere. The first is our sense of guilt about the past, and the second is our anxiety about the future.

Psalms 42-The writer describes an episode of spiritual depression. He is thirsty for God because he feels estranged from God, and is overwhelmed by the presence of his enemies who taunt him about his invisible and intangible God. He ends by reminding himself of his covenantal relationship with God, which no moods can destroy.

Psalms 104-God's creative splendor is described and how God sustains His creation.

Psalms 130-the writer describes himself as floundering in deep waters-a picture of his sin, guilt, remorse, together with his sense of God's judgment upon him and his nation. But with God there is forgiveness. Far from encouraging sinners in their sin, God's forgiveness promotes that fear of the Lord, or reverent awe in His presence, that leads us to flee from iniquity.

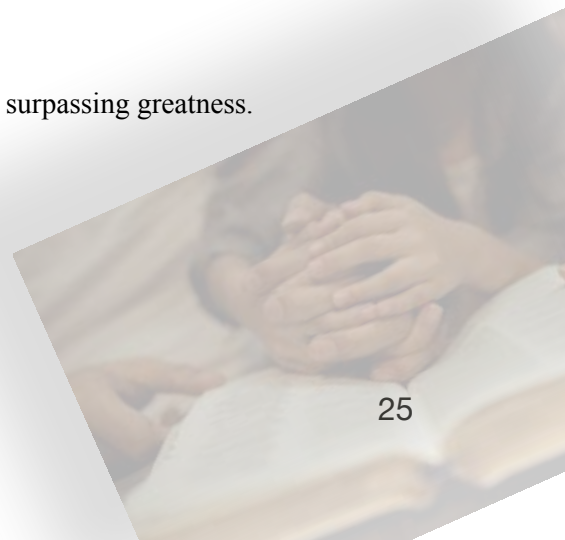
Psalms 150-This is a summons to worship God.

Where should we worship? In His sanctuary and in His mighty heavens.

Why should we worship? To praise God for His acts of power and for his surpassing greatness.

How do we worship? With every conceivable instrument known to man.

Who is to worship? Everything that has breath-the whole human race.



Through the Bible Through the year summary series ~ Part 3

~ Dr Philip Ho

Summary of “Through the Bible Through the year”

by John Stott Part 3

Isaiah

The prophet Isaiah ministered during the time of Kings Hezekiah of Judah's reforms.

Israel is described as the vineyard that Yahweh planted but yielded only wild grapes characterized by these 6 woes.

1. Illegal acquisition of land
2. Excessive consumption of alcohol
3. Brazen defiance of God
4. Perverse transfer of moral categories
5. Conceit
6. Corruption and denial of human rights.

Isaiah's call was his vision of Yahweh, exalted and transcendent, seated on his heavenly throne. Attended by Seraphs crying Holy Holy Holy. Isaiah came for confession of his sin, cleansing and then his commissioning.

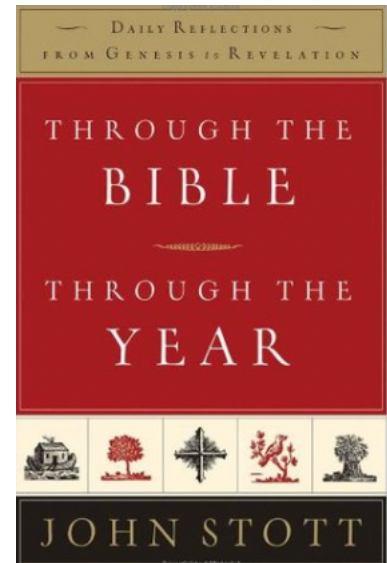
King Rezin of Aram (Syria) and King Pekah of Israel formed an alliance to try and force Ahaz of Judah to join forces against Assyria. Ahaz instead of having faith in God sent tribute to Assyria which spared Judah but conquered Syria in 732 BC and Israel in 722 BC.

Isaiah 40 confronts the people who think God has forgotten them. But what is needed is a fresh vision of God. As God of creation we cannot doubt His power and as God of the covenant we cannot doubt His love.

Isaiah 46 has a satire about idolatry. Babylon's deities- Bel(Marduk) and Nebo need their worshippers to lift them on their shoulders, to carry them. These idols cannot speak or move. Instead Yahweh is the one who carries His people and He is a living God.

Isaiah 55 reminds us that we would know nothing about God if He had not made himself known through revelation in Scripture for His ways and thoughts are higher than ours.

Isaiah 66 describes the New heaven and New earth that God will create. Those who have deliberately rebelled against God will be destroyed.



Jeremiah

God's word burns like fire in his bones but nobody listens to him. Unlike Isaiah who says "Here I am send me" Jeremiah remains as a reluctant prophet. Before they could assume the prophetic office Isaiah's lips were cleansed by burning coal, and Jeremiah's mouth was touched by the divine hand.

Jeremiah had a sustained appeal for repentance but God's complaint was that Judah did not return to God with all her heart but only in pretense. (8:10) The people persisted in their sins.

The people's unwillingness to repent was due to stubborn and rebellious hearts. Jeremiah predicted that Jerusalem would fall to the Babylonian army, while false prophets predicted victory.

Jeremiah wrote to the exiles telling them to settle in as God would only bring them back after 70 years. Life is not random, or meaningless, or absurd. God has plans for us and His plans are for our good. (Jer29:11)

5 distinctive characteristics of false teachers.

- 1.They abuse their power.
- 2.They live a lie-a double life between their private and public persona.
- 3.They strengthen the hands of evildoers instead of calling them to repentance.
- 4.They fill people with false hopes.
- 5.They speak visions from their own minds.

The church needs Pastors who expound and apply the Word of God well and who practice what they preach.

Jeremiah prophesies to a time when God blesses us with the new covenant-a law written in our hearts, a universal knowledge of God (all peoples) and an eternal forgiveness through Christ.

Lamentations is said to be written by Jeremiah.

To think about ourselves and our sufferings brings despair but to think about God and his faithfulness brings hope. That is how we should approach difficult times in our lives.

Exilic Prophets (Ezekiel and Daniel)

3 deportations from Jerusalem to Babylon occurred. The first was in 605 BC which included Daniel and his 3 friends. The second was in 597 BC and many national leaders were taken including King Jehoiachin and Ezekiel. The final deportation occurred in 587 BC when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed.

Ezekiel had his overwhelming vision of the glory of God in 593 BC while in exile. Firstly the glory arrives in Babylon. God has not forgotten his people. Then secondly the glory departs from Jerusalem as a result of the idolatry which provoked God's anger. Thirdly the glory returns to Jerusalem through the east gate and is people worship Him and are obedient.

Yahweh instructs Ezekiel to eat the scroll and fill his stomach with it. This reminds Ezekiel, and all messengers that ***we must first digest God's word ourselves, then obey it, before we can proclaim it to others.***

Ezekiel points out Israel's sin and justification of God's judgment on them. The people did not love God with all their being and they did not love their neighbor. A recurring theme in Ezekiel is that "they will know that I am the Lord"

Daniel and his friends ***resolved to assimilate all that was good in Chaldean culture while rejecting everything that was incompatible with their faith.*** They did not object to everything but just those practices that pertained to their faith. They refused to bow down and worship Nebuchadnezzar's image (resulting in being thrown into the furnace) and refused to stop praying to Yahweh (thrown into the lion's den)

Through visions, Daniel is shown that kingdoms will come and go (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome) but God's kingdom will never be destroyed.

Pride and madness go together but humility is accompanied by reason.

Return and Restoration (Ezra, Nehemiah, Zechariah, Haggai, Esther)

The Babylonian empire fell in 539 BC and King Cyrus of the Persian Empire took over. Ezra records that the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus who issued edicts for the Jews to be repatriated back to their homeland and to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

The restoration of Judah occurred in 3 stages.

1.538 BC- ***Zerubbabel, grandson of King Jehoiachin, and Jesua the high priest returned to Jerusalem. There was opposition but God sent prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage Zerubbabel and Jeshua.*** Zech 4:6 reminded the people that the rebuilding would be by God's Spirit. Cyrus returned 5400 articles of gold and silver that had been taken from the Temple by the Babylonians. The reconstruction began in 520 BC and was completed in 515 BC, around 70 years after the Temple's destruction in 587 BC, just as prophesied by Jeremiah.

2.458 BC- ***Ezra who was a priest and scribe*** arrived in Jerusalem to regulate Israel's religious and moral practices to comply with the law of Moses. He acted as secretary of state for Jewish affairs. Ezra studied the law of God, obediently practiced it, and faithfully taught it to others. (Ezra 7:10)

3.445 BC- ***Nehemiah was the king's cup bearer. He was sent to be governor of Judah,*** and he restored the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah gives us 6 examples of good Christian leadership.

1. ***The Christian leader has a clear vision***-He can see what role God has called him to fulfill.
2. ***The Christian leader feels deeply about his vision.*** Nehemiah was passionate about his task and saddened by the current state of affairs.
3. ***The Christian leader seeks support from both God and human beings.*** Prayer and action are not alternative options. Nor are they incompatible with each other. Nehemiah prayed but he also took action in requesting for official documentation of permission to do his tasks.

4. ***The Christian leader develops a realistic plan.*** Nehemiah went out at night to inspect the city walls personally so that he had an on the ground understanding of the problem at hand

5. ***The Christian leader attracts a following.*** A leader needs to be diligent but cannot achieve much alone. A leader who inspires people to follow his lead is able to mobilize a larger size of manpower to finish the task.

6. ***The Christian leader refuses to be discouraged.*** We can always expect opposition to tasks we work at, sometimes from opposing groups but sometimes discouraging comments even from your own camp. A true leader refuses to give up. He or she perseveres.

Esther describes the persecution of Jews during Xerxes's reign (486-465 BC). The key verse is in Esther 4:14 "who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" We are reminded that God puts us in situations where we can stand up for Him. We must always be ready for it is an opportunity not to be wasted and we must play our role as God's servants.



Evangelism in Cell Groups

who's your
ONE?

Collected your bookmark from your CG leader?

who's your ONE?

1. Identify one of your closest relationships for each category.
2. Mark the person with the following symbols.

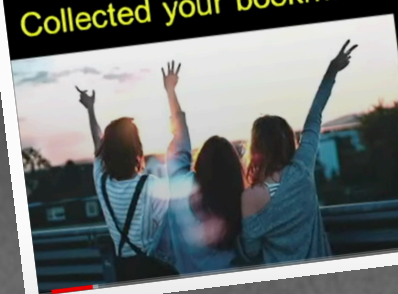
+ SAVED
x LOST
? UNCURE

FAMILY
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

NEIGHBOUR
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

WORK
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

EXTENDED FAMILY
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



CELL MINISTRY TRAINING 2022 (hybrid)

Register at:
<https://forms.gle/wc3onzEPfVsXw1N17>

**Closing Date:
30 May 2022**

DATE	TIME	MODULE
Sat, 04 June	2-4pm	1. Philosophy of CG Ministry
	4-6pm	2. Leadership in CG Ministry
Sat, 11 June	2-4pm	3. Leading in CG Meeting (Part 1)
	4-6pm	4. Leading in CG Meeting (Part 2)
Sat, 18 June	2-4pm	5. Cell Group Dynamics
	4-6pm	6. Cell Group Problems
Sat, 25 June	2-4pm	7. Caring for CG Members
	4-6pm	8. Service of CG Members

**30 May 2022
Closing Date:**

<https://forms.gle/wc3onzEPfVsXw1N17>

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To **DISCIPLE** every member into Christian maturity and to be effective in the service of God.

To **EVANGELIZE** the city of Ipoh and to set up congregations in strategic areas.

To **TOUGH** a needy community with God's transforming love and justice.

To **SEND** Christian workers into the harvest fields and to be involved in missions.