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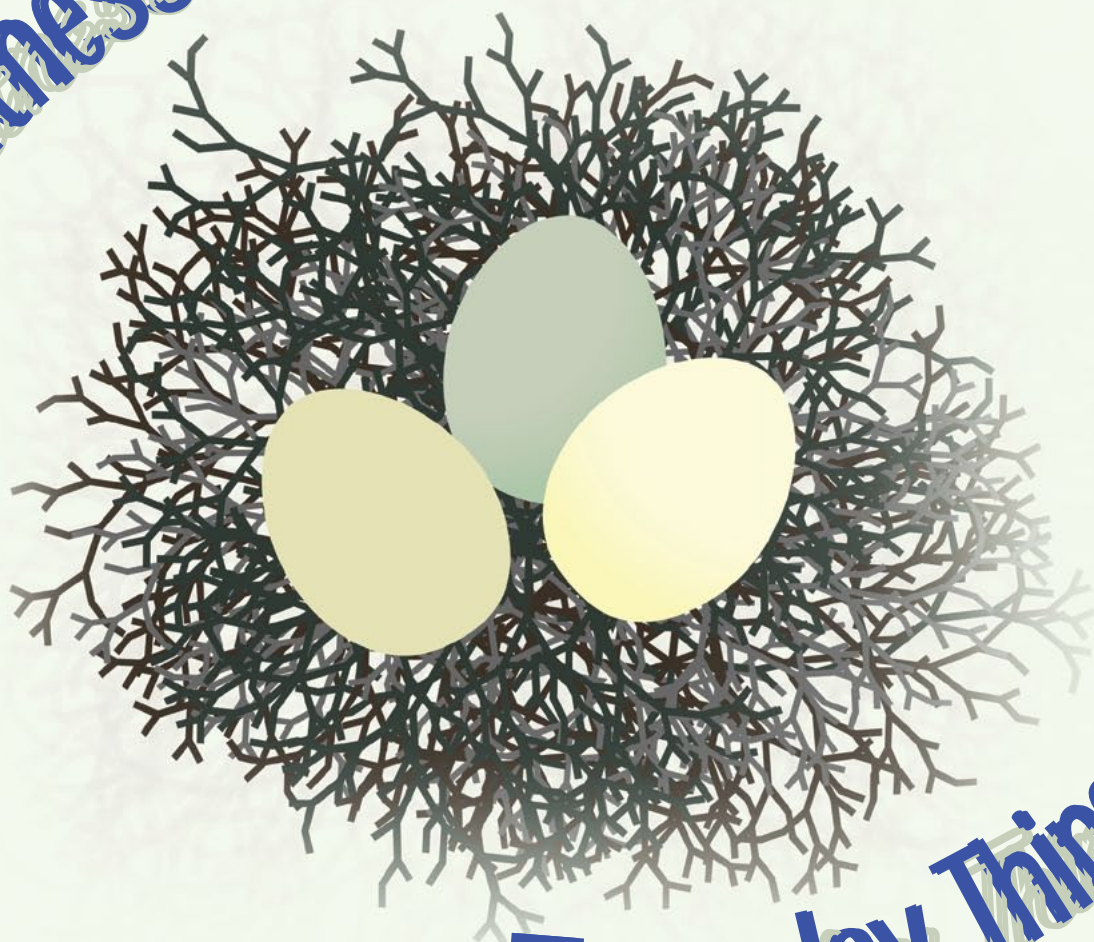
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TRINITY
Methodist Church

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Witnessing through



Everyday Things

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WITNESSING THROUGH EVERYDAY THINGS



by Tricia Tong and Caroline Lim

The week leading up to Easter is often described as a drama.

Events begin to unfold with Palm Sunday when palms are waved and donkeys are thought of. This is followed by night services from Monday to Maundy Thursday when we contemplate our mortal journeys seriously. On Thursday, the altar is stripped for Good Friday. All is literally black and gloomy before a rainbow of colours dawns on Easter Sunday with easter eggs for children, and hot cross buns for adults.

How can we use this imagery to “shake salt” and share the good news of Christ’s resurrection without necessarily shoving a tract in the faces of our pre-believing friends and family?

Perhaps we could give a potted plant of palms to our neighbour along with a greeting card that could simply say, “I learnt in church the other day that palm branches were used in token of victory and peace. Wishing you peace in your home every day this Palm Sunday.”

At Easter time, chocolate easter eggs fly off the supermarket shelves more quickly than usual. In England last year, The Meaningful Chocolate Company sold the Real Easter Egg (www.realeasteregg.co.uk). For the first time, the easter egg box package specifically mentioned Jesus, explained the Christian understanding of Easter on its pack, and gave money to charity and development projects. This year’s Real Easter Egg comes with these improvements:

- The three crosses on the front are bigger
- The Easter story is a colourful visual story board as opposed to last year’s text only version
- Under the lid, and for the first time ever on an Easter Egg, there is a quote from the Bible - the resurrection text from the Gospel of Mark.
- Inside the box is a copy of the Easter story in booklet form for children to keep and parents to share.

So if you’re considering holding an easter egg treasure hunt, or an easter egg decoration party for your child’s schoolmates, you might want to adapt some of the above ideas to share the good news. Add coloured jelly eggs on the menu for the day!

Why not also invite your friends to bake some hot cross buns together, and share their history over breakfast?

Too lazy to bake? Entice them to our usual hot cross bun breakfast on Easter Sunday.

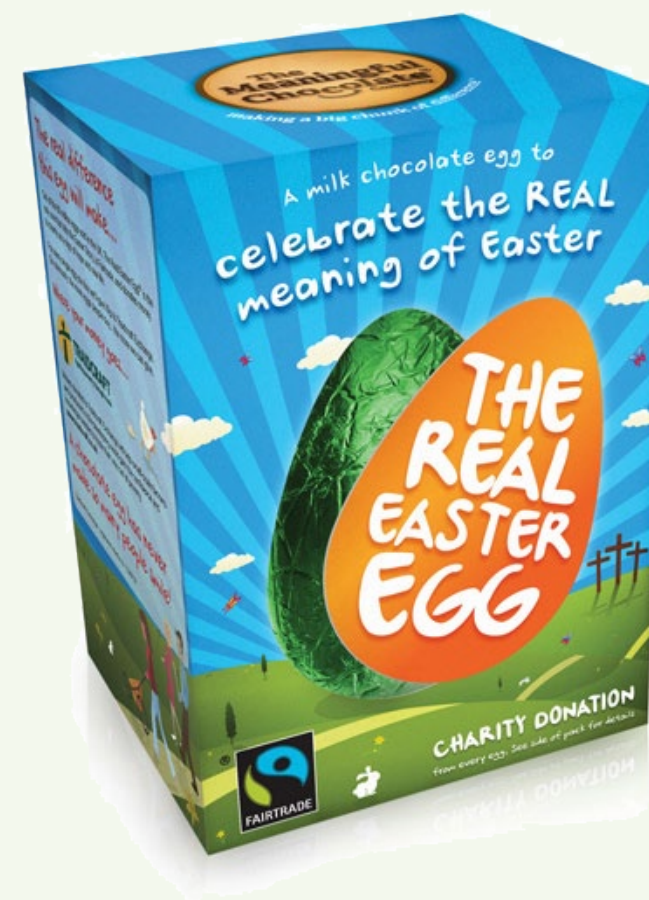
Or make a date with someone and get to the east coast of Singapore to watch the sunrise so that you can talk about what happened on that first Easter morning.

Have a dinner of lamb shank? (see related story on page 4).

Anxious that you won’t know how to squeeze God into the conversation? Relax! As you pray for your friends, ask God to make you sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s leading and trust that God will guide your choice of conversation topics.

Sometimes, you don’t even need to bring God into the conversation – focus on building the friendship or relationship and on really getting to know the person. We need to be patient and trust in God’s timing for seed sowing and harvesting.

May the Holy Spirit, with Whom we are filled, empower us this Easter to speak God’s Word boldly.



BEHOLD THE LAMB

The sacrifice of lambs played a very important role in Jewish religious life.

And the traditional roast lamb dinner that is enjoyed on Easter Sunday goes back earlier than Easter to the first Passover of the Hebrew slaves.

The Passover feast was a celebration in remembrance of God's deliverance of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt. Lamb was roasted and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, usually horseradish or romaine lettuce, which are used to symbolise the bitterness of slavery. This was done in obedience to God's instruction that the angel of God will pass over their homes and bring no harm to their first-born son.

In the temple in Jerusalem, the sacrifice of lambs for the sins of the people was part of the daily worship routine (Exodus 29:38-42). The time of Jesus' death on the cross corresponds to the time of the evening

INGREDIENTS

Makes 12-16 kebabs

- 1kg lamb, trimmed and cut into half-inch cubes
- 12-16 skewers soaked in water for 30 minutes
- 10 button mushrooms, thickly sliced
- 1 onion, thickly sliced
- 1 red and 1 yellow bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into half-inch pieces
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Marinade

- Dash of lemon juice and balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/2 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
- 1/2 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 clove garlic, minced

sacrifice. The Old Testament prophets Jeremiah and Isaiah foretold the coming of One who will be "like a lamb led to the slaughter" (Jeremiah 11:19; Isaiah 53:7) and whose sufferings and sacrifice would provide redemption for Israel. Of course, that person was none other than Jesus Christ, "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29).

We are separated from God because of sin, and we stand guilty before Him. Our only hope is in God who provides a way for us to be reconciled to Himself. That is what He did in sending His Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross. Christ died to make atonement for our sins and to pay the penalty of death for whoever believes in Him.

So as we enjoy the simple oven-roasted lamb kebabs based on this recipe, let us give thanks for His sacrifice. We are covered by His blood, protecting us from the angel of (spiritual) death.

METHOD

1. In a small bowl, combine all the marinade ingredients. Mix well and apply to the lamb. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator overnight.
2. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
3. Assemble kebabs by threading lamb, mushrooms, peppers, and sliced onions onto the skewers, alternating them so that each kebab has a bit of each.
4. Place kebabs on a rack in a roasting pan. Drizzle with oil, sprinkle with salt to taste. Turning the skewers to evenly coat all of the meat and vegetables.
5. Bake about 12 minutes for medium rare or 15 minutes for medium well.



Photo: Chow.com

Hymn for the season of Eastertide

Because He Lives

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow.
Because He lives, All fear is gone.
Because I know He holds the future,
And life is worth the living just because He lives.
- "Because He Lives" (Gloria & William Gaither)*

Beyond the simple lyrics of "Because He Lives" is a heartfelt story of the creation of this hymn. The hymn was written sometime in the late 1960s by the husband and wife team of Gloria and William "Bill" Gaither, who have to date, co-authored some 600 songs.

At that time, the Gaithers were experiencing a dry spell in their lives. They had not written any songs for a while, and the United States was going through a period of great spiritual chaos, with the height of the drug culture, the peak of the Vietnam War and the whole nation being fixated with the "God is Dead" theory. Racial tension was also increasing. Closer to home, the Gaithers found themselves subjects of false accusations and belittlement. Bill Gaither was also recovering from a bout of illness.

It was during this time that the Gaithers were expecting their third child, and first son, Benjy. To Gloria Gaither, the thought of bringing another child into the world at a time like this was taking its toll on her. Yet she could testify to a time where she was sitting in their living room in agony and fear on New Year's Eve, when suddenly and quite unexpectedly, she was filled with a sweet and calming peace. Like an attentive mother bending over her baby, it was as if her heavenly Father saw her and came to her rescue. Her panic gave way to a calmness and an assurance that only the Lord can give. She was assured that the future would be just fine, left in God's hands. And this was how the lyric in the second verse came to the Gaithers: "How sweet to hold our new-born baby and feel the pride and joy he gives, but better still the calm assurance that this child can face uncertain days because Christ lives."

In Bill Gaither's words "And it gave us the courage to say "Because Christ lives we can face tomorrow" and keep our heads high."

The resurrection of Christ Jesus confirms His power to defeat sin and death. Through the resurrection of Christ Jesus, we have eternal life with God and an eternal hope. His resurrection makes it possible for each of us to face our daily lives with confidence and courage because we know that the living and victorious Christ is with us every step of the way.



When we are faced with life's sudden obstacles, or are in a continuous uphill struggle, be reminded of Christ's words in John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." Christ exhorts us to have faith in Him and to march triumphantly with Him toward the future, no matter which stage or situation of life we are in.

Will you choose to claim Christ's victory in your life, and submit all your uncertainties to His sovereign will? Will you proclaim that "life is worth the living, just because He lives?"

"Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him."

Romans 6:8-9



THE DEPTH OF God's Love

The sermon was preached from the pulpit on 29 January 2012 for the 8.45 am and 11.15 am English services. The sermon has been edited for the purposes of this newsletter. Mr Chan Chong Hiok is a member of Trinity Methodist Church. He can be reached at cch@zteam.biz.



by Chan Chong Hiok

AGAPE. It is eternal, constant, unchanging and invincible even when attacked by evil because it follows after God's character and gracious dealing for all of creation. But the depth of God's love is most expressed to us in the saving of sinners.

God's Love Saves Us

The extent of God's divine love is seen most clearly in Jesus - His life, ministry, His death on the cross for the people who made Him suffer, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. God's power through Christ's resurrection transforms us inwardly, resulting in the assurance of divine work in us. Today, as I share, I urge you to hear the voice of God reaching out to you. If you drop dead today, will you be going to heaven? Are you sure? If you are not sure, something is amiss. Perhaps you have not put your trust in Christ who has been knocking at the door of your heart for such a long time.

God's Love Transforms Us

Though your sins are like scarlet, God says it shall be white as snow. You are pure before the eyes of God because of the blood of Jesus Christ. You have been transformed. The love of

God must transform into loving action in us. The Bible uses the word "fervently" in 1 Peter 1:22, to love one another with a pure heart. It takes energy yet a total dependence on the Holy Spirit so that this expression of love can come about. The ability to love the way God does must be to love even the not-so-attractive, the not-like-minded, the not-congenial, the unlovely. **This is the power of agape - it is able to transcend what is natural to do that which is impossible so that the world will be able to recognise the way of God in us.**

God's Love Pursues Us

He pursues us and continues to love us so that we may be able to continue to mature in Him. God has plans for your life too, that you may be useful in His hands and that all that you are may point to one direction - the glory of God. Every day is a gift of grace from God that you and I may realise out of the depth of God's love when we are preserved for the next hour, sensing the joy and treasure that God has poured into our lives.

God's Love Constrains Us How do I love others? By faith.

By faith we can love the person who is unlovable, who attacks us. You do not need to be defensive. You should pray according to God's will for you to love and for you to follow His commandments and His will.

Our motive must be to love without expecting anything in return. God will return the favor and blessing to us.

Have you been assured of God's love in redeeming and saving you?

Have you sensed with conviction the great treasure of His love that nothing can change you being a child of God? That is key to security in yourself. Some of the most beautiful women or most intelligent people feel insecure even though they are so gifted because they are not assured of something that does not change in their life - that God loves them unchangingly.

Only with Agape can we be secure. Not because of how good I am but because of how good He is.



Ain't No Mountain High Enough

At 1834hrs, on Dec 17 last year, I stood at the summit of Kala Pattar (5545m), the mountain on the southern flank of Pumori (7145m) from where there is a dramatic sunset view of Mount Everest, the Western Ranges and Lhotse Face.

Now when I look back, the words from The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho ring in my ears: "When you really want something, the whole universe conspires for it."

I enjoy travelling solo, because it gives me the freedom to go as fast or as slow as I want, and it gives me the flexibility to change my destination on the fly. Don't get me wrong, I also like hiking with people because I love discussing things as we're walking up the trail.

But it's those hours when I'm the only human around that I spend time in reflection on life in general and of my life in particular. Those are the hours when I am "recharging my batteries".

Last December, I trekked up to the Everest Base Camp (5340m). As I flew to Lukla, the starting point of the trek, I saw Mount Everest and the Himalayan region, and thought to myself: "How am I ever going to get up or through there?"

But as I started walking up the trail, the way presented itself. That's when I started thinking how climbing a mountain can be - and often is - used as a metaphor for life.

The mountains in life are exactly like their physical counterparts.

They are intimidating, challenging, steep, and appear terrifying. But mountains are indeed climbable and conquerable and I am persuaded that God puts no more on me than He has equipped me to bear.

Many a time during my trek, when we got to the higher regions above 3800m, I was tempted to give up and turn around. The harsh Himalayan weather and treacherous terrain were taking its toll me. The two years of my national service training could not have prepared me for this trek. Yet God brought me back to my army days saying:

"You've been on a mountain before, a different mountain with different characteristics but a mountain nonetheless and you are still standing!"

Look through your yesterdays, wasn't I with you when you were trying to climb a mountain of hurt, a mountain of pain, a mountain of loneliness, a mountain of fear or a mountain of depression?

Don't you remember that I am true to my Word? So instead of running away from this mountain and fearing its magnanimous stature, embrace it and prepare to climb. For the same God that was in the mountain for Abraham, Moses and Jesus, now dwells in the mountain with you."

I remember praying to God along the way to level out the paths or perform a miracle to give me extra



strength to complete the long eight hour-trek each day, or to give me a short rest. But I realised that God wanted to use the mountains to shape and mould me through each trial and challenge.

While I didn't make it all the way up to the top of Mount Everest, reaching the base camp was good enough to teach me some life lessons.

I believe that mountain climbing, like life, isn't just about getting to the top and taking a photo to prove you did it. Tiresome and treacherous though the trek may be, God is surely faithful and we will triumph through the peaks and valleys till the end.

"For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care."

Psalm 95: 3-7

Have you been touched by this sharing of a quiet time with God? Please consider telling us how God has been speaking to you! Drop us a message at tmccomms@gmail.com with the excerpt from your quiet time journal - you never know how your walk with God may touch the lives of others.

A Symphony For The Soul - God's Masterwork: A Concerto in 39 Movements



By Samuel Wong

If you, like me, was expecting to go to a musical event, then you couldn't have been more surprised.

"God's Masterwork: A Concerto in 39 Movements" is not a symphonic performance but an inspired series of teachings that take a panoramic view of Israel's grand history. The master composer is God Himself, unfolding His concerto in 39 movements, or the 39 old testament (OT) books.

"The Bible is a symphony marking the different historical events of the world, beginning from the fall of man. Similarly it also reveals God's redemptive plan through all 39 books of the OT," says Rev Peter Goh, this "concert's" conductor.

Participants are invited to listen to the series of 39 movements being played by His unseen Hand through lectures that are more like

Sunday school stories and modern documentaries that are historically engaging and visually exciting. Presented on a multimedia platform, there are also interactive activities like quizzes and puzzles to liven up each monthly session.

As a symphony for the soul, participants listen and soak in its beauty, sitting in appreciation of high and low notes. The peaceful interludes and the thundering crescendos are aptly positioned like any piece of music. The concerto begins with the upbeat percussion of a chorale prelude in Genesis, through the cantatas and cadenzas articulated in Psalms and Proverbs, right to the slowing larghetts and sudden pause at Malachi. The recurring melody of God's redemption through Jesus Christ is repeated throughout each biblical book and section.

The main objective of conducting this series is to refocus our attention and create an in-depth survey

of the OT which many have relegated to being too ancient and irrelevant to our modern age. However to understand and enjoy God's word and also to know and understand the new testament (NT) better, one has to know the OT and how it all began. The OT is the backbone and forms a solid background, laying the foundation for the revelations of the NT.

As such, God's Masterwork: A Concerto in 39 Movements is planned to spread over time with no fixed end. Held just once a month in two-hour sessions, the undertaking promises to take many months. Rev Peter is sensitive to the pace of learning, eager to bring attention to the God of the Word, and not just the Word alone. The musical element that comes into play includes the sound of silence, as silence is a note by itself. It is only in silence that we can enjoy music's lyrical nature.



With a modest attendance of 30, the first session began in mid-January (and continues on every third Wednesday of every month). Delving into the canon of the scriptures, Rev Peter also explained how the English Bible, from when it was derived to its present modern versions, came about.

In getting to know the OT, it is good to memorise all 66 books of the Bible. A tall order you say? Maybe, but not if you have a formula. Those who were there, were taught it. They were also taught how to do spiritual journaling, encouraged to write down personal reflections as they read the 39 books of the OT beginning with Genesis. It was suggested that they complete the reading of Genesis. Participants are to read one book of the OT before class each month until completion of the 39.

After the enjoyable first class, the second class in mid-February saw a marked rise in attendance. This time, after the quiz and stories, the fascinating documentary of Days of Noah, about the search and

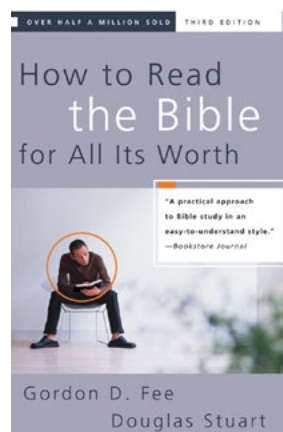
discovery of Noah's Ark at Mount Ararat in Turkey, was shown. Likewise a short documentary about the search for Sodom and Gomorrah was shown in March, and the archeological discovery of Mount Sinai will be screened in April. Since the book of Genesis has some 50 chapters, it was started in the Bible study in March and will be completed in the Bible study in April.

Mr Wee Eng Hock who attended both January and February classes with his wife Judy, said: "We were encouraged to attend this course as a study of the 39 books of the OT would give us an insight into our Creator God, which we believe is fundamental to one's knowledge of the Bible. The two sessions so far have been interesting."

The next session of God's Masterwork: A Concerto in 39 Movements is scheduled for **Wednesday 18 April 2012** at 1000h – 1200h. Enquiries and registration can be made to the church office directly.

BIBLIOTHEQUE by sks

The Discipleship & Nurture Committee has been running adult bible classes on Sundays on *How to Read and Understand the Bible Better* and *Laying the Foundations of Discipleship: Bitesize Theology* (see back page for details). The books featured below will help you further your study.

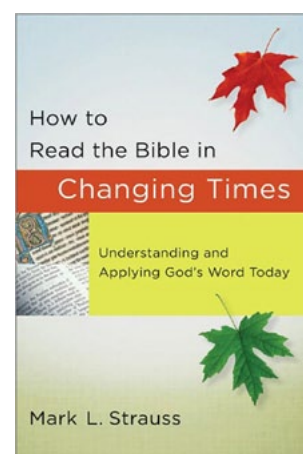


Title : How To Read The Bible For All Its Worth
Author : Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart
Format : Softcover
Price : \$13.50

Even though it might seem particularly daunting at times, the Bible is meant to be accessible to everyone from new believers to seminary students. It is not just for those who are particularly gifted or scholarly. This guide provides readers with a clearer understanding of the different writing styles that are found in the Bible. There is also an updated list of recommended commentaries and resources for those who want to delve deeper into the word of God.

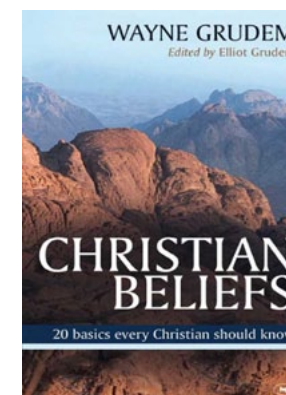
Title : How To Read The Bible In Changing Times
Author: Mark L. Strauss
Format : Softcover
Price : \$23.50

God's Word is unchanging but the world which we live in is ever-changing. How can we apply the words which were written thousands of years ago in today's world? The "heart-of-God" approach provides guidelines to discern the meaning of the text in its original context and cultural features and how we should apply the truths discovered to contemporary life situations. If you struggle to see the connection between the Bible and your world today, this insightful book will help you gain a better understanding of the Bible.



Title : The Blue Parakeet
Author : Scot McKnight
Format : Softcover
Price : \$22.00

Parakeets make delightful pets but their owners often cage them up or even clip their wings. McKnight contends that many attempt to do the same thing with the Bible. He challenges Christians to rethink their approach towards reading the Bible. In his inimitable style, McKnight encourages Christians to be the people of faith they long to be.

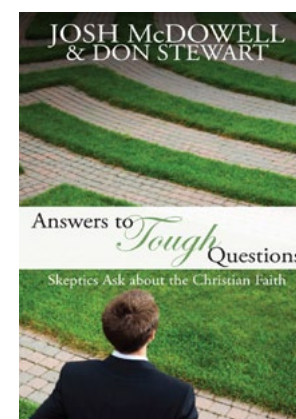
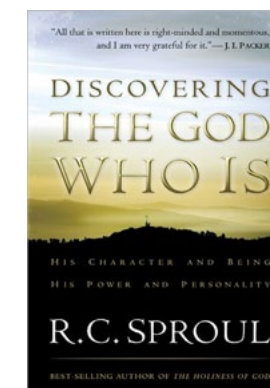


Title : Christian Beliefs
Author : Wayne Grudem
Format : Softcover
Price : \$22.00

This reader-friendly guide provides a clear and concise introduction to key Christian beliefs. The chapters cover a range of biblical topics that have practical applications to Christian living. The topics include an understanding of what God is like and the importance of atonement and resurrection.

Title : Discovering The God Who Is
Author : R C Sproul
Format : Softcover
Price : \$17.50

In *Discovering The God Who Is*, readers will journey with Sproul to discover for themselves the magnificence of God's character and being, His power and personality as Sproul asks the questions many of us wonder about God such as: Is the Bible the Word of God? What is righteousness? What is the difference between a moral and a legal right? How does God create something from nothing? Sproul communicates deep truths in a fresh and easy-to-understand style as he shares his passion for God and excites the reader to dig deep and know the God who is alive, who is real and is able to relate to each and every one of us in our lives.



Title : Answers To Tough Questions
Author : Josh McDowell & Don Stewart
Format : Softcover
Price : \$15.50

Sometimes it can be hard to put our Christian beliefs into words when questioned by non-believers, especially if they are our loved ones. In this book, authors Josh McDowell and Don Stewart provide clear and persuasive answers to 65 difficult questions often asked about the Christian faith. This book will help to strengthen the faith of the believer and put into words the answers to that we have always found difficult to articulate.

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30 day bible challenge



by Ang Hern Shung

Take 20 minutes of your daily life for 30 days to get to know the character, life and teachings of Jesus. That was the challenge issued to the youth of TMC at the start of this year. Many youths took up the challenge with the desire to get to know Jesus better and to improve their walk with God. Throughout January, the youth were led on a Bible reading plan that focused on the life of Jesus. From the foretelling of His birth in the Old Testament, all the way to His resurrection in the Gospels. They were asked to read and journal down any observations or thoughts they had regarding the day's Bible verse, and were encouraged to ask as much questions as they could. Interestingly, Facebook also became a fantastic platform for the youths to share their reflections on the Bible verses, as well as discuss any questions that may have arisen from the day's readings.

Here are some reflections from the 30-day challenge from some of the participants:

"Indeed God spoke to me during the 30-day Bible challenge. One of these was in Hebrew 11:1. 'Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.' This verse really spoke to me because it's a reminder for me to have faith in God even though I do not know what He has planned for me. This is really encouraging because I'm taking my O levels this year and this reminds me to always trust in the Lord even though I do not know what is ahead of me."

Ming Xuan, 16

I have learnt that Christians are susceptible to a hardened heart. We might be so desensitised to the Good News and so we fail to see God's goodness in our lives. However, I have also learnt that God wants us to be constantly amazed by His presence, and thus I seek and give thanks for the little blessings He gives me each day

Russ Hoe, 17

"Jehovah Jireh is translated as 'The Lord will provide'. God's provision that day was not just adequate, but more than enough to meet the need of his followers. Jesus will provide for those who follow him."

By Jacelyn Lau, 16, on reading the passage on the distribution of the five loaves and two fish.

We were challenged to rethink the ways we treat people whom we do not get along well with. Jesus wants us to love our enemies. When you are faced with challenges or find it difficult to do the right thing, stop, take a deep breath, and ask yourself: WWJD - What would Jesus do? Are you able to live your life pleasing God in your actions, thoughts and words?

By Emily Tan, 19

NAMED Celebrates 10 Years of Fellowship!

By
Eugenia Koh

IT TURNS 10 THIS YEAR.

NAMED, one of the small groups in TMC, celebrates a major milestone with relationships within the group growing from strength to strength. Members of this small group have seen each other through different seasons since their school days.

"10 years in the making, NAMED is one of the longest-standing young adult small groups in TMC. United in faith, bonded in spirit, we meet regularly to share and grow in our faith. A common love for God brings us together. Through the different seasons, we lean on each other and upon God's strength," said Charmaine Ong, who works in marketing.

One of the major highlights witnessed by NAMED throughout the years is the development of a culture of openness.

"It's been amazing to look back and witness God's goodness through the years. He's deepened our level of sharing, and used us to encourage one another on. Each small group meeting is an honest and open time of sharing of our hopes, dreams and struggles, and as small group leader I've been blessed and encouraged richly by our time each week," said Eugenia Koh who's from the communications industry.

The group also prides itself on dealing with the real issues of living out one's faith in the midst of a post-modern and secular world. Being in the media and marketing fields has exposed members of the group to many influences and different approaches to life as many of

them come into contact with a spectrum of individuals. Small group meetings cover discussions around many secular issues and the struggles with them.

To commemorate its 10th anniversary, NAMED will be holding a series of celebration events throughout the year. Those interested in finding out more and attending one of these sessions can RSVP at eugeniakoh@yahoo.com.sg. Seats are unlimited but hurry now and make your bookings if you are keen!

About Named:

Started in 2002, NAMED consists of a group of 4 young women who meet weekly for a time of bible study and prayer. With most of the group being in the field of marketing and communications, they balance each week the demanding hours of their dynamic jobs with small group meetings.

As such, fellowship meetings have taken them from church to various cafes around Singapore. Small group meeting days vary from either one of the week nights to Saturday brunch meetings. While it doesn't have a fixed meeting day or place, the group still manages to meet regularly.

The group is also unconventional in that it is not particularly fussed about having a group name. It is currently called NAMED as group members were told that it had to be named for listing in the church's directory!

"Meeting each week keeps me grounded. It reminds me of my purpose as a child of God. Through the support and encouragement, I am refreshed each week with a renewed spirit,"

Charmaine Ong,
Marketing



HEARD ON THE STREET

"Through these 10 years, our small group has evolved along with our personal lives. It's seen us through the different stages of our lives – from JC to uni days, and even as we each enter the workforce now, always forming that constant space of support, prayer and fellowship. For me, it's where I am reminded of how God's created us to be a community of believers where as friends and sisters in Christ we can share, rejoice and grow together in our journey of faith."

- Eliza Tan,
final year
student at NUS.



"My fondest memory of NAMED was how the small group started really organically with a few girls who wanted to be a support for each other through Christ and the small group has evolved to become a support system through the bond of friendship formed through the years. Going to small group is always the highlight of my week,"

Foong Wenjia,
PR

IN & ABOUT TMC

feb - mar

Foot Reflexology in TMC



CM Teachers Dedication

Does the name Takhmao ring a bell? Some of you who have sat through an update from a visiting missionary from Cambodia would know that TMC has adopted a church in Takhmao. It is TTMC or the Takhmao Trinity Methodist Church.

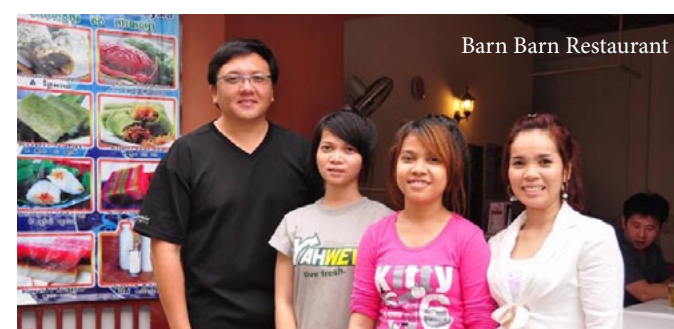
What else do you know about TTMC or TMC's missions work? What are our missionaries' needs and challenges? How do we support TTMC having adopted them?

Mr Kelvin Tan, the new chairperson of Missions and Outreach, is passionate about what he wants to do. He intends to undo the mystery of missions and the work involved.

Besides TTMC, our church also supports missions work in Cambodia.

Mr Kevin Lowe and his wife Claire were the first missionaries supported by TMC. They have lived in Cambodia long enough to be able to write and speak the Khmer language. Claire runs The Learning Lab, an enrichment centre for students. It also teaches life skills in a Christian environment and the graduates in turn are able to reach out to their own countrymen, sharing the love of God.

Jacob and Wai Cheng run Harvest Inn (harvestinnonline.com), a humble guest house where the income is used to train and disciple the locals. To keep the 'new', young Christians gainfully employed, the couple started the tuk tuk Ministry and Barn Barn Restaurant, which serves local fare and an array of "melt-in-the-mouth" nonya kueh. The revenue from this venture is channelled to missions work.



As for the tuk tuk Ministry, what objective does it serve? If you have travelled to Malacca or Manila, you may have seen similar vehicles. The tuk tuk is a traditional three-wheeled motorcycle offering convenient, no-frills transport for tourists. Besides providing revenue for the young riders, it also allows them to ferry visitors around Takhmao to introduce them to the work of God.

Ms Violet Khor is a retired school principal who decided to visit Cambodia, specifically, Takhmao. Here, she answered God's calling to take up the challenge to become the principal of Toul Kork Methodist School of Cambodia. The school has 800 students from kindergarten to secondary level. What difficulties does she encounter? Are you able to imagine teaching Home Economics without a kitchen or utensils, and where students just learn the theory of cooking? Or teaching Science with no laboratory to execute the experiments? What other areas keep Violet awake at night? She is looking for volunteers to teach craft, perhaps motorcycle repair or better still, to organise a school camp.

How can you contribute? How can you support God's work through the missionaries?

We are putting a team of journalists and photographers to capture the essence of missions work. Are you up to it?

Are you able to help promote Harvest Inn, to grow the business to fund the work of God?

May God's word speak to you through Luke 10:2:

"The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into His fields."



by Rose Tan

More on TMC's missions work can be read about at www.tmc.org.sg/missions.html. Contact Kelvin Tan at kelvinlstan@singnet.com.sg



Toul Kork Methodist School



Tuk Tuk parked outside Harvest Inn

Ouch! Yow! Ooo! Yelp! Tsk!

Are these sounds you expect to hear at a typical foot reflexology session? Do they connote images of red thumb impressions left on your ankles long after the session is over? Or perhaps worse, bruises which suggest that a right old battering has been delivered?



More than 40 people had their misconceptions about foot reflexology clarified over four sessions with Rev Peter Goh. No instruments of torture were used. The only contraptions used were the gentle hands God gave all of us.

There is foot reflexology of the eastern and western genre. Whereas pain, diagnoses (“Ah ha! Your liver is weak” or “Oh ho! Your digestive system is poor”) and earnestly-promised healing are trademarks of the former variety, western foot reflexology is devoid of pain, does not diagnose nor purport to heal, but instead, focuses on relaxing the patient.

Reflexology of the latter genus is complementary medicine based on the principle that there are reflex areas in the hands, feet and ears which correspond to every part, gland and organs of the human body. Contrary to popular belief, reflexology originated in Egypt, not China.

As reflexology is a science based on physiological and neurological study, participants had to memorise the landscape of the feet with reference to the anatomy of the human body. This was truly hard work especially for those who had long consecrated their biology lessons to the inner reaches of memory.



In the midst of learning the ‘caterpillar’ thumb technique in reflexology, some other poignant spiritual lessons emerged.

God is truly our imaginative Creator. Have you ever noticed that the curvature of our feet mirrors the curvature of our spine? Did you know that the foot and the spine each have 26 bones? Or that a quarter of all the bones in our body are found in our feet. That’s surely a reason to treat them better than with just a pedicure!

Once the skill is learnt, the possibilities of improving relationships and bringing families closer together are also endless. Some of the participants of the course were mother and daughter, others were spouses. Imagine both husband and wife giving foot reflexology treatment to each other after a hard day’s work, or a daughter massaging her father’s feet. It creates a time to talk and a time to demonstrate love and care through a loving touch.

Beyond getting pampered with reflexology and performing their moving functions, what else are feet meant to do?



“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, “our God reigns!” (Is 52:7)

After Isaiah rehearses some history in chapter 52, he tells of a glorious sight of a messenger running to Jerusalem to bring the good news of God’s restoration of the Babylon exiles to Zion. This foreshadowed the redemption of mankind by Jesus (Rom 10:15). The “good news” of restoration and redemption is spoken of as a great blessing.



Can reflexology bring about a blessing? It is Rev Peter’s testimony that many in the Assisi Hospice have been brought relief – physical and spiritual – through reflexology. They have been able to relax from the pain of their terminal illnesses, and more importantly, received Jesus into their heart as the reflexologist shares the gospel while administering treatment to the (captive) feet. What a creative way to share the good news!

We Christians often like to box things into Christian and secular. Who would have thought that a secular thing like foot reflexology could contain spiritual lessons?

Let our feet be beautiful because we bring the joy of the abundant life to others through all the “everyday” things.

A Pedicure for the Soul



by Tricia Tong

Benefits of Reflexology

- Reduces stress
- Induces relaxation
- Improves blood circulation
- Revitalises energy
- Cleanses toxins
- Synergises the body system
- Stimulates creativity
- Enhances productivity
- Maintains good health
- Improves sense of well-being
- Nurtures relationship

Gets in touch with God, our Creator, the ultimate Healer.

A Reflexologist’s Opening Lines

*How is your sole (soul) today?
Good health is but 2 feet away
Don’t let stress - your arch enemy - defeat you.*



Today, I am William Wee.

We are attending a befrienders training session, organised by Outreach and Social Concerns in partnership with the Methodist Welfare Services (MWS). This session is one in a set of three modules organised to give members a better idea of the social service scene in Singapore.



by Cheryl Sim

FRIENDS IN NEED, FRIENDS IN DEED

The Outreach and Social Concerns ministry (www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html) will be organizing these Befrienders training sessions on a yearly basis. These sessions comprise 3 modules:

1. Understanding the social service system in Singapore and how befrienders can help families in need. The poverty simulation exercise (reported in this article) will take place in the second half of this module.
2. Helping skills: How to empathise with, and help beneficiaries (financially, emotionally, etc.). Self-care for Befrienders will be covered in the second half of this module.
3. Advanced skills: Handling challenging issues with families (e.g. health, employment, abuse, and termination.)

The sessions are run by experienced staff from Methodist Welfare Services, and are helpful not only for existing Befrienders, but also for all who wish to get a better understanding of Singapore's social service system, and to help families in need.

For more information on these sessions, do contact: Lee Pak Kheng at 8288 7736.

Today's session is a poverty simulation exercise. We are grouped into families, each playing the role of one family member. My sister, Whitney Wee (Mrs. Winnie Tan), is nine, and our grandparents are Warren (Mrs Lee Pak Kheng) and Wendy Wee (Mrs. Maureen Ng). We have no parents, and our grandma has been the sole breadwinner since our grandfather developed mobility problems. I have been diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and, at seven years old, am a handful for my grandparents, who work to make ends meet.

The exercise has four rounds, each representing one week of the month. A round lasts for 12 minutes, during which time all family members have to run their errands, go to work, attend school, pay their bills, and seek financial assistance from a buffet of social service organisations that have set up "operations" in our plaza.

We scurry to the plaza when the round begins. It is a frenzied rush for my grandma to send the children to school, and get to work on time. In school, I – as instructed by my role – do no work and saunter around the compound, unattended. My scholarly sister turns in impeccably written work and pesters the teachers into giving her a scholarship (They can't. We need to approach the Community Development Councils). We are given letters to take home, instructing us to pay our school fees next week, and bring money to purchase new abacus for class.

Elsewhere, our grandfather hurries to the various social services to apply for handouts before the round ends and the social service offices close for the "week". We attempt to work within the complex system, managing to apply for the Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund, food coupons, and a few waivers of miscellaneous fees. At the end of each round, the banker calls out the names of families who have not paid their dues that week. Offending parties are faced with the prospect of eviction from their homes, starvation, and the shutting off of their domestic utilities.

It is a gargantuan feat of coordination – we strategise which bills to pay, and which to defer (my abacus, sadly, has to wait). We try to minimise trips to save on our limited ez-link passes. My sister valiantly declares: "I don't need food, I will drink water". To my seven-year-old self, the true meaning of most of these activities eludes me. All I know is that amid the chaos, Grandma complains that her

broken teeth have to stay broken (next to electricity, dental appointments are a luxury), and slowly, the microwave and fridge have to be pawned.

It is eye-opening. It is sobering. More importantly, it is real – or as real as a simulation exercise could possibly be. The reality is that the issues that I vicariously experienced during the two-hour simulation exercise are the very struggles that many Singaporeans grapple with.

The statistics are not positive. During the session, we read about families that get by with very little, and often go hungry. Despite optimistic reports on decreasing unemployment levels and the rising income levels of the lowest percentiles in our population, the poor do exist. Confronted with this reality, how can we turn aside?

The simulation session makes me wonder how families are able to even navigate the labyrinth of social services – it was struggle enough for us, in a controlled environment, and with the very seasoned Auntie Pak Kheng in charge of making our family decisions. In reality, with strained family ties and limited education thrown in to exacerbate the already-complex situation, day-to-day life is by no means smooth-sailing.

The befriender's role is to walk with these families, helping them in their specific areas of need. Some need guidance in understanding the social service system. Others need help with sorting out their daily doses of medication. Yet others need a listening ear and friends to encourage them to lead an independent life. The needs differ. Some are easier to meet, others more complex. Sometimes, the befriender discerns these needs and tries to meet them as best as he or she can. All the time, the befriender seeks to love these families with the love of Christ. Challenging, but a rewarding responsibility.

The final bell rings. The Wees have made it through the month, if only because of the ingenuity of my grandparents, and by the skin of our collective teeth. We laugh together now, reflecting on the things we did well (or not) and sharing the lessons we've learnt about the social service scene in Singapore.

At the back of my mind, though, is the knowledge that while our day's activity had ended, life still goes on for the many whose lives this simulation was modelled after. That knowledge alone is cause for action.



到彼岸去 Across the Straits

10月20日清晨6点早起，为要到柔佛传福音给一位高龄 89岁的妇女就迫切地祈求上帝打开她的心门，从她女儿的口中，知道她在一周前跌倒。如今躺卧在床上不能行动，须要家人服侍。我们求上帝保守她有清醒的头脑，能够慎重地考虑并接受这宝贵的救恩。

在路途中，我们都带着期盼的心情。希望她还有机会认识主耶稣，在她有生之年得救，得永生。

当我们抵达陈家时，我们再次诚心地祷告；我们的姐妹惊喜地看到母亲能坐在轮椅上而不是弯曲地躺卧在病床上。老人家看起来十分消瘦，但精神犹佳，头脑十分清醒，能清楚地表达自己的思想与看法。

姐妹家中的亲人，大哥、大嫂与妹妹也都带着笑容迎接我们。这使我们不尽要感恩，因为我们深怕大哥、大嫂会拒我们于门外。

神的恩典降临在老妇人的身上，她甘心乐意地接受主耶稣作为她个人的救主。在决志祷告的整个过程中，她都能随着传道清清楚楚地认罪悔改，切切实实地接受耶稣作她心中的王、生命的主，并且答应从此以后不再拜其他的神明，只单单地信靠主耶稣；甚至于在当天下午就接受洗礼成为天父的女儿。

感谢上帝开恩，大嫂也谦卑地放下身段，让我为她和她有病的孩子祷告。在祷告的过程中她也领受圣灵的感动，流下了几滴眼泪，圣灵继续工作让性格倔强的大嫂愿意定下心来听传道讲有关主耶稣受死、埋葬、复活的福音。

大嫂与小姑的关系一向都很恶劣，她们无法沟通，但当天下午神的爱浇灌在她们中间，神将和睦的灵降临时，她们愿意握手，彼此接纳。

神晓得这个家庭须要救恩，要从黑暗中赐于他们一条光明的道路；当传道继续传扬上帝的大爱时，这一家人都安静细细地听。我们在旁也一直求真理的圣灵来光照聆听神话语的亲人。把福音的种子撒在好土上。

后来，我们也被圣灵再次引领到另一位亲人的家。一进到家门就看到四个偶像，看来要花一些心思才行，这主人她性格十分直爽，许多时候当有人向她传福音的时候，她立刻说：“不要跟我说耶稣。”十分抗拒。当我们与她闲聊时，我们不断地从内心恳求圣灵给我们机会与她分享福音，终于有机会谈到信仰的问题，虽然她告诉我们她选择了异教，但是从她的谈话中，知道当她开始寻求神的时候，她是先到教会去，但许多其他的原因与拦住，她作了今天错误的选择。我们没有花太多的时间与她争论，却默默地为这颗封闭的心来祷告。我们提醒她耶稣还是依然地爱她，也告诉她真正的平安与能力是从我们所敬畏的全能上帝而来。临别前，我们送了一本Saltshaker “盐的摇器”给她。求上帝引领她去读这本特刊，从当中许多的经文使她寻得真理、生命、道路 - 主耶稣基督。

这一次柔佛之旅，虽然短暂，但对我们来说其意义重大，有收割、有撒种；我们会继续祝福，探访这个家族。我们最大的期望就是人人得救，将福音传到地极。因为主耶稣说：“你们要去、使万民作我的门徒、奉父子圣灵的名、给他们施洗。凡我所吩咐你们的、都教训他们遵守我就常与你们同在、直到世界的末了。”（太28：19-20）



On Oct 23 last year, I woke up at 6 am to travel to Johor with a friend, Sarah to preach the gospel to her 89-year-old mother.

Sarah had told me that her mother had had a fall a week ago, and was lying in bed unable to move. She was totally reliant on her family for care.

I prayed that God would open the door of her mother's heart. And we asked God to give her a clear mind to carefully consider accepting His precious gift of salvation.

When we arrived, we prayed again in earnest. We were pleasantly surprised to see her on a wheelchair instead of being confined to the bed. She was fairly thin, but in good spirits. Her mind was alert and she could express her ideas and views clearly.

Sarah's elder brother, his wife and her younger sister were all at home and they greeted us with a smile. We thanked God for we were fearful that they would turn us away.

God's grace was upon Sarah's mother as she accepted Jesus as her personal Saviour. She said the "sinner's prayer", repeating the words clearly and was baptised that very afternoon.

I also thank God for His mercy to Sarah's sister-in-law who put aside her pride and allowed me to pray for her and her sick child. As we prayed, she was so moved by the Holy Spirit that she cried. With the Holy Spirit's enabling, this once-stubborn lady willingly listened to the Gospel.

The relationship between Sarah's sister-in-law and Sarah's younger sister had always been estranged. All along, they had refused to speak to each other. But that afternoon, God's love was poured out on them. The spirit of reconciliation descended upon them and they shook hands in mutual acceptance.

God knew that this family needed salvation. He bestowed on them a path of light in their darkness. When the preacher spoke about God's great love, the family listened quietly. Meanwhile, Sarah and I prayed that the Spirit of truth would enlighten them as they listened to the Word of God. The seed of God's word did indeed fall onto good soil.

Later, we were again led by the Holy Spirit to the home of another one of Sarah's relatives. We saw four idols the moment we stepped into the house. It seemed to us that we needed to put in more effort in witnessing to this family. On many previous occasions, when someone had tried to preach the gospel to this stubborn relative, she had immediately resisted. "Do not tell me about Jesus," she would say. This time, when we chatted with her, we continuously prayed in our hearts for the opportunity to share the gospel with her.

Finally the subject of faith came up. When she first began seeking God, she had gone to a church. Due to a variety of reasons and obstacles, she chose to believe in a pagan god. We did not debate her choice with her but quietly prayed for this closed heart. We reminded her that Jesus still loves her and that real peace and strength comes from the Almighty God. Before we left, we gave her a copy of the Saltshaker magazine. We continue to pray that God will direct her as she reads the many verses in our magazine so that she will find the Truth, the Life and the Way - our Lord Jesus Christ.

This Johor trip was short but significant to us. There was harvesting and there was planting. We will continue to bless and visit this family. Our greatest hope is to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth and that everyone will be saved. Because Jesus said: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20)



Taxi-ing Towards God

This is my testimony on how, by God's grace, the faithful witness of fellow Christians has impacted my own family.

I was born into a nominal Muslim family – my father, a Singaporean Chinese, had met and married my mother, an Indonesian Muslim, and had converted to Islam.

I was the first in my family to become a Christian, having done so during chapel after transferring to Methodist Girls' School (MGS) when I was in Primary 5. I remember being very excited about my newfound faith and trying to share with my mum about Jesus and asking her to be a Christian. She told me very firmly that she could never be a Christian because she was a Muslim. I was very sad because that meant that I would not see her in heaven after she passed on.

This worry continued to preoccupy me on-and-off for the next 20 years of my life, as I prayed desperately for my parents' salvation through cancer scares that my mum had, whenever my parents travelled overseas, and so on. Over the years, I did not evangelise openly, as my mum made it clear that she was not interested in converting. But I continued to let them know that I prayed for every family crisis. And that God was faithful and always answered my prayers.

Finally, there was an occasion about six years ago when my parents travelled overseas. I don't know why but I was especially anxious for them for some reason. I remember bargaining with God as I prayed, and I promised Him that if He should deliver my parents home safely, I would try and share with them about Him.

Of course, my parents came back from their trip safely and some months later, God reminded me to keep my end of the bargain. That year, TMC organised a Christmas event and I picked up an invitation card. After that, my struggle began because I didn't know how to broach the subject with my mum. Finally, out of desperation, one day I just thrust the invite into her hands, mumbling something about how she and my dad should come and bring my nephews along. There wasn't much of a response from her and because of the awkwardness of the whole situation, I didn't really ask her whether she wanted to come.

Christmas eve came and to my surprise, my mum called me in the morning to ask me what time she and my dad should be there. My parents and my nephews came for the event but nothing earth-shattering happened. Or so I thought. Little did I know that God had already set His plan into motion.



by Caroline Lim
Caroline Lim is the chairperson of our Witness & Evangelism Committee.

A few months after that, my parents attended the miracle service at Lighthouse Evangelism on their own. You can imagine my surprise when I found out! I asked my dad how that came to be. My dad was working as a taxi driver at that time and he said that on more than one occasion, when he had ferried passengers to the church, they had invited him to attend the service. It then occurred to him to bring my mom to the miracle service, as she had been suffering on-and-off for over 20 years from a very severe pain in her jaw. She had sought different types of medical treatment but they had never been effective. I never knew until she gave her testimony at Lighthouse months later that the pain was so bad that there were times that she had contemplated suicide.

And so, my parents attended the miracle service and my mum said that during the service she just couldn't stop crying because she felt so loved by God. And the most wonderful thing happened – God healed her of that pain in her jaw that had plagued her for so long. She immediately came to place her faith in God and my dad, having witnessed the miracle, did likewise. My parents are now baptised members of Lighthouse Evangelism. My mum is so filled with the Holy Spirit and is an anchor of faith in our family.

I am sharing my testimony to give glory to God for the faithfulness and mercy that He has shown my family. I share it because I am thankful that a few Christian sisters bothered to invite the taxi driver who drove them to the church to come and experience the God that they worshipped. I share it to encourage my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to step out in faith and obedience to the Great Commission that our Lord Jesus gave us. Those Christian ladies could not have known what would happen after they invited my dad to the church. But that simple invitation that was given has led to so many blessings for my family and occasions when God was glorified, through my mum's testimony in her church and at her workplace.

I am sure many of us have a family member or friend in mind whose salvation we have been praying about. And we should keep on praying for them, for it is a spiritual battle that we wage. But let us also be encouraged to act as the Spirit leads us to, whether it is to invite them to our Sunday service, to outreach events, or to an Alpha Course. In the coming weeks and months, there will be opportunities for you to learn how to share your faith more confidently as well as platforms like the Alpha Course for you to invite your pre-believing family members and friends to. Let us continue to share the love that God has placed in our hearts with all those around us so that He may be worshipped and glorified!

EASTER SERVICES AT A GLANCE

1 Apr Palm Sunday
845 and 1115 am
A Grand Entrance

Holy Week
800 pm

2 Apr The Reason

3 Apr The Invitation

4 Apr The Outcome

5 Apr The Crown of Thorns

6 Apr Good Friday
900am
The Forsaken Christ

8 Apr Easter Sunrise Service
630am
Perplexed

8 Apr Easter Service
900am
What a Difference 3 Days Make



We're Searching for Volunteers

1) LAYOUT DESIGNERS REQUIRED

Your help is needed with designing pages of our church newsletter, Saltshaker (www.tmc.org.sg/resources.html). Familiarity with ADOBE In-Design required. Commitment: Once in 2 months. Please contact Gek Khee in the church office / tmccomms@gmail.com ,if you are able to serve or if you have any queries.

2) Love books? The Resource Centre is looking for 3 members to join our team! Please contact Jeanette at jeanlh Wong@gmail.com for more details or/and to sign up.

3) We need drivers to pick up and send back elderly who wants to attend the Yum Cha session on the 1st wednesday of every month. If you can help, please contact Victor Seah, tel: 9619 6176 or vseah@singnet.com

4) If you can serve as:

- Organist / pianist
- Sound Crew
- Display Co-ordinator
- Drummer / Bass Guitarist

please contact person: Patricia Zoey Tan at 9818 8447 / patriciazoeYTan@yahoo.com.sg

5) Contact 123 is in need of tutors to assist primary and secondary school children in their school work, volunteers to manage the counter or any other area you can assist. Block 123, Serangoon North Ave 1, #01-149. Contact Cathrine at cathrine@tmc.org.sg / 6285-8450. See more information at www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html

The Saltshaker ran an article on the Japanese tsunami in June last year. We now hear from a TMC worshipper, Damein Cheong, who has been serving in Japan with CRASH Japan (www.crashjapan.com) in the aftermath of the tsunami. CRASH stands for Christian Relief Assistance Support Hope.

The Great East Japan Earthquake was a magnitude 9.0 undersea megathrust earthquake off the coast of Japan that occurred at Mar 11 last year. The tsunami caused a number of nuclear accidents, primarily the ongoing melt-downs at three reactors in the Fukushima I Nuclear Power Plant complex, and the associated evacuation zones affecting hundreds of thousands of residents. The Japanese National Police Agency confirmed 15,844 deaths, 5,893 injured, and 3,394 people missing across eighteen prefectures, as well as over 125,000 buildings damaged or destroyed. Around 4.4 million households in northeastern Japan were left without electricity and 1.5 million without water. The needs of the Japanese are still great and many are still suffering in silence today having lost loved ones and friends. (Facts from Wikipedia).



connect with others



"We were posted to the base at Ichinoseki, one of the areas affected by the tsunami and earthquake, during our trip in February this year. Four of us, from Canada and Singapore, joined four Norwegians, one German, four Americans and four Japanese.

Together we spent time with the survivors through operating a mobile café known as Ricky's Cafe, songs, sports, making greeting cards and quilting.

FROM JAPAN

Around coffee tables at Ricky's Cafe, we shared in the laughter and tears of the survivors as they told intimate stories of their loved ones swept away by the tsunami. We could not fully comprehend the devastation they had experienced but their willingness to let us into their suffering brought us joy. And our presence, we hope, brought them comfort.

One elderly gentleman pulled out photos of his family. His son had suffered a snowboarding injury 10 years to the day before he was washed away in his wheelchair. His daughters too were gone. The man now gives shoulder massages in memory of his wife.

Yet amid these dark times, there was humour. An elderly woman whom we were making greeting cards with playfully stuck a pair of stickers on her ears for earrings.

As we chatted with the ladies who were busy with quilting work, we were allowed a glimpse into the fortitude and stoic nature of the Japanese. While they worked on the quilts with dexterous fingers, the women commented on how creating something beautiful in a community had allowed them to forget for a time their horrific nightmares and enjoy life again.



But much as we were heartened by the cheerfulness of the survivors, we were stunned when we visited the devastating scenes left behind by the disaster.

We had the privilege of visiting the kasetu jyutaku or "temporary housing" that had been built by the Japanese government. The transience of the accommodation reflected the uncertainty of the situation the tsunami survivors were in -- their lives were and are on hold for an indeterminate time. We lent a helping hand with cooking and the distribution of meals to the victims.

We were fully occupied every day, delivering invitations to survivors to attend a concert given by Migawa, a Christian singer, did a prayer walk in the area, and on weekends, we also took victims on outings to places like the nearby world heritage cultural centre.

We assisted a Baptist church with clean-up work and packing of relief bags, and visited a nursery which the Baptist pastor has been helping to rebuild.

We were so overwhelmed and affected by our visit to the Ichinoseki base that none of us wanted to return home. Instead, each one of us wanted to remain and work with the tsunami victims of to help restore their broken lives.

It is amazing how many Christians around the world have responded to the needs of these survivors who are experiencing firsthand God's love through the many caring followers of Jesus.

And there were those who responded. One young man gave his life to the Lord. An elderly woman made arrangements with a Japanese Christian to study the Bible and attend church.

Each day we experienced God's goodness to us as we shared our lives with our Japanese friends. We believe that God called us to bring His healing to the people in the tsunami-struck areas. We are His oaks of righteousness to reveal His splendour. In Jesus's name, we can bring consolation and encouragement.

So what does the future hold for these survivors? No one knows the answer. Perhaps as more of our Christian brothers and sisters visit, more of the survivors may open their hearts to the truth of God's tremendous love that offers them the hope of eternal life.

One of the members of CRASH is returning to the Tohoku region between April 23 and May 5 this year to help the ladies sew aprons and potholders. If you are interested to join or help in any way, please contact Damein Cheong at hansenlovesjapan@gmail.com.

EVENTS

Wed Apr 4, May 2 and every 1st Wed of the month 10am-12pm

Yum Cha is an opportunity for people to come together for fellowship, and serves as a platform for TMC-ers to meet one another as well as non-Christians in the community mid-week. Devotions in Feb and Mar will be on how to handle one's inferiority and temptations.

www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html#yumcha

Every Sat, 9am-12pm

Contact 123 IT Courses from basic computer, to the use of Facebook and movie-making.
<http://www.tmc.org.sg/c123/c123course.pdf>

Wed Apr 11, May 9 and every 2nd Wed of the month, 3-5pm

Tea@3, join us for tea, fellowship, singing followed by a light and interesting programme. Organised by GYM

Sat, Apr 14, 28 and May 12, 26, 9-11am

Fellowship of Ukulelians meet to fellowship and play the ukulele of course
www.tmc.org.sg/highlights.html#ukulele

Wed Apr 18, May 16 and every 3rd Wed of the month, 10am-12pm

God's Master Works: A Concerto in 39 Movements is an overview of the Old Testament conducted by Rev Peter Goh
www.tmc.org.sg/highlights.html#gym

Every Fri from Apr 20, May 4, 18 and every 1st and 3rd Friday thereafter, 9am

WSCS Bible Study by Esther Wong. Contact Mrs Diana David / Mrs Joanne Wong at 96507126 / 98585517 for more details.
www.tmc.org.sg/highlights.html/wsc-sbs

Every Sun till 20 May (except for 1st Sundays and 8 Apr), 10:15am

D&N Adult Bible Class, Laying the Foundations of Discipleship - Bitesize Theology

Thu Apr 26, May 31, 10am-12pm

St Luke's Eldercare Centre Devotions at Blk 217 Serangoon Ave 4 on how to handle one's inferiority and temptations. TMC's ministry to SLEC brings hope, help and the love of Christ to many needy elderly.
www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html#slec

Sun, Apr 29, May 27, 9am

Visit to Institute of Mental Health by Outreach & Social Concerns Contact Yvonne Tan at 9091 8589 / yvnn_tan@yahoo.com
www.tmc.org.sg/osc.html

Every Sat (not on 5 May), 3-4.30pm

WSCS Line Dancing. \$10 per month. Contact Eunice at 6288 4061 for further details.

every 2nd and 4th Sun of the month, 7:30 - 8:30 Prayer Meeting

Sat May 12, 2-5pm

Befrienders' Training Module 3 - Engaging Families with Challenging Issues and Termination. Contact Pak Kheng at leepakkheng@hotmail.com for further details

Sat May 19, 2-5pm

Small Group Workshop I. Contact Sue Yien at sueyien@gmail.com for more details

Sun May 20, every 3rd Sunday thereafter, 10am

WSCS Visitation to Homebound. Those interested to cheer up old folks, please contact Lucy Chan at 97482733

Sat May 26, 7-9pm

Mandarin Service Parents' Night Appreciation Dinner
www.tmc.org.sg/highlights.html

Further details on TMC's events can be found at www.tmc.org.sg

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stock.XCHNG (www.sxc.hu)
All-free-download.com

Printer

Lithographic Print House Pte Ltd

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