

#### **BATAM MISSION # 2**



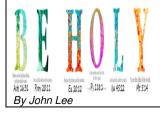
By Tony Koh INTEGRITY



#### By Alicia Wong MOMENTS OF TRUTH



By Joyce Tan BE HOLY





YAM Retreat



The Vine This Month Editor: Alicia Wong

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Cover Photo: YAM Retreat at Kukup



# **HOM Editorial**

There was not much happening in September other than the big hoo-hah about

the repealing of a Penal Code in a South Asian country and an outcry to have the same in Singapore.

Have you heard of the Butterfly Effect or Pandora's Box? Simply, it refers to small events creating catastrophic results.

The Merriam Webster definition for:

• **Butterfly Effect** : a property of chaotic systems by which small changes in initial conditions can lead to large-scale and unpredictable variation in the future state of the system.

• Pandora's Box : a prolific source of troubles.

Many may think that repealing a section of the Penal Code is a small matter without any significant ramifications to our society and way of living. Eve must have thought that when she ate the fruit in the Garden. Let us hope that we do not open Pandora's Box and create a Butterfly Effect which will destroy our Garden city.

In October, there will be a flurry of activities in JCC:

13 <sup>th</sup>	Ministry Leaders RnD
19 <sup>th</sup> – 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Cambodia Mission Trip #0118
$20^{th} - 21^{st}$	Pulse Leaders Retreat
$23^{rd}_{} - 25^{th}_{}$	LCS Mission Consultations
27 <sup>th</sup>	JCCK Graduation
	LCS Reformation Service
28 <sup>th</sup> 30 <sup>th</sup>	JCC Think Tank Meeting
30 <sup>th</sup>	IRCC (National Level) Meeting

We are expecting some very important guests coming to JCC for these meetings and hopefully we will have more newsworthy stories in the next issue of The Vine.

Pastor Appreciation Day is on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2018.



From The Vine team,

Martin Cheah

## Mission Accomplished!

### ENCORE TRIP TO BATAM

On 11 August 2018, a team from the Abundance Cell Group embarked on a second Mission trip to Batam. There were a total of seven with visitors in the team. You will see Uncle Roy, Ethel and the Stwart family i.e. Stwart, Doreen-Stwart (wife) and Derrek (son) who visited Jurong Christian Church (JCC). Derrek is a friend of Hannah and they were former Jurong Secondary School classmates. Together with the others, Susan and I went for our Mission trip adventure!

I remember the love of God for me and reached out to the Stwart family for this "One Day Batam Mission Trip" where we can share the experience of the JOY (Jesus, Others & You) that God has given to us. The importance of serving, reaching out and living out our FAITH is like what our Missionary GOD sent His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to do. He reaches out to us by dying for our sins on the Cross. The old rugged cross that tells the story of His Love for all of us!

We are privileged to join William, Alister of Queenstown Lutheran Church (QLC) and their medical teams from different walks of life for this trip to bring God's Love to the Batam Gundap Villagers.

This initiative was started by David, a Social Counsellor who was from the Covenant Evangelical Church at Woodlands. He started this Mission work more than 10 years ago when he felt burdened



Uncle Roy prayed with the group in fluent

Bahasa Indonesia at the trip. Susan and Ethel taught the kids and spent time with them. Ask Susan and Ethel to share more with you!

as he witnessed dying children who were abandoned and left helpless from

It was a privilege to meet David, the guy in a black T-Shirt, on this trip. What a lovely, humble servant of GOD!

the village. It was then that he shared the Mission work at QLC and QLC adopted this initiative as part of their Mission Ministry to visit and care for the villagers by sending a Mission team monthly. This trip to Batam Gundap Village again was memorable for me. It was the

second visit for Ethel and Susan too. Our hearts thanked God for his Grace to see the team through songs, fellowship and providing medical help for the villagers. The latter was one of the key objectives for this trip.

In addition to providing the medical care, teaching and sharing of God's Word, we had a Birthday Celebration with the Villagers. We thanked God that this is possible because of Jesus. All the duties and responsibilities were aptly rendered in the saving and healing Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour! Amen.



"Jesus said, Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19:14

For those in the Abundance Cell Group who were on this Mission trip, we are like the children that God said we should be.

Care to join us? I can always link you up with the QLC team! It is better to give than to receive.

Our reflections and takeaway thoughts after the trip could not be revealed more than through the photographs here. We are indeed very blessed to be a part of this Mission trip with the QLC team!

"I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Psalms 121:1-2

Tony Koh

## WHAT IS INTEGRITY?

This is a topic that came up during one of my teaching sessions with a student, who would at times go off tangent from studies to discuss about the thoughts that linger in her mind from her interactions with her schoolmates. To my student, integrity means being honest, keeping your word, your promise that was made to someone. While I applaud her sticking to her values instead of being swayed by the people around her, I wonder if this word 'integrity' even exists to the people around me. Many times, I encounter people who backed away from their word, citing difficulties when it is time to deliver or simply, dropping out of the radar, reappearing only when the matter had blown over or forgotten over time. Integrity does not seem to mean the same thing to everyone in an age where a man's word does not mean much. In fact, if a man's word is not in writing with 100 lawyers backing it, it does not mean anything anymore.

### What does the bible say?

There are many positive examples of bible character living with integrity but let us take a look at a few.

**Daniel** was the captive prince who was first under the pagans Babylonians and then under the Persians. I am sure that his circumstances then were not any better than what we are facing now but "Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom. The administrators and the satraps tried to find grounds for charges against Daniel in his conduct of government affairs, but they were unable to do so. They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt nor negligent. Finally, these men said, 'We will never find any basis for charges



Daniel prayed to God three times a day after being told not to worship god

against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God." (Daniel 6:3) Daniel was genuine, he was honest, he was righteous and he was consistent in his personal life and in his professional life.

**David** is another classic example. David's path to the throne was paved by his own integrity. His vibrant relationship with God fueled a humble right-

eousness that refused to endeavor to ascend to the throne before God's time. Instead, David waited on God, all along restraining his own men from making attempts on King Saul's life (See 1 Samuel 24, 26). David's integrity was rewarded by God, who cleared David's path to the throne.

Then we have **Job**, in 1:1, as blameless and upright, God-fearing and standing clear of evil. Because of his integrity, he becomes the subject of a trial (1:13). The entire book deals with a test of Job's integrity. In 1:8 God launches His challenge to Satan. The challenge issues in the test of Job's character. Not until 42:10 does the test end did God restored his fortunes.

What are the similarities we can draw from all the examples we can see in the bible?

- He transcends history.
- He utterly fulfills his calling. In other words, he lives in the absolute center of God's will. His only desire is that God's will be fulfilled.
- He has a right attitude.
- He will be envied and he will be hated by the world around him but he will never be embittered by it.
- He is condemned but if he is condemned, he is condemned for his righteousness for there's no other flaw.
- He is known for his virtue and integrity even by his enemies.
- He is a faithful citizen. He is subject to human laws until they would cause him to violate the laws of God.
- He is willing to face any consequence within the framework of God's will and leave the outcome to God.
- He will serve faithfully no matter what it costs him personally.
- He is delivered from all harm and he is preserved for every purpose within the will of God.
- He is a vehicle for God's glory.
- He will be avenged by God. His enemies will be dealt with by God, he doesn't have to deal with them himself.
- He is exalted by those around him as well as by the One above him.

Has the latest poll or news headline shaken your values? Remember Job, David or Daniel. A person of integrity does not allow a changing environment to change his standards. When God says, "I will do this," you would not find Him turning around and saying; *"Hey, I don't know what I was* 

*thinking...times have changed... I just don't feel the way I used to feel.*" Know that hypocrisy, dishonesty, duplicity, and corruption are the opposites of God's call. When we carry out these evil traits or do not keep our word, we are misrepresenting Christ's good name and defiling Him with our feeble excuses. Hypocrisy gives people a false impression of God and His people. Insincerity gives people a false impression of who we are called to be; it nullifies integrity.

Let us lead lives that are worthy. Our call is to do as we teach, to do as we say and to act as we teach others to act. The reason the Pharisees are equated with hypocrisy is that they were worshipping not the God of the Jews but a made-up god that suited their own thoughts, schemes and pride. They also covered truth and integrity with their hidden agendas and deceit (Psalm 103:1-14; Matt. 23; 1 Tim. 3:2-7; 1 Pet. 5:10)

### **Personal reflections**

Thinking back, my standard of living as a woman with integrity is founded on my father, who based his values on the Word. Reticent as he may be, he would never be one to go back on his word or compromise on his values. Hence, in my growing years, I was fortunate to have him as a role



model to emulate. I do not claim that the walk is easy but having the fear of God in me, knowing that everything I do, I have to be accounted for, keeps me in line for most parts of my life.

Alicia Wong

# I Surrender All

Life has been extremely hectic and challenging this year as a full time working mother of 2 young children. Juggling various roles as a wife, mother, social worker, employee, daughter-in-law, sister-in-law, friend, Christian, etc has been overwhelming. Things were constantly going beyond my control to the point that I felt life was meaningless. Every day was spent rushing here and there attending to people's needs. I wish I could collapse and disappear magically to somewhere far away.

Hence, when the advertisement for YAM Kukop retreat was announced, I was elated as it meant a short and quick getaway for me. Motherly duties such as waking up at 3am to feed my son still continued as I brought along my children

for the trip. However, I was thankful for the spiritual rest and benefited from Pastor Chai Aik's heartfelt motivational message of attending to our "Garden", to flourish in the place that God has called us to be.

Pastor's advice to pray for our workplace, boss and colleagues was really timely for me as I was going through a rough patch at work. This reminded me





that all things are in God's hands and we are to surrender every aspect of our lives to Him. On a light hearted note, we were served with such good food during the retreat and I most enjoyed the durian party fellowship amidst everyone's stinky breath. I look forward to the day I could give back to the church by being in the retreat planning committee when I have the capacity to do so.

Esther Goh



We are all called to be holy; "for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy." (1 Pet. 1:16)

The call by Apostle Peter for holiness had its source in Leviticus. Read Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, 26.

Leviticus 19 New International Version (NIV)

Various Laws

**19** The LORD said to Moses,

<sup>2</sup> "Speak to the entire assembly of

Israel and say to them: 'Be holy

because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

Leviticus can be comprehended in two parts:

• The first part is about how the Israelites might approach God through sacrifices, the investiture of priests, the offering of sacrifices and being committed to the ordinances on cleanliness.

• The second part is about living a holy life, of which Chapter 19 is most expressive.

Reflecting on the two parts of Leviticus, we

can also contemplate the two parts of Scripture overall – the first is about the precepts (principles, teachings, guidelines, laws and such) while the second part is about the application of our relationship with God in our daily walk of holiness before Him.

It does not do well for Christians to "like" one part and therefore focus on it at the exclusion of the other part. The two parts are interconnected as a continuous framework that brings out the full effect of God's will in the evolvement of life events as man experiences and engages them. In the course:

- Some of the practices of the OT are no longer applicable to us. For e.g., sacrificing burnt offerings. Nevertheless, as we learn about the laws on sacrifices before the Advent of Christ, we can imbibe useful insights on their importance in their time and meditate deeper on the seriousness of Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God sacrificed on the Cross for our sake.
- Some of the commands of the OT are perennially relevant for us to obey. For e.g., many of the commands such as against

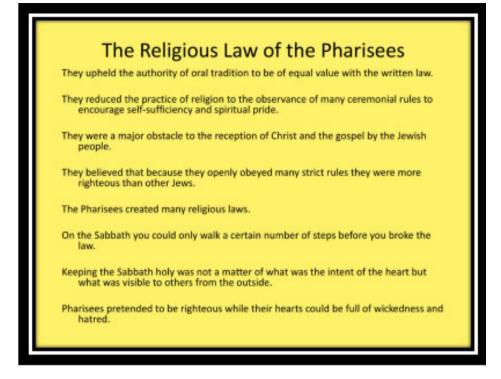
stealing, lying, deceiving one another and profaning the name of God ... (Lev. 19:11*ff*).

Some of the commands are not possible for us to comply with directly, being very specific to the farming livelihood of their time. Nevertheless, we ought to see the rationale behind the commands and comply with them in spirit. For e.g., regarding Lev. 19:9-10, most of us are no longer involved in the physical farming of land and reaping therefrom. However, we do reap our wealth through our modern ways of investing hard work, and the spirit of showing generosity to the poor and the strangers is very much possible for us to uphold in our walk of holiness by our willingness to let the poor and the strangers ("foreigner") have a go for the "grapes that have fallen" (i.e., the remnants of our reaping) instead of coveting every bit for ourselves. In this modern day, many instead go so far in their walk of unholiness as to withhold the wages of the "foreigners" (the foreign workers and domestic helpers) in direct affront to the spirit of Lev. 14:13b.

To be holy is God's requirement for us to abide by. It serves humanity well if everyone understands and willingly submit to holiness without the need for reminders. Reality, however, is that people tend to wander off the straight path of holiness when there are no reminders or no laws to comply with. How many people avoid polluting the environment because they want to serve humanity well by saving gaia or because they are led to do so by the anti-pollution laws? God's statutes and ordinances similarly have the effect as reminders and warnings to His people to live the holy life – the life that is right not because God demands it but because it is the right thing good for us, good for humanity.

When the holy life is lived out by everyone, there will be fewer conflicts between people. The daily news is evidence staring in our face that most people (because of selfish motives) do not delight in the walk of holiness. God's commands are treated with disdain. The Ten Commandments inscribed on stone are treated as if they are written on paper scraps to be flung off at whims. There is heavy price to pay. Indeed, the world is paying the price – snowballing turbulence!

There are various types of "holiness". One popular type is called "ceremonial holiness". What is it?



"Ceremonial holiness" is obedience towards the performance of rituals on a specific day or occasion. Rituals have their proper place in Christian life, and are definitely important because God directed them. However, a display of holiness by devoted attendance to the observance of rituals or customs becomes hollow if the spiritual fervour is separated from our holiness in everyday life outside of the specific day or occasion. The "ceremonial holiness" then is tantamount to a mere show that is detached from the reality of the person's life testimony. Such "ceremonial holiness" was what Amos blamed his people for, because their egregious wicked deeds in life (Amos 5:11-12) were completely at odds with their staunchness towards festivals and offerings:

"I hate, I despise your religious festivals; your assemblies are a stench to me. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellow-ship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!" – Amos 5:21-24

The false holiness of the Pharisees was lambasted by Jesus when they were doing bad things (devouring widows' houses) and made lengthy prayers for a show. (Mk. 12:40)

The term "His/Your Holiness" is an honorific title used in addressing certain religious leaders. It is a status title regarding their high office; yet not to be confused with the holiness we talk about, that Christians seek to live out in their life, which is to set a framework for our thoughts and actions to follow the holy character of God, guided along by our obedience to His commands.

It is easy to associate status with holiness, and the disciples of Jesus showed no exception of being misguided in this respect when they argued about who was the greatest. (Mk. 9:13) The mother's request for her two sons (Matt. 20:20-21) is another outstanding example of such a misunderstanding.



Our pastors are our spiritual leaders and we look to them for guidance on how to be holy while also getting inspiration from their holy lifestyle. This said, however, we must be realityconscious that they are in a basic respect like everyone else – being human, on the same path as we walk in holiness. Being similar as mutual

brethren, we encourage one another to be holy. We do not treat our pastors or spiritual leaders as holy targets of adoration. This may seem obvious to readers of The Vine, but misguided worship of human leaders (as holy) by followers is not unheard of, especially in cults.

God commanded Moses to say to the Israelites: "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy." (Lev. 19:2)

God's people are not just called to be holy, but to be holy with regards to God himself who is holy.

Our God is "majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders." (Ex. 15:11) Who among us all who are sinners (Rom. 3:23) can emulate fully God's holiness?

Frankly, the answer is "We can't." Nevertheless, we can aim our spiritual sight high at God's holiness, looking in that direction as we forge ahead in our striving to be holy. Whether we run along as a hare or plod on like a tortoise, we should be able to tell ourselves that we are fulfilling our aim of moving forward. If any of you think that you must be a giant in order to make the grade of being holy, you are very wrong. In relation to the mother's request mentioned above, Jesus said this to His disciples:

"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." – Matt. 20:25-28



So, if you are not a giant, you still stand a chance to make the grade for holiness.

If you think and serve God like a servant to your brethren, then you stand another chance.

If being holy has anything to do with status, then the "lowly"

status of servanthood with a humble heart for service should be ours to go after.

John Lee



It was a relaxing group excursion to Springleaf Nature Park on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2018, organised by the Jurong Central Community Sports Club.

On one hand, it was a pleasant outdoor morning walk in fresh air. On the other hand, it was a sad reminder of our dwindling natural wealth as Singapore city becomes more and more built-up with the preservation of a rich ecological environment being given insufficient attention by urban planners.

In Genesis 1:1-25, the adjective "good" or "very good" was used more than



five times to describe the things God created.

As of now, we just take whatever little comfort we have in whatever there is left of nature that is good as God created it to be and enjoy it as much as possible. More importantly, the simple morning walk brought observation to the mind of the obvious ecological and environmental deterioration that people have no problem witnessing worldwide even though many may have a problem recognising it and acting to prevent it.

The prioritisation of artificial wealth over natural wealth on Earth presents one of the greatest crises and challenges to man. What does God want Christians to learn from the sight of diminishing nature?

What is "good" as in describing God's creation is the great beauty in its original state for us to behold. Man builds concrete irreversibly out of limestone and sand that are in nature and, in the process, relentlessly wastes away the original beauty of flora and fauna that survived on the natural resources with which God provided in abundance.

Obviously, man has failed miserably in answering God's call to protect all that He has created.



Philosopher Mencius came up with the expression 以於述壑 which has become a Chinese idiom meaning "to shift one's problems onto others". Anything good, people find it hard to learn; but anything not good, people pick up the idea quickly. So, 以欲述壑 has become translated into "Beggar Thy Neighbour" as an economic policy through which one's country strives to deal with her own problems by shifting the problems or worsening them on others. We are all guilty of this "Beggar Thy

Neighbour" attitude when we shift problems of environmental protection to others by neglecting our own responsibilities. We beggar our neighbours when we do these for our own convenience: (1) Excessively throw our money (because we have plenty) at products that lead to deforestation not in Singapore but in other countries, (2) Discharge wastes uncaringly so that these wastes end up causing air and soil pollution somewhere, but not

Thou shalt love thy neighbor thyself.	our as
Mark 12:31	KJV 1900

in our own backyards, (3) Pay no heed to conservation of water, electricity and exhaustible natural resources, causing the greenhouse effect and various climatic disorders, (4) ... Mencius might be respected as a great philosopher; but 以欲述壑 (literally, "to use one's neighbour as a drain") was certainly not his word of wisdom. The word of wisdom from the Bible is "Love Thy Neighbour", not "Beggar Thy Neighbour"; and our neighbour is everywhere around us and also includes the generations of our children and grandchildren who might lose out entirely on enjoying the beauty of God's creation because we have made the Earth barren by our reckless usurpation of it.

Some people hold the cavalier attitude towards the destruction of nature: "Everybody is doing it, I am just a follower."

Some others disdainfully say, "So what? The Bible is telling us not to love the world or anything in the world. (1 Jn 2:15)" 🔅

Don't love the world's ways. Don't love the world's goods.

1 John 2:15 (MSG)

Obviously, wiser counsel for these people would do the Earth good.

It is beneficial from time to time to take a walk in nature. Even if it is just a diminutive nature park without an attractive abundance of God-

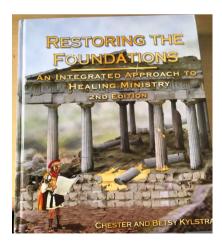
created beauty to behold, we can let our sight and mind behold a reminder of human responsibility for the state of affairs, a warning to prevent the following happening:

"The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the heavens languish with the earth. The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse consumes the earth; its people must bear their guilt." – Isa 24:4-6a

John Lee



When I received a message from Reverend Anthony to sign up for the RTF seminar on 22 September 2018, I was wondering what it was all about. I was hesitant and unsure if I should attend because of my hectic work schedule, committed time with my family and activities in Church over the last few months. I did not know what to expect, but when I did take that step to attend the seminar, I was glad that I went



through a day filled with unexpected surprises; i.e., self-awareness of who I am and a realisation of who God is to me through prayers and healing. It will be a continuous journey for me as I seek His wisdom and understanding.

This seminar reminded me of a page I read in the "Our Daily Bread", June to August edition of 2018, "The Pain We've Known". It said that too many of us live as if the pain we have known is all that there will be. Even those of us who are Christians may live as

though the gospel, a word that means "good news," has little good to offer us today. We live as though it was only an event of the past – Jesus' death on the Cross and His resurrection to new life. Yet, we have the assurance that God is weaving together the greatest ending to our



story. The final chapter is more than we can ask or imagine.

Reverend Judah Daniels and his wife, Shammah, took us through the introduction of the vision and mission of RTF which teaches the importance of the Revelation of the integrated approach to Healing and Freedom ministry. It warms our hearts and minds to gradual stages

of identifying the four key problems in our lives:

- 1. Sins of the Fathers and Resulting Curses (SOFC)
- 2. Ungodly Beliefs (UGBs)
- 3. Soul-Spirit Hurts (SSHs)
- 4. Demonic Depression (DO)

It is "The Cross" which signifies God's solution to the four problem areas that Jesus has redeemed us for the healing we need. It addresses the root cause of our pain by



understanding the "How" to manage situations through prayers, restoration of our belief in God and the importance of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It does not focus only on the "Why" of things that happened. It provides the steps for us to handle the various areas through our willingness to forgive, listen, reach out and open our minds to our Heavenly Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. It opens the door to receiving the blessings from God and being real with God; i.e., Ask The Lord (ATL) in all that we do.

I may not have vividly portrayed the full extent of the seminar in this article. It is an experience that you who have gone through it would be

able to fully understand. The experiences would differ for individuals as you ATL.

As the hours went by and the seminar ventured deeper into insights to our hurts, pains and soul, it took courage to continue the seminar and participate in the declarations, approaches and perspective of submitting to God in a totally new way. You may have had such experiences in your walk with God!



The amazing use of role play and visualization of scriptures from the Bible added clarity to the content and messages of "Healing Hearts, Changing Lives, Empowering Leaders and Transforming Nations". As the moments of truth unravel within us, there are more to do after the seminar as knowing God is a life-time effort and commitment.

JOYCE TAN







Director John Woo says, "I like doves. They look so beautiful, like a woman. For me they represent peace and love and purity. And sometimes they're seen as the messengers of

God, so they're important to me because I'm a Christian."



Paul Walker said, "I'm a Christian now. The things that drove me crazy growing up was how everyone works at fault-finding with different

religions. The people I don't understand are atheists. I go surfing and snow boarding and I'm always around nature. I look at everything and think, 'Who couldn't believe there's a God? Is all this a mistake?' It just blows me away."



Rocker and bornagain Christian Alice Cooper says, "Drinking beer is easy. Trashing your hotel room is easy. But being a

Christian, that's a tough call. That's rebellion."



Martin Sheen abandoned religion for a time, but he says, "I have long since returned to my church. I have never forgotten that even though I

turned my back on God, in my time of greatest need, he came to find me."



Gary Busey describes that power of prayer saying, "Prayer should be in appreciation, not in supplication."



"Everybody Loves Raymond" actress Patricia Heaton says, "You try to be a model of kindness and love and forgiveness to all

those around you, because you have received kindness and love and forgiveness from God through Christ. That's what Christianity is."



Mickey Rooney has said, "All the muddy waters of my life cleared up when I gave myself to Christ."

For the full list of quotations, go to this link: <u>https://www.ranker.com/list/celebrities-who-are-christians/celebrity-lists</u>