

**The Vine Committee**

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## HOMI'S REFLECTIONS

There are many blessings God has given us and I would like to help you count your blessings.

For the past seven years, I have been paying \$600 monthly for my car loan. Just last December 2013, I paid the last payment. Now I have spare cash just at the right time. For umpteen years Joo See had been paying over \$1000 every few months for her eye medicines. Around November 2013, the doctor said she need not take these medicines anymore and now her bill is around less than \$200.

Some of you may say, "I don't drive, so I don't have this blessing." My friend it is not the people who take MRT that are poor. It is those who drive. Can you imagine besides the car loan, there is the insurance, road tax, petrol, ERP, parking and regular servicing costs. Then there are those who say I don't save on any medical bills because I am healthy. God help you if you don't realize that you are blessed.

Do you know that it costs around \$250,000 to send a child overseas for studies? Aren't you blessed that your child can have his or her education in Singapore and even more blessed if he or she gets a scholarship with guaranteed future income?

It is agonizing to think that we feel that we are not blessed by God. We expect to receive the \$10 million TOTO win before we consider ourselves blessed. *Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD **blessed** him.* (Genesis 26:12)

In Malachi 3:11-12, God says, "*I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,*" says the LORD Almighty. "*Then all the nations will call you **blessed**, for yours will be a delightful land,*" says the LORD Almighty. Here you will notice that God did

not mention an increase of hundredfold but he will prevent pests from devouring the crops. This too is a blessing.

The problem is we always think the grass is greener over at another person's garden so we fail to see the beauty in our own garden.

Did you know that a half page ad in the Straits Times can cost around \$30,000 and yet we have this free advertisement in the Straits Times on 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2014.

The Fund Raising sub-committee were greatly encouraged by this free press which will help in our efforts to raise funds for the Rebuilding of JCC. I don't know how many eyeballs were on the papers but I expect at least 10,000 people should have read this. Prayerfully, God will touch these people to want to have a share in building His house for His glory.

I have only one comment though. Why did the photographer take this picture just when a lady with an umbrella walked pass? Is there any symbolism here? *He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.* (Psalm 91:1)

*Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter--when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?* (Isaiah 58:7) Maybe it is symbolic of the new JCC reaching out to the residents of Taman Jurong.

Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

Martin Cheah

**PAST B**

# HOME

THE STRAITS TIMES  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2014

**B1**

**B7** Another MP reacts to HPB's FAQ

**B15** Death of prof's wife; Ex-bus driver pleads guilty

## Three church groups to share \$25m hub

Pilot project is aimed at addressing shortage of space for religious use

**BY MELISSA JACQUES**

A \$25 MILLION church hub where worshippers from three Christian denominations – Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist – will be under one roof, in a quiet way to a pilot project aimed at creating the same concept found by churches here.

The new five-storey building at 700 Chong Road, which will sit on land currently leased to the Lutheran Church's former Christian Centre and being built by United Church for 30 years.

There are about 50 years left on the land lease.

Work on the approximately 60,000 sq ft hub is expected to start next year and be completed by mid-2015.

The project, spearheaded by Bishop Terry Lee of the Lutheran Church in Singapore, was given the green light by the Urban Redevelopment Authority and other government agencies last month.

The National Council of Churches of Singapore, of which Bishop Lee is president, has been meeting with the authorities over the past three years to explore options to address the issue of lack of space for religious use.

"We've been sharing with the authorities on the church hub concept. There's also a possibility that the authorities may look at having multiple churches housed in the same building structure, run by either a lead church or a joint venture," he says.

He said there are plans to eventually house more churches in the former hub.

To cater to worshippers from these churches, the hub will have at least two chapels or worship rooms.

Bishop Lee believes spearheading the project will help churches cope to address the challenges of land scarcity and rising property prices and costs that have driven some churches to seek locations to build function rooms, chapels and even novel incidental structures.

Plans for the hub come amid the growth of the Christian community here.

In tandem, with Singapore's population growth, the number of Christian worshippers has almost doubled from about 188,000 in 2000 to around 330,000 in 2010.

The church hub, which will sit on land that is currently leased by United Lutheran Church (ULC), will be jointly owned and operated by Lutheran Church and Joint United Methodist Church for 30 years. PHOTO: MARK CHENG

Number of Christian worshippers in Singapore: **588,000**

In 2010: **930,000**

Number of Protestant churches: **500**

Number of Catholic parishes: **29**

## *The Peace That Transcends All Understanding* (Philippians 4:7)

The dove has been considered as a symbol of peace throughout the world since time immemorial.

Sadly, we all know too well that peace in the world has been an elusive dream since time immemorial too. Aristotle said that we make war that we may live in peace. We have seen two World Wars, and it looks like a third is in the making. Alas, man cannot be satisfied without making wars, societies cannot be content without conflicts, and families cannot be still without squabbles! Do we really need to create hostilities in order to cherish hope of peace to come through fracas?



Every last Sunday of January, there would be a “Caravan of Peace” event at the Vatican when the Pope would release some white doves as a peace gesture. Last year, the birds released were attacked by a seagull. This year, a similar thing happened with the two released white doves immediately set upon by a

gull and a crow. If the dove is a symbol of peace, and the attacking birds are a symbol of aggression, can we not ask whether, symbolically, the incident reflects the real situation in the world that peace is always being intimidated by its belligerent antagonists?

It is gloomy to visualise the dove as a delicate bird vulnerable to tough foes on the prowl. Nevertheless, looking at the sinful world, we can agree with Jenny Shipley (the 36<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of New Zealand) that “peace is a fragile thing; it takes courage to secure it; it takes wisdom to maintain it.”

Does man always desire peace, yet have no peace? Mother Teresa said, “If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”

If we have forgotten, there is hope yet that we can still recall if we make the effort; or at least that, now refreshed in our memory by the reminder, we henceforth strain our mind (if we must) not to forget again that we belong to each other.

I found this interesting poem on the Internet, written by a lady with the online name *harriet567*:

## Peace Like A Dove

*Peace like a dove that soars above the tempest and the storm,  
Faith that moves mountains when we pray,  
The love of Jesus healing our wounds,  
God's peace that comes into our hearts to stay.*

Last year, when the two doves of peace came under attack, they managed to escape from the clutches of the birds of prey and flew back into the Vatican palace. This year, the two doves of peace again managed to fly away after just losing some feathers. Call it divine intervention or give it whatever interpretation you wish, but for me I feel a valuable symbolism to us that the world still has hope – even when peace is under attack, it can survive.

Like what is mentioned in the above poem, peace is like a dove that soars above the tempest and the storm.

The era of social media crusading, politicking and character slaying has its ugly pervading influence. Yet, I see a positive side of it in making transparent the authentic nature of the world which is but a stage of a theatre where all men and women are merely players in a drama. What do we see of actors and actresses in a drama? Yes, they are all dressed up to look good with a façade of elegance that hides the real McCoy. It is clear that whether people see themselves as “in the world” or “of the world”, they are on a shaky stage and there is a lot of insecurity. How can we find peace in such a world?

Jesus assured, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

And Apostle Paul reminds:

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

The peace doves can survive attacks, so can peace in the hearts of men of God.

Shalom!



*JOHN LEE*

# VOICES FROM THE HEART

## *Taxi, Taxi... God with us*

It has been a while since I wrote. The **experiences that I will be sharing were gathered** over the last year. Often I wondered what I should write and it is not as easy as it seems. For me, it always helps when I pray for wisdom before I start. This is the second article for the theme, "Voices from the Heart". After many prayers, I started typing.

There are four distinct stories from taxi drivers which I will be sharing with you. As I look back while writing, it amazes me how God works through the lives of anyone who believes in Him, His Love and His Grace. He does not select people based on race, nationality, status of wealth or qualifications. Through His eyes, His Love for His People will always be the focal point as how Jesus had died on the cross for us.

1. Wendy has an 18 year old son. When I boarded the taxi to work one morning during rush hour, I was amazed at how Wendy was open about her testimony for Jesus as we started talking about God. Yes, she was a lady taxi driver. I may have missed out some details but she did assure me that I could share her story with you and contact her when I needed more information.

Wendy was with a married man for 10 years and always living in the misery of quarrels and disagreement over her wish to attend church. All these ended when her son was beaten up by a group of youngsters and he was in a coma for a long time.

She was distraught and sank into depression with many questions left unanswered. She turned to God and prayed for her son's recovery and consciousness. She challenged God and His Mighty power to bring her son back and promised God to share her testimony when it happened. Her son regained consciousness and she became a Christian in June last year.

On her relationship, she also prayed for direction and wisdom to deal with her lover. She ended the relationship with much determination and had peace of heart and mind in the process.

I apologized for probing into her life. She graciously gave thanks and said to share her story with others about the love of God in her life.

You can imagine what a beautiful morning it was in my mundane routine of heading to work every day.

She did meet someone whom she knew and they are dating now. He is a brother-in-Christ. I sincerely wish her well as she continues her walk with God.

2. SSH is another elderly taxi driver I met. He gave me a bookmark titled, "God's Perfect Gift" and reiterated that God is the One and Only God. There is no other like Him.

SSH's grandmother came from China and became a Christian. SSH's father was not a believer and did not understand why God was so important to the family. It took a turn of events when SSH's father had a medical condition and he was rushed to the hospital with the help of Christians. He became a believer after the ordeal.

SSH never forgot what his family has shared with him. He is in his sixties now and holds a cheery disposition about life and about God. The journey ended with a "God Bless you!" as I alighted from his taxi upon arriving at my destination.

As you already know, I had a pleasant ride and a memorable one, knowing how much God is with us all the time.

3. TTH is another middle-aged taxi driver who did not stop talking about God since I boarded his taxi. He has a daughter who is a nurse and he is proud to serve in church. He gave me a four-page article that he wrote and hope to publish it someday. He gave a copy to me for reading. Out of respect, I will not be sharing the content in this article.

He is bilingual in his understanding of the bible and shared his experience as a Christian. Though he did not reveal more about his personal life, he could not stop sharing about God and the belief that we should have in Jesus. Of course, he gave me newsletters for reading too.

I pray that he will learn to listen more and I know that his courage to share about the Work of God will continue. May God be with him and his family as he strives to tell many more about the Word of God!

4. I could not remember if I had asked for the name of this next taxi driver. He is a young man with a Primary school going son. For easy reference, let's call him D. D loves to travel to China as a back-packer. He learnt about the Chinese culture and started travelling again after his recovery from stroke.

D shared that he was in depression three years ago when a stroke hit him. His hands are still trembling at times and are not as nimble as before. He is able to drive a taxi and has been more cheerful since he became a Christian last year.

It was God who brought hope back into his life. He said that money was his main focus and now Jesus is his life. He was been much happier since he knew Jesus.

D is spending more time with his family and his son. He found joy and is living each day as it should be.

I still catch a taxi once in a while when I am rushing for time. Someday, I hope to have stories to share when I am on buses and MRT. God is good all the time and all the time God is good, isn't He?

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” (James 1:2-5)

I believe all our experiences are valuable. So if you have a story to share, let us know.

*Joyce Tan*  
26 January 2014

## **“Children are like wet cement”**

Every February, Moody Bible Institute hosts a week-long conference called Founder’s Week. During this week, they celebrate the birthday of D.L. Moody and invite pastors to come and speak instead of having classes. I have always benefited from the messages that were preached during Founder’s Week. It is truly a spiritual feast. This year’s theme was Be Holy and speakers included Gary Chapman (author of The 5 Love Languages), Wes Stafford (President of Compassion International), Jim Cymbala (author of Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire) and Leith Anderson (President of the National Association of Evangelicals). You can watch all the sermons here: <http://www.youtube.com/user/MoodyBibleInstitute>. Just click on Founder’s Week 2014.

This year, the message that had the most impact on me was by Wes Stafford. He spoke about the importance of ministering to children. He shared that most churches do not pay enough attention to impacting children below the age of 14, which is the age by which most Christians come to faith. He gave the powerful analogy that children are like wet cement – they are the easiest to make an impression on and as they grow older, the cement gets harder and harder. By the time they are young adults, the mould is set, the cement has hardened and making a change would require breaking the cement. As such, he firmly believes that it is extremely important to invest in teaching children to love God. The sad reality is that not enough emphasis or resources are being placed in investing in children. He then went on to talk about how an encouraging word, like “you’re doing a fantastic job” versus a discouraging word “you’re stupid and will never make it”, can have such a powerful impact on a child’s self-esteem and personal development. You never know when you are making an impact on a child through your words and actions. It really spoke to me because children’s ministry was something that I had previously not paid much attention to. But now I believe that it is such an important ministry. Children are a blank canvas and for those of you who have children or get to work with children on a regular basis, you have such a privilege and





opportunity to influence what goes on that blank canvas. Be encouraged that you are indeed making a difference in these young lives, even though you may not see the results of it right now. Keep up the great work you're doing!

This message also resonated with me because Suren is pregnant and we are going to be parents soon! It is such a joy to have our prayers answered (honestly, we almost gave up) but we also recognize that it is a heavy responsibility to be parents and being entrusted with the privilege to influence the life of our child. We praise God that the pregnancy has been smooth, He has helped us overcome several obstacles and anxious moments; He has been faithful in keeping mother and child healthy throughout the pregnancy thus far. The baby is due in the middle of March, I don't know whether it's going to be a boy or girl, it will be a surprise for me on that day itself! Your prayers are very much appreciated as we transition into this new phase of life of having to care for a little one while handling school work, without any additional support for the first few weeks.

God is indeed faithful. All praise and glory goes to Him.

*Samuel Tan*

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The Editors wish Samuel and Suren all God's blessings for a wonderful child who will bring them joy.

*But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children--with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts. (Psalm 103:17-18)*

I think if you want to send them a gift, you could go through this link in the Internet:

[http://www.target.com/RegistryGiftGiverCmd?isPreview=false&status=completePageLink&registryType=BB&isAjax=false&listId=t2NStMNmyaMFcgZx2c1Jww&clkid=Vb60R5Wi02KGz-STOeV2w3qJUkTUg23SAS42UQ0&Inm=Online+Tracking+Link&afid=The+Knot+%2C+Inc.+and+Subsidiaries&ref=tgt\\_adv\\_xasd0002](http://www.target.com/RegistryGiftGiverCmd?isPreview=false&status=completePageLink&registryType=BB&isAjax=false&listId=t2NStMNmyaMFcgZx2c1Jww&clkid=Vb60R5Wi02KGz-STOeV2w3qJUkTUg23SAS42UQ0&Inm=Online+Tracking+Link&afid=The+Knot+%2C+Inc.+and+Subsidiaries&ref=tgt_adv_xasd0002)

# CHINESE NEW YEAR SHOPPING



The JCC Dialect Group had a wonderful time doing Chinese New Year shopping on 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2014.

We visited factory outlets at Woodlands and Senoko. Then we had a relaxing time for *nasi lemak* lunch at Sembawang Park. It was really a great day with fine weather and cool breeze at the park.

The cheerful faces in the pictures tell the whole story of enjoyment that did not escape even our senior citizens who have some mobility problems.

After lunch, we proceeded with further shopping at Pandan Loop.

There were goodies in abundance from factory to factory. Although not everything appealed to everyone, there was enough variety to satisfy all.



The shopping trip started off from the church at 9.00 a.m. sharp with a few vacant seats on the bus. On the return journey, we



reached the church at 5.00p.m. and there were no more vacant seats as the New Year goodies filled up all the space. However, wallets and purses became empty – at least that was true for myself as I lost some self-control in buying a number of things I found to be much cheaper than what it would cost at Fairprice Supermarket.

Such a shopping trip for Chinese New Year has been an annual affair, and it is usually very popular among our dialect folks. It is so convenient for them, saving them the trouble of lugging goodies from point to point on crowded public transport, and meal is even provided. The elderlies showed themselves to be quite energetic. May they have many more years of happy group CNY shopping with JCC!



*JOHN LEE*

***Introducing the Fund Raising Committee***



You will notice that both bro John Lee and I are in the Fund Raising committee, so be prepared to receive many updates in The Vine as the fund raising programs take place.

We will keep you in the know, when to prepare your dough. Once we get the green light to go, from our chairman, Alan Soh.

*Martin Cheah*

**“We need never be ashamed of our tears.”**  
— Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*



We hear it often that real men don't cry. This saying isn't right. If women are considered as the ones having the prerogative to cry because crying is seen as a weakness, then it is implied that real women are weak and real men are strong not to shed tears. It is not fair to men to be denied a cathartic outlet for their emotions as it is unfair for women to be pejoratively regarded.

Margaret Thatcher was known as the Iron Lady. A lady “made of iron” couldn't be weak. Yet, she was not ashamed to show her emotions with tears when she left her official residence (No. 10 Downing Street) for the last time in 1990. Please don't tell me that she was not a strong woman whom many men admired.

Yes, many men (not just her husband) admired the Iron Lady. When she passed away in April 2013, Chancellor George Osborne let roll freely down his cheeks tears of sadness when listening to the eulogy.

Closer home, you can't miss the images of our former Prime Minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, crying when Singapore left Federation Malaysia to become independent. Our present Prime Minister had also on occasions showed with tears in his eyes that he is not superman – he is just a normal human like everyone who has times of joy and times of sadness.



Wait! Did I say “superman”? Why can't supermen also have emotions? Have you watched any superheroes in movies who have never displayed human emotions? Alright, I don't dispute if you say that that is all in reel life. Now, you don't dispute with me that Jesus also cried. He wept over Jerusalem. This is recorded in Scripture – Luke 19:41.



Do you know the shortest verse in the Bible that is a complete sentence? You have got it right if you say John 11:35 – “Jesus wept.”

It is recorded in Scripture not just once that Jesus wept. Probably, he wept many times more than those cases recorded. Most likely, Margaret

Thatcher, Chancellor George, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, our present PM Lee and a whole host of important and powerful personalities (including President Obama, if you wish) commonly weep on innumerable occasions in public or private too.

Include Billy Graham too. He confessed, “The Christian life is not a constant high. I have my moments of deep discouragement. I have to go to God in prayer with tears in my eyes, and say, 'O God, forgive me,' or 'Help me.'”

In a sense, weeping is a basic sign of humanity; so it is not something unusual and I find it odd that there are people who hypercriticize it just like those on Twitter who made a leader (Chancellor George) the butt of jokes for his weeping.

Weeping is a means to release pent-up and destructive emotions. With crying, burdens get “cried out” or vented. Good can come out of it, like what the Psalmist says, “weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.” (Ps 30:5b)

**Charles Dickens said crisply in *Great Expectations*, “Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are rain upon the blinding dust of earth, overlying our hard hearts. I was better after I had cried, than before – more sorry, more aware of my own ingratitude, more gentle.”**

Be not ashamed, therefore, to cry candidly when the moment calls for it, like a child even if you are a very much grown adult occupying an important position in church or in society. We were all created human, with the God-given gift of tear ducts in our eyes for their usefulness. Emotions bottled up are not good; the bottle can explode devastatingly if you want to show off that yours is made of tough material. Jesus was the Word made flesh (John 1:14), and He showed the humanity of the flesh when He wept. It is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of a compassionate heart and a God-blessed facility to release pain. People who disparage crying as a sign of weakness lose sight of the importance and usefulness of it. I would now like to share with you the story of Joseph.

### **Joseph Cried (Genesis 50:15-21)**

The passage tells us that Joseph’s father died, and Joseph’s brothers were afraid that Joseph would hold a grudge against them and take them to task

for all the wrongs they did to him. So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: 'This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father."

**When Joseph received the message, he wept.** Note that he wept not simply because of his father's death; a range of complex emotions actually came into play. The emotions were not just appearing in an instant and snappily settled, but stretched from the moment Joseph recognised his brothers through the complicated process of reconciliation to the time that he welcomed his father Jacob and family of seventy to Egypt. You can read the details from Genesis 42-47. In other words, the complex emotions were building up over time until ... until Joseph could not hold them down any further and so they welled up in tears.

Joseph had commiserated with his brothers for the circumstances they were in. Instead of harbouring any hatred against his brothers for selling him into slavery 20 years ago (Genesis 37), he had become a God-fearing man. He remembered the blessings God had upon him. As famine ravaged the land, only Egypt had a stockpile of grains. So Joseph' brothers were forced by the circumstances to go to Egypt. In Genesis 42-47, we read about the touching meeting and complicated reconciliation process between Joseph and his brothers. Finally, Joseph welcomed his father Jacob and whole family of seventy to Egypt.

Let's ponder. Joseph cried:

- Because of his brothers' lack of understanding towards him  
Having reconciled with his brothers and taking care of them well with the good life in Egypt, his brothers still harboured doubt about his sincerity towards them, whereby they offered themselves to be Joseph's slaves. For all the loving forgiveness that Joseph demonstrated, treating his brothers as his brothers and not strangers, he could be a mite let down by his brothers' lingering mistrust of him and so he shed tears of disillusionment.
- Because of his father's great love  
Joseph was Jacob's most beloved. And because of this fact, his brothers conceived the evil idea of selling him into slavery to Egypt by willfully deceiving their father that Joseph had been eaten up by wild animals. Jacob lived 20 years of sorrow under the deception that his beloved son was no longer alive. Imagine the

hardheartedness of Joseph's brothers in keeping the secret, unrepentant and untouched by conscience to reveal the truth that Joseph was alive and spare their father of the enduring pain for 20 years. Yet, despite their wickedness, the father (Jacob) unconditionally forgave them for their evil deed. Instead of thinking about punishing them, he thought about their well-being. As he was dying, he left this instruction for the brothers to take to Joseph,

“This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.’ Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father.”

The last sentence of Genesis 50:17 says that “when their message came to him, Joseph wept.” Joseph wept not plainly because of his father's death, but because of the message that revealed the father's magnanimous love.

Yet, the thought of the father's love and company which he had missed for 20 years made him feel pained that after the 20 years of separation and missing each other, the delightful reunion in Egypt was so short-lived for him to offer his filial love in his father's old age. The tears he shed were tears of love for a great father.

- Because of God's miraculous love and saving grace  
Think of it. If not for God's hand behind everything, the whole family of Joseph and his brothers would have perished in the overwhelming famine. However, God unimpeded by man's evil worked his wonderful plan through it to lead Joseph into becoming the governor of the land of Egypt, enjoying the good fortune whereby his family could be spared from starvation. Filial Joseph had always thought of himself more as the son of Jacob than as a subject of Pharaoh. The message's pleading for him to forgive the sins of the servants of the God of his father reminded him of the bad things that had happened to him and the blessings that had come out of it. How great was God's love and saving grace! At the thought of it, he felt the pang in his heart to give in return his gracious forgiveness to his brothers. The tears he shed were tears of gratitude to God and of love for his brothers.

## What we can take away from Joseph's tears

The reasons pondered above for Joseph's tears give an inkling of how multifaceted and complex emotions can be. Only Joseph himself understood the true breadth and depth of the emotions; onlookers can only try to understand.

When someone is crying, of course, the noble thing to do is to offer comfort. Often, we can only do so much, not fully knowing the emotive base that the tears spring from – just like a doctor addressing symptoms rather than the cause on occasions when they can't do better; and the body is left to its own to do its healing wonder. This healing wonder is from God, as the tears flow silently through the soul and cleanses the heart.

Revelation 21:4 says that God will wipe every tear away. "There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."



The time has not come yet. Meanwhile, let's hear what William Shakespeare advises:

**"If you have tears, prepare to shed them now."**



And when you are caught weeping, you don't have to give the excuse:

"I'm not crying. I just have something in my eyes; yes, in both eyes."

*JOHN LEE*



**2 Cor 9:10-12** Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

## What are four things you expect from giving special gifts?

- Treasure in heaven.
- Future provisions so you can give again.
- Your giving will help meet the needs of God's people.
- Your giving will cause people to thank God.





# NEWS IN PICTURES

On 16<sup>th</sup> Feb, sister Yulia was baptized and is reborn as Lydia.

Our dear sister loves her mother very much and prayed God's blessing to be upon her.

May we pray together that God's blessing be upon mother and daughter.

Welcome sister Lydia Wang.



On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of Chinese New Year, Seline's elder brother passed away. While he was in the hospital, he said that he wanted to be baptized when he came home. However he did not get home but went straight Home to be with the Lord.

Even though it was the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of CNY, JCC members went to support Seline in her time of mourning. It was an encouragement to her family



members. Seline braved her sorrow to sing 2 songs for her brother. <http://youtu.be/mUwFrXjSweM>

*Martin Cheah*

# MY NEGATIVE TO GOD'S POSITIVE

“Get going. Move forward. Aim High. Plan a takeoff. Don't just sit on the runway and hope someone will come along and push the airplane. It simply won't happen. Change your attitude and gain some altitude. Believe me, you'll love it up here.” — *Donald Trump*

“Do not empower your negative thoughts by giving them “legs” so they can run around your mind, creating worries, frustrations, and anxiety in your life.” — *Rodolfo Costa*

“Empty pockets never held anyone back. Only empty heads and empty hearts can do that.” — *Norman Vincent Peale*

“Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. Hold this picture tenaciously. Never permit it to fade. Your mind will seek to develop the picture... Do not build up obstacles in your imagination.” — *Norman Vincent Peale*

Frankly, I am not a positive thinker myself. I never read Dr Peale's book, *The Power of Positive Thinking* because I don't think it will work for me. How we wish we could be a mega church. Here is what Pastor Prince says in *Destined to Reign*:

“Have you come across people who have little, yet even that little is taken away from them? On the other hand, there are those who already have much, yet they receive even more.”

He quotes Matthew 25:29, “*For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him*” and concludes that, “Jesus is talking about a firm belief in God's Word that gives one the courage to say, ‘I have it!’. If you say that you have it, you have it, and more will be given to you. But if you say that you don't have it, when you actually do because God has freely given us all things (Romans 8:32), then even what you have will be taken away.”

Pastor Prince goes on to encourage, “When you need something, God says that you are to ask of Him. And when you ask, believe that you receive it. (Mark 11-24)”

At this time in our church's history, I would want to pray to be like David when he faced his Goliath, “*You come against me with sword and spear*

*and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.” (1Samuel 17:45)*

I wish someone would pray for me that my eyes will be opened like Elisha’s servant. *“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2Kings 6:16-17)*

I hope that I can have the faith in Matthew 17:20, *“Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”*

I am now part of the committee that faces the giant task of moving the mountain and all the forces, which seem to hinder us, from achieving our goal. I need to have that faith or as some would call it “positive thinking” to see God at work in all situations. When I see the article in the Straits Times, I must acknowledge that God is moving and not feel doom that now the whole world knows our situation.

When God provided us with Eden school to house us temporarily, I must not say like the Israelites, *“Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt?” (Exodus 14:11)*

Let not my negative thinking affect the team as we work to achieve what God has planned for us to build. Let me learn from our brother Pastor Michael Christian, who singlehandedly built up Tomorrow’s Hope in Nias. If one man can do it with the help of God, imagine how much more can be achieved by 600 or more people?

***NOW, MY SON, THE LORD BE WITH YOU, AND MAY YOU HAVE SUCCESS AND BUILD THE HOUSE OF THE LORD YOUR GOD, AS HE SAID YOU WOULD. (1Chronicles 22:11)***

*Martin Cheah*

# DIALECT CNY 2014 VISITATION

The Dialect Ministry made its usual CNY visits and it was quite challenging to visit 5 homes in a day, munching on cookies at each home, along the way. However, it is a work we cannot stop doing until the very last soul has been saved.



May the Lord give us the strength to finish the race that is before us. May He open the hearts of these, the parents of our

brothers and sisters.

Pray with us for their salvation. Pray for a breakthrough, for wisdom to bring God's Word to these beloved elderly.

*Martin Cheah*

PS. You can tell there were 2 days of visitation from the different clothes worn by Deacon Peter.



<http://youtu.be/AEETE5i1Rc>