



Jurong Christian Church

The Vine Committee

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Editor's Word

When the last issue of The Vine came out on JCC's 43rd Anniversary, a young lady came up to me, very interested to know more about the torture that she thought I had been through. Unfortunately, I had to disappoint her because I was not writing about my own experience but about brother Yun's. Thank God that the young people do read The Vine. I think this young lady has the missionary zeal because she is interested to know more about the suffering church.

Churches in the West, and I think we have to consider ourselves in that category, do not know about the lives of our fellow Christians in the parts of the world where the church have to go underground, like the 1st century believers. Imprisonment, torture and economic sanctions are common to these Christian brothers in such countries. However some statistics show that these churches are growing much more rapidly than those in the West.

I only hope that when persecution comes to us, *"you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved."* (Matthew 24:9-13) , we will be able to stand like our brothers in the suffering church, and also grow stronger.

Did you know that even if you eat a lot of good food but do no exercise, your body will not go stronger? How does one get the 6 pack abs? Certainly not by eating a lot of good food. So also, I believe the Christian, who keeps getting fed by the Word but does not go out and share it, will not grow. I believe that God does not expect the light to be kept under a bowl or a talent to be buried in the ground.

I mentioned a few issues earlier that I had learnt CPR and AED. After almost a year of not putting it into practice, I think it is as good as forgotten. If you happen

to have a heart attack, don't expect me to be of much help because I am not too sure of how to apply these life saving techniques properly. Recently on 24th August, my colleague had a heart attack. As he lay on the ground, I could only watch helplessly. Good thing he was fully awake and did not need CPR. Only those with constant practice, like the Civil Defence Force, will be able to do it confidently.

So too for all of us who have attended the Conversational Evangelism seminar by Dr Dave Geisler, which taught us how to listen to our contacts, clarify what they are telling us and then reach out to them with the Good News, if we do not put into practice what we have learnt, it will do nobody any good. This methodology is not confrontational and in fact may be somewhat like the Inter Religious Harmony drive, which tries to build up unity through diversity. We listen to our contacts and we share our beliefs. No one is forced to accept but all are required to listen politely.

The first step of Conversational Evangelism is Hearing. So when you hear a Buddhist say that the recent spate of floods in Singapore is an "Act of God", it should elicit from you a question, "Do you believe in God?" Some Buddhists believe in god and some don't. You have to find out if your contact does or does not.



Even if he believes in god, generally Buddhists believe that god cannot end suffering only the teachings of Buddha can end suffering. The question then should be: "How can man end suffering if it is brought about by a god?" "If man is greater than god, then what is god?" So the second step of Conversational Evangelism is to clarify what your contact is saying.

After listening to him, if your contact is willing, then share with him the Christian's view of God, "*For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.*" (John 3:16). A loving and eternal God who died for us so that we can live with Him forever.

Martin Cheah

RICHARD'S DREAM

Dear Bros. & Sis. in Christ,

Greetings in the precious name of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ.
Shalom.

It was greatly impressed upon my heart to share my dream with you, as follows:

On 4th May 2010, around 5pm, I had a dream.

The dream was very intense. It was about the End Times, His coming back.

In the dream, I was preaching to a large crowd of peoples, some of whom I knew, their faces very vividly seen and I could even recall them (of ages 60+, 40+ and 10) when I was awoken.

I was urging everyone to be prepared for the 2nd Coming of The Lord, and that we are to cling onto Him irrespective of whatever things that are going to happen soon. God will do what He says in His Holy Bible, that all will come to pass, and, true to Himself, He will do what He says He will do on that Day. (Dreadful to those who know Him not, but great rejoicing to those who are found belonging to Him.)

It was so intense that I literally shouted and yelled repeatedly so much that it woke me up.

I sat upright on my bed – with a pounding and crying heart.
Just as I was awoken abruptly, I also abruptly slumbered back into sleep and fell back into dream again.

However, this time, I found myself telling the Lord that we are going to rebuild JCC soon for our children and our children's children where they can glorify and Worship Him.

But, somehow, He did not even mention anything about the rebuilding of JCC. Rather, He just said, “You all do whatever you all are doing.”

BUT, HE EMPHASISED, SPEAKING SLOWLY, - DO NOT FORGET TO PREACH MY GOSPEL TO ALL PEOPLES WITH UTMOST URGENCY - AS HE IS COMING BACK REAL SOON.

NB: Just about then, Pastor Anthony sms-ed me confirming the follow-up with an elderly lady (60+, who came for our Family Day and indicated in the Feedback Form that she wished, among other things, - to know more about the Christian faith). This time, I was completely awoken by the beeping of the incoming sms message.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, as I share this with you, my heart is still very excited about it; yet my feeling is mixed with concern as many still have yet to come into the knowledge of salvation through Christ. (Salvation that only He can offer.) Even my mother, mother-in-law, brothers and sisters, and billions out there are still eternally lost, without CHRIST in their lives.

Let's continue to pray together (even with para-churches, whenever and wherever opportunities are open to us) to bring others into His Glorious Kingdom. Amen.

Serving Christ in partnership with you,

Just me: Richard

GOD is LOVE.

Do you know why a Car's WINDSHIELD is so large & the Rear-view Mirror is so small?

Because our PAST is not as important as our FUTURE. Look Ahead and Move on.

Friendship is like a BOOK. It takes few seconds to burn, but it takes years to write.

When GOD solves your problems, you have faith in HIS abilities; when GOD doesn't solve your problems HE has faith in your abilities.

CH Spurgeon preached a sermon entitled FORGIVENESS MADE EASY and this is his closing statements. If you want to read his sermon in its entirety, you can find it at <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/1448.htm>

Spurgeon died in 1892, so this sermon is at least 100 years old but it is still relevant for us today.

FORGIVENESS MADE EASY

A blind eye is often the best eye a man can have, and a deaf ear is better by far than one that hears too much. "Also take no heed," says Solomon, "unto all words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee." Something you have done may irritate a servant, and he may make remarks that are unbecoming and impertinent. Don't hear what he is muttering. Keep out of hearing; he will be sorry tomorrow, and if he thinks you did not hear him, he will continue in your service and be faithful to you. What would you do if your master held you accountable for every word and if he scrutinized every sentence that you uttered? How would you live at all if he reckoned sharply with you? No, dear friends, as you are to forgive one another, do not take offense; and when offense is given, do not exaggerate it, and if you can, do not even observe it.

Then again, do not publish offenses. There has been something very offensive said. What now? Do not repeat it. Do not go first to one, and then to another and say, "Now this is quite private, and mind you keep it a secret-So-and-so has spoken shamefully." Better that you should let your heart break than go up and down with a firebrand in this fashion. If a brother has done wrong, why should you do wrong also? And you will be doing wrong if you publish his fault. Remember how the curse came upon Noah's son for exposing his father. How much better it is for us all when there is anything wrong to go backward and cover it, without even looking at it ourselves, if we can help it. Cover it up! Charity covers a multitude of sins. Not only one, two, three sins will charity cover, but she carries a cloak that covers a whole host of faults.

Above all, my brethren, and with this I close, never in any way, directly or indirectly, avenge yourselves. For any fault that is ever done to you, the Master says unto you, "Resist not evil." In all things bend, bow; yield, submit. "If you tread on a worm, it will turn on you," some say. Is a worm

your example? Christ will be mine. It is a shocking thing when a Christian man forgets his Lord and finds an excuse for himself among the poor creatures under his feet. But if it must be so, what does a worm do when it turns? When you have trodden on a worm, does it bite? Does the worm hurt anyone? Ah, no. It has turned, but it has turned in its agony and writhed before you, that is all. You may do that, if you must. Brother, the most splendid vengeance you can ever have is to do good to them who do you evil, and to speak well of them who speak ill of you. They will be ashamed to look at you; they will never hurt you again if they see that you cannot be provoked except to greater love and larger kindness.

This ought to be the mark of Christians. Not "I will bring the law against you," or "I will avenge myself," but "I will bear and forbear even to the end." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Do not take into your hand that which God says belongs to Him. Rather, as He for Christ's sake has forgiven you, so also forgive all those who do you wrong. "How long am I to do that?" says one. "I would not mind doing it three or four times." There was one of old who would go the length of six or seven, but Jesus Christ said, "Seventy times seven." That is a very considerable number. You may count whether you have yet reached that amount, and if you have, you will now be glad to begin again, still forgiving, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you. May God help us to be patient to the end. Christ Jesus must be the object of our imitation. This is the kind of doctrine that Christ Himself preached, and therefore, since He preached continually this love to our neighbor, and also forgiveness of our enemies, we ought both to preach and to practice it. Go and believe in Him, and be imitators of Him, remembering that He forgave His murderers upon the cross on which He accomplished our redemption. May His Spirit rest upon you evermore. Amen.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon



THE FISH

What is the oldest symbol in the Church? Answer: **The Cross**

What is the second oldest symbol in the Church? Answer: **The Fish**



“ΙΧΘΥΣ” (pronounced as “ikh-thoos”) is the Greek word for fish. In the early Church (first few centuries A.D.), Christians used this symbol as a code to avoid the Roman persecutions. It is actually an acronym that stands for

“Jesus Christ, God’s Son and Saviour”):

ΙΗΣΟΥΣ	Jesus
ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ	Christ
ΘΕΟΥ	God’s
ΥΙΟΣ	Son
ΣΩΤΗΡ	Saviour

Christians do not worship symbols. However, symbols have their purposes in the Church. They focus our attention on something. When we see the Cross, we think of the crucifixion of Christ for the propitiation of our sins. When we see the FISH, we may be reminded to follow Jesus as fishers of men. (Matthew 4:19) When the early Christians were persecuted, they used the FISH symbol as markers at places of meeting, as identifiers between believers and non-believers and, possibly, as a badge of their faith. Jesus himself made use of a lot of symbols in his messages to his disciples (“I will make you fishers of men” being one) and parables. The righteous and the wicked were being compared to good and bad fish. (Matthew 13:47-50) In the miraculous feeding of the multitude (John 6), the fish featured prominently next to the bread. It is interesting that the FISH used so often for its symbolism by Jesus actually bears an acronym that carries a great and germane message about Jesus Christ himself as God’s Son and our Saviour.

The FISH symbol of the Christians (not any other fish artwork) since the early Church has become so well-known that it even appeals to non-believers. They copy it (in the very artistic form of two identical intersecting arcs enclosing a meaningful word), with some distortions to suit their purpose, of course. Is imitation the sincerest form of flattery?

Christians do not need to be carried away by the flattery. However, whenever we see the symbol fixed on doors of houses, pasted as decals on cars, worn as jewellery, printed on stationery, etc., we should be much pleased by the reminder that Christ is in us and encouraged to share the Good News. Maybe we should proliferate the use of the FISH as a Christian icon that it may become a regular conversation piece, aide memoire or cue.

John Lee

“Jesus, like any good fisherman, first catches the fish; then He cleans them.” –
Mark Potter

WORLDS AT WAR - BATTLE BETWEEN TRUTHS AND LIES

A Bolivian-born man with a “divine mission” hijacked a plane in Mexico, with a Bible in his hands.

A few teenagers in Singapore, claiming spiritual insight about an impending end to the world, made a pact to jump off a building so that they can become demon slayers. Even a secondary school boy among them with aspiration for university could be so thoroughly brainwashed by a teen medium. The whole thing is like a dark echo of the Jim Jones’ doomsday cult in the late 1970’s.

In Myanmar, an American, “acting on God’s revelation”, swam across a lake to warn Aung San Suu Kyi about her life. He caused more problems instead of being of any help.

In UK, two kids (only 10 and 11 years old) with a history of violence committed murders most foul with ingredients of robbery, torture and sexual perversion against their child victims. News report revealed that the criminal kids were into watching horror films that even grown-ups dare not watch.

Addiction to violent games, gunmen murderers on school grounds, on-line dalliances, etc. – all sorts of perverted conducts and values – no longer take people by surprise. Nothing is news anymore. The real world is not a comfortable place, so youngsters take their flights of delusion.

The traditional singing concerts on stage (*getai*) during the traditional Chinese 7th month to entertain the returning dead when the gates of Hades are thrown open are pushing the envelope for raunchiness. I wonder whether the intended ghost audience occupying the front-row first-class seats includes sex-starved members calling for the sexy shows, so the organizers are only catering to demand.

Supporters of the modern *getai* argue that unhappy parents can keep their children away. How? Let me venture a suggestion: Parents can lock their children in the house, hide the door keys and then the children can’t even go to the coffee shop, run errands or meet up with friends for school projects or tuition lessons if parents are not available as chaperones to ensure that they take the paths without the bawdy attractions waylaying them.

The responsibilities for children's well-being are placed squarely on parents' shoulders: Parents can inculcate the right values (without overstepping to hinder the children's freedom and independence), so that the children would be wise enough to avoid the bad influences; parents can discipline (without over-disciplining to attract criticism), so that the young ones do not go astray (like becoming loanshark runners for a few 10-dollar bills); parents can shield their children from sexually-nuanced public material (because media owners and exhibitors have to cater to popular demand and commercial considerations); parents can keep watch on their children 24h/day ... Parents are supposed to be very powerful against societies' onslaught of negative forces. Even school teachers have a lot to complain, but little can they do, about the increasing boldness of today's kids. Secular morality is challenging religious ethics at every turn.

I read from a news headline that in a Comex IT Fair, there are "more booth babes and tech hunks" and there is a competition to "vote for your favourite Comex girl". Wow! Does any cool dude wish to pay a visit to an exhibition of girls in search of one he can vote to win? Or does any femme fatale wish to try her charm to get the attention of a hunk? I think the tech wares on sale are secondary because the babes and hunks are getting a lot of publicity.

What is happening in the world, and what are the wrong influences at work that parents (the super-species) have to bear the responsibilities alone? Actually, I should ask, "What are happening in the worlds?" Apart from the old world that the older folks are accustomed to, there is the new world, the virtual world, that the younger generation is more contented with. Sense of reality is replaced by a sense of "virtuality" – virtual truths prevail over eternal truths and time-tested values.

Ironically, while governments all over the real world are deeply aware of the ills that accompany the invasion by the virtual world, the real world's defences are seriously deficient in facing the blitz. Ironically indeed, the real world leaders are actually embracing and encouraging the tools and operation of the virtual world by active participation or omission of controls.

Properties in the real world are expensive; but with real world \$10000, a whole island (not just a house) can be bought in the virtual world with all the trappings of the real world (café, lectures, excursion sites, vacant fields to build new facilities, etc.). We use real world money (RWM) to buy virtual world properties; virtual world businesses can be set up to earn profits in VM (virtual money) which can be converted to RWM. The line between real and virtual is increasingly being blurred. One day, the banks and moneychangers may start to offer INTERWORLDEX (inter-world exchange between RWM and VM) and other cross-world services. The usual FOREX will diminish in relevance.

Are more and more people enslaved by cyber-alliances to forsake real-world friendships? People who are lonely but can't find a partner in this world can look for a beautiful wife or handsome husband on a virtual island. Virtual sex and virtual booze are also possible to elicit virtual pleasures that can migrate across the real-virtual boundary and be converted to RWP (real world pleasures). Pick-and-choose and marry-and-divorce are less troublesome in a virtual country. Plausibly, laws and statutes of virtual-land will make their appearance to establish virtual governance. When will it be when a spark, or a trigger, is all that is needed for the virtual world to take over lives completely? Are more and more people going to lose their ability to distinguish between reality and the virtual world, between spiritual truth and demonic deception?

In another world – the heavenlies – a war is taking place between God and Satan, as described in the Book of Revelation. The war in the end times is not fought with our familiar real world's weapons and ammunitions. Physical fortresses and bunkers won't provide safety from the onslaughts of attacks. Instead, we need the full armour of God to "stand against the devil's schemes." (Eph 6:11)



"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 6:11-13)

"Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints." (Eph 6:14-18) We need all this to withstand the propaganda of the world (from political chicanery to advertising spiels of businesses to egocentric half-truths purveyed by self-seeking individuals).

In conclusion, here is an appeal from Apostle Paul:

“By the meekness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you – I, Paul ... beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:1-5)

John Lee

“Most people show by their priorities and their casual approach to spiritual things that they believe we are in peacetime, not wartime...” – John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*.

God's Protection and a Lesson Learnt

God is ever protecting His children from all harm and He knows his job well.

Last week, I was not happy over certain issues regarding some 'unfairness' of treatment.

I was analyzing the whole issue and 'teaching' the Lord how things should be done in the way of what I think is right.

On Wed night (18 August) I was praying for the Lord's guidance and help to do first thing right the next morning.

On the morning of Thursday before I stepped out of my house, I told God, 'You are going to clear all my doubts and forgive me for being so unkind to my fellow friends. Then I walked out of my house with my son Benedict.

As usual, he walked up to take his bicycle and I walked down the stairs from the 10th floor. I continued my walk with my left hand holding my handphone till the 8th floor. Somehow my left foot slipped and my body slid

straight towards the staircase landing. Midway, my handphone dropped on the floor splitting into 2 parts and the battery came out. As I slid down, miraculously I landed standing upright without any injury. Then I just picked up my hp and continued walking down as I felt the peace of God and protection of his hands over me. I was brimming with joy at that moment. His protection was over me just like my experience of skiing when I was with my family in Korea.

I continued walking to my transport pick-up point. Somehow all my doubts I had the night before cleared up. My thoughts are not His thoughts and my ways are not His ways. When I reached the office, I called John and told him that if not for God's hands I would have injured my body and could never imagine how the injury would be like.

Thanks be to God for His loving care & protection over His children!

Peggy Lee

SAFE AND DRY

"Singaporeans expect everything to be perfect, which we try to do. But some things are beyond (that) - it's an act of God, unless you want to lose half the roads and have canals," Mr Lee (Kuan Yew) said. (as reported on Today online)

Flood in Singapore – who ever thought that we will experience severe flooding in Singapore. Flooding so severe that your prized Ferrari parked in the basement would end up a submarine. That was what actually happened to one of my neighbours when the first of 2 flooding incidents happened at my condominium. This was on a Thursday afternoon of November 2009. It so happens that I work only 1 day a week and it happened on the day when I was at work, so my car was not in the basement that particular afternoon. Thanks be to God.

Months passed and everybody had forgotten about that flooding incident. We were not expecting the second return when on 17 July 2010, a sudden heavy downpour at 4.00 am in the morning caught many of us by surprise. The security guards sounded the fire alarm and I was rudely woken from my sleep. Grabbing my keys, I quickly rushed down to the basement car park. It was starting to flood as the waters rushed down like a waterfall. The whole stretch of Bukit Timah canal was flooded. Some of the cars were already stalled and those parked on a lower level had already been submerged.

Fortunately, my car was park on a slightly higher ground but the waters were already about to reach the car door. Next to me was another lady who was also unsure what to do as the waters kept gushing in. I asked a nearby man to drive my car out of the car park but he was scared to do so with an unfamiliar car.



There was no choice, uttering a quick prayer for direction, the lady next to me and I decided to make a dash for the exit. She drove her car off first and I followed behind. As I pressed on the accelerator, I could feel the car floating. Someone had earlier mentioned that the water would have entered my exhaust by now and if I started the car, it would immediately stall but thank God, it didn't.

I made my way up the slope but at the top of the slope, there was a policeman blocking the way. He was stopping the traffic because there was flooding everywhere. I told him I cannot stop my car here because the onrushing flood waters will drive it back down into the flooded basement. He relented and let me proceed.



I drove up the slope to higher ground and then left the car there. There was a Mercedes parked just behind me, I went over to the driver who told me that his car had stalled and the water had gotten into the cabin. His car was brand new, only a few months old.

I went back up to my house and was too exhausted from the experience to go back down to check if water had gotten into my car as well. After the water subsided I went down to check on my car and it was completely dry. The flood waters did not damage the engine or enter the cabin. Halleluiah, Praise the Lord.

Psalms 32:6 Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him.

Lucy Tan

Probably the safest place to be in a flood would be up on the 50th floor of the Pinnacle@Duxton. Some of us visited this very tall HDB block in the heart of the city and was almost blown away by the view at the top, not to mention the strong winds up there.

Food and fire are not allowed on the deck for obvious reasons, so it is not possible to organize a BBQ here. Just survive on fresh air and sunshine.



JULY 2010 43rd Anniversary



JCC celebrated its 43rd Anniversary with a sermon from Bishop Terry Kee, singing by the Chinese and Dialect Choirs and a buffet lunch after service.



July also saw the launch of the Fund Raising Dinner for the Rebuilding of JCC. The dinner will be held on 4th Sept at SAFRA, near Jurong Point.



PJ or Project Joshua officially came to an end on July 1st 2010 as all the youths will now meet as a Cell Group in church on Sundays.

REBUILDING JCC

Back in 2007/8 the church leaders mooted the idea of extending JCC so as to cater for the expanding need for space. This idea soon grew into a full blown rebuilding of the entire church possibly in phases, as the council saw the bigger vision of a new church in line with the Government's plans to make the surrounding area into the Lake District.



However, we did not have the funds to hire building consultants and architects to guide us and give us some concept designs. Yet by some mysterious movements of unseen hands, we received expert advice from Audrey Teo, Chief Architect of LTA, who provided us much help and also enlisted her friends, Limin Hee, an Assistant Professor from NUS School of Architecture and Thomas Schroepfer, an Associate Professor from Harvard University Graduate School of Design.



On 26th July 2010, the first concept drawings were presented to the Rebuilding Committee. However as I look back through all the events that finally lead to these drawings, I am amazed that we should even be at this stage and almost without any cost. Thank

God for providing all these professional services free of charge.

Indeed if God is not rebuilding JCC, its builders build in vain. In the back of my money mind, I am still wondering how we can raise the large amount of money for the building of this new church building. Certainly, it will be God who raises this money for us and through us. We had carried out many small fund raising projects in the past but the upcoming Fund Raising Dinner is the first major project and we hope that you will be there among the expected 900 attendees.

Martin Cheah

Raising Expectations

For the Fund raising dinner, the youths from both sections are practicing hard to present a song for that night. Come and share their exuberance as they serenade us.



Ministry Leaders' Planning

Saturday, July 3 - Leaders of the various ministries from Adult, Youth and Dialect gathered together as the pastors shared their plans for JCC.

