

The Vine Committee

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Singapore flags around
JCC as the nation
celebrates its 52nd
birthday.



**Brother
Martin
Writes**

I can't help but wonder, is it a self-fulfilling prophesy? Did you read about an advertising gaffe by a sushi restaurant which introduced a sushi, "Maki Kita" which means "Curse Us" in Malay?



Chinese are very superstitious and do not like to talk of death. However, death is an event that truly is "Not If, But When". Regardless, everyone will surely die because ... *it is appointed for men to die once* – Hebrews 9:27.

From the very second that we came into this world, we have an appointment with death, only we don't know when. A few days back, we attended the wake service of Joo See's sister-in-law's father. The doctor told him he had about a week to live and it turned out to be so. However, before he died, he requested for baptism. If only the rest of the people in this world realize that they have a limited time here and request for baptism before they leave this world for an eternal life with Jesus, in the next.

There are not many sure things in this world, but death is a sure thing and we should be concerned about it. To Christians, the other sure thing is what Jesus said, "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*" – John 14:6 Since it is a sure thing, we should not play, play but be prepared. We should not avoid the topic of death as if it is never going to happen. To the worldly-wise, they will make a will early and not leave their children in confusion. To the spiritually enlightened, they should decide to accept the grace of God through Jesus Christ now and not at the hour of their death.

Have you ever considered why every country celebrates its birthday with a



show of weaponry, the tanks, fighter planes, warships and soldiers? Someone in the Internet says that it is a morale boost. Having a big demonstration gets the people all riled up, gets them feeling patriotic and nationalistic even if the living conditions are destitute. Secondly, it is used as a show of force. Finally, they become an annual tradition to distract people from the real world for a little bit. Patriotism and nationalism can be a way to unite the people under a single cause and a single flag.

Basically, it is because they do not depend on God but in their own strength of arms. However, we should trust God for His protection.

If God is for us, who can be against us? – Romans 8:31

I was enjoying the National Day Parade from the Mandarin Oriental last week. Joo See's whole family were there in one room with a wonderful view of the entire parade. After the parade ended, I looked down at the crowd leaving the parade grounds towards the public transport and I was very concerned that the MRT would be too packed for Joo See and I to go home.



However around 9:45 pm we decided to leave as we saw that the crowd in the streets below had cleared. My brothers-in-law followed suit but they were all driving. I thought how nice to have a car at a time like this. When we reached the MRT, it was quite clear and we were able to get on board the train without squeezing. We reached home around 10:45 pm and went to sleep. The next day we found out that the rest of the family reached home around 12:00 am because of the traffic jam after the parade.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

Finally, years ago when I was still driving, I always prayed that I would never get into an accident which would cause someone their life. Now that my driving days are over, I can say that God had answered that prayer. In the news lately, driving a vehicle has become a weapon of choice for some.

Martin Cheah