

The Vine Committee

Editor:

Alicia Wong

Writers this issue:

John Lee

Samuel Tay

Tan Chih Chiang

Joyce Tan

Photos:

Martin Cheah

Edwin Yeo

Cover Photo:

AGM 7th May 2017

Getting the quorum



**Brother
Martin
Writes**

You might have read this story from Esquire UK recently, about a pastor, Jonathan Mthethwa, from Zimbabwe, who tried to walk across a river known locally as 'Crocodile River'. He did not survive the crossing.

An eyewitness called Deacon Nkosi shared some grim details with the Daily Post:

"The pastor promised he would demonstrate his faith to us today, but he unfortunately ended up drowning and getting eaten by three large crocodiles in front of us.

We still don't understand how this happened because he fasted and prayed the whole week. They finished him in a couple of minutes.

All that was left of him when they finished eating him is a pair of sandals and his underwear floating above the water."

I thought to myself, "What is the moral of this story?" Jesus walking on the water was not the problem. It was his apostles, to be precise, Peter, who had problem walking on the water. It was recorded in Matthew, that when Peter saw the wind, he was afraid; and began to sink. How far did Peter get before he began to sink? This is not recorded but I presume that he must have taken at least a few steps.



Don't know much about the wild but I would expect that most rivers have river banks. So if you step from the bank into the river, you would know immediately whether you are able to walk on the water or not. You would turn back and not struggle your way into the middle of the river and drown.

Perhaps he stepped off a boat in the middle of the river, like Peter. Anyway he should have chosen a safer miracle to emulate, for example changing water into wine. Has anyone else done this? You might argue that wine makers have been making wine for many centuries. Yes, but to get the best wine, you need to age it a number of years. Jesus turned water into the best wine in an instant, and not just a small bottle but 120 gallons of it.

What is the moral of the story? Jesus did not ask us to help prove his miracles. He asked us to share the Good News of Salvation. The Lord gave final instructions for his followers to go to all nations and that He would be with them even until the very end of the age. It was not "The Great Suggestion." No, the Lord commanded his followers from every generation to put our faith into action and to go make disciples.

You want to be Christlike - *who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.* – Philippians 2:6-7. Christ left Heaven to be a missionary on the Earth. Can we remain in our comfort zones?

Many of us like to travel, we take the cheapest airlines, stay in the cheapest hotels and eat the street food. If you are able to do this, then you have what it takes to be a missionary. There are two mission trips planned this year. A two day Children's Camp from 15 to 16 October and a three day Christmas Outreach from 9 to 11 December. Register yourselves with Yew Moi, HOM Missions, now! Be a blessing to the Cambodians.



From the LCS Missions Newsletter: Kublai Khan, whose mother was a Christian, was visited by Catholics (probably by Marco Polo) and was attracted to Christianity. Around 1271, he wrote a letter to the Pope stating "Send 100 teachers of the Christian faith who could show us clearly that the law of Christ is best. If persuaded, I and all under my rule will become his followers." However, the Pope sent only two teachers, and they turned back. Kublai Khan was later converted to Tibetan Buddhism.

Life is a blast. Recently, 24 people were killed in a bomb explosion in Bangkok and 22 people were killed in a bomb explosion in Manchester. Were they greater sinners than us? *Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them--do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem?* Luke 13:4

When a catastrophe happens in our world, it is virtually certain that a question will come up: "Where was God?" People always seem to question how a good God could allow a terrible thing to happen. Jesus answered their question with a question: "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way?" This response shows us that those who brought the original question to Jesus were assuming that

all the suffering that people endure in this world is proportionately related to their degree of sinfulness, an idea that remains pervasive today.

Jesus was reminding His hearers that there is ultimately no such thing as an innocent person (except Him). Thus, we should not be amazed by the justice of God but by the grace of God. We should be asking why towers do not fall on us each and every day.

We can deal with catastrophes in this world only by understanding that behind them stands the eternal purpose of God and by realizing that He has delivered us from the ultimate catastrophe—the collapse of the tower of His final judgment on our heads.

Therefore go and make disciples.

Martin Cheah