

**HERE I (WE) STAND**



*By John Lee*

**FROM US TO YOU**



*By Joyce Tan*

**RESTORING THE FOUNDATIONS**



*By Peggy Tan*



*Cambodia Mission Trip*



**THE HARVEST FIELDS**

**The Vine This Month**

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# HOM Editorial

Recently, I received an email promoting a book - Sacred Pathways (Discover Your Soul's Path to God). Although it is only less

than US\$6, I did not order the book because it will be shipped from the US and the mailing cost would be additional.

In Sacred Pathways, bestselling author Gary Thomas unveils the 9 types of "spiritual temperaments" we all possess that inform how we navigate our spiritual journey and interact with God. I looked at the icons for these 9 types and come to a conclusion that every one of us must travel on our own journey the way God made us. Like John mentioned to me before, he prefers to read rather than listen. Without reading the book, I presume that John is the Intellectuals type.

I don't want to presume too much without reading the book but perhaps some of you may find your paths from the icons below. I believe that God made us all unique and so we cannot assume that all

the members of JCC will be of the same kind and will follow the same paths to spirituality.

I can think of those who are Naturalists, who love the open sea and the creatures that swim or love walking on the green. That is the way they are made. Possibly, the older folks are Traditionalists and some are Caregivers, we cannot fault them for it.

There is no guarantee in a cell group every member will be of the same type, even if the old adage, Birds of a feather, flock together, may hold true for some groups.

We know that as a people of God in JCC, our goal is to be a Christ-like church. However we come to achieve this goal through our own God-given paths. It is probably not the same path for everyone. I know of Henry (JWCG) who is very driven to go on mission trips to Cambodia but not everyone in the CG has that same interest.

God made everyone different but He loves everyone all the same.



*Martin Cheah*

# “Here I (We) Stand!”

Imagine that you are a Christian burdened in your conscience by some truth that by conventional prudence is best kept in your heart to “keep the peace”. Would you really be at peace with the conviction hidden in your heart while the people around you are at peace with your tacit understanding to keep your belief to yourself?

## Martin Luther

Centuries ago, Martin Luther was confronted with the message from the church that doing good works – among other things, the purchase of indulgence – would earn oneself a path to salvation. That was a wrong teaching. As a monk subservient to the Pope, he could either keep silent or speak up. Despite the sensitivity of the matter – a major preaching of the church – he chose to speak up. Now, these words “**Here I stand!**” have been famously attributed to Martin Luther for his devotion to the scriptural truth when challenged at the Diet of Worms<sup>1</sup> against the popular misinformation that Christians were fed by the church then.



Because of one man – Martin Luther – who stood by his spiritual conscience, “Salvation by Grace through Faith in Christ Alone” is now validated in the church today. Imagine how the perpetuation of the distorted church preaching on good works would have continued to this day if Martin Luther, and anybody else, just kept silent in acquiescence to the status quo that the church authority found comfortable with for all pragmatic considerations.

Making his stand on the truth, Martin Luther was not being rebellious against authority. As Bishop Terry Kee said last year at the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemoration of the Reformation, it was not Martin Luther’s intention to rebel against the church. He was only seeking dialogue on the truth that was weighing on his conscience.

Unfortunately, the people whom Martin Luther had wished would step up to the plate to peaceably discuss his ideas of truth failed to deal with them with desirable equanimity and courage. Instead, the imperial councillors at the Diet of Worms were single-minded not to have a proper discourse on the truth issue but to cast Martin Luther as an outlaw. It is apparent that the imperial councillors had their subjective or popular considerations that hindered them from a fair disposal of the case against Martin Luther.

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<sup>1</sup> Diet (a formal assembly) of Worms (an imperial city of the Roman Empire)

In short, Martin Luther was courageous in making his stand on the truth he strongly believed in; but the imperial councillors were an absolute contrast.

### Nicodemus

Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, a Jewish religious court which was a very powerful ruling body much akin to the modern-day supreme court of the land. He was also a person learned in the Hebrew Scriptures, being called a teacher of Israel. (John 3:10)



Nicodemus seeks Christ

Nicodemus was confronted with the truth about Jesus Christ, the Messiah. However, he didn't possess the courage like that of Martin Luther who would boldly declare "**Here I stand!**" on the truth that was in his heart. Instead of approaching Jesus openly in the day, he came out furtively at night to acknowledge Jesus as

Rabbi:

*"Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him." – John 3:2 (KJV)*

Even if Nicodemus' belief in Jesus was partial, he was not like other Jewish leaders who were adamantly antagonistic of the Messiah. If he simply revealed his "half-belief" in Jesus in broad daylight, he would most likely be excommunicated from the synagogue (John 12:42) like Martin Luther was to become excommunicated from the church for an honest conviction with the truth. However, despite Nicodemus' lack of courage, he later did pull up some guts to defend Jesus before his peers (John 7:51) and even openly assisted in Jesus' burial (John 19:39), bringing with him a large quantity (75 pounds) of expensive myrrh and aloes fit for a king.

The worthy point about Nicodemus was that despite his initial reservation about openly asserting his nascent belief in Jesus, the Rabbi, he did later courageously stand up to the belief in his heart.

### Peter, the Apostle

Unlike Nicodemus who was with incomplete faith in Jesus during a large part of the latter's ministry, Peter was someone who followed Jesus from very early and became one of Jesus' foremost disciples. His faith in Jesus was exposed to all and for good reason he was anticipated to be the Rock of the church.



Peter did not exactly say "**Here I stand!**" but he did use very

strong words to boast about the depth of his faith in Jesus, words that were much more forceful than the words that Martin Luther would use. These were what he declared strongly to Jesus, no less:

*“Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.” – Matt. 26:33*

*“Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” – Matt. 26:35*

What happened after the bold declarations of not falling away, and of dying for Jesus? So much bravado; but when directly challenged on his faith, he disowned Jesus 3 times before the rooster crowed! (John 18:15-27)

Good for Peter that after the resurrection of Jesus, he did live up to his status as “the Rock” of the early church, proclaiming the gospel confidently (Acts 2:14-41; 3:12-26; 4:8-21), performing miracles (Acts 3:1–11; 9:32–35, 38–42), as the first missionary to the Gentiles (Acts 10:1–45) and as a missionary to the Jews outside of Jerusalem (Acts 12:17).

### [Here we stand!](#)



When we are on spiritual high tide, we make confident declarations of our faith. When directly challenged on our faith, especially when we are on spiritual low tide, do we stick to the bold statement “**Here we stand!**” or shrivel away?

To be sure, no church that is manned by sinners is perfect. However, being imperfect means that there is always room to improve. As Christians, do we stay with a comfortable status quo or play active roles (whether as shepherd or sheep) as agents of positive change, keeping our focus (“**Here I stand!**”) on the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Or do we say “**Here I stand**” today (as a member of one church) and “**There I stand**” tomorrow (as a member of another church) with our theological convictions shifting as the wind blows?

If every Christian feels that “everything is fine, good enough, nothing much I can do, just go with the flow ...”, I am afraid that JCC may just become a Ju-rong Church Club where members just maintain their duties (of regular attendance, for example) to feel good and imbibe whatever there is instead of growing it as a church on the rise, a happening place set on firm spiritual grounds.

The truth in this statement that someone shared with me is retained even after replacing the word “life” with the word “church”:

*“So much in ~~life~~ **church** depends on our attitude. The way we choose to see things and respond to others makes all the difference.”*

It is sad that from time to time we heard church scandals around the world. These scandals (compromise with morals and ethics, financial faults, etc.) did not just come out of the blue overnight but developed out of an attitudinal indifference to bits and pieces of wrong practices that accumulated into a big mess over many years. Even if we are fortunate to see few of such big-mess happenings in our locale, it is still unglorifying to God and not conducive to our outreach efforts when pre-Christians hearing the scandals become averse to us due to misperceptions of the church messages.



Martin Luther, Nicodemus and Apostle Peter were not super-human – just ordinary humans who had their shortcomings, yet having the right attitude of “**Here I stand!**” at the crucial moments that made an impact on the church to God’s glory!

We don’t need to aspire for major acts like the impressive works of the great church fathers. While cumulative little bits of attitudinal indifference may lead to an unglorifying testimony for Christ, it is also cumulative little bits of right attitudes in our Christian service (whether as shepherd or sheep) that will lead to a vibrant spiritually happening church. We may just be small cogs in the wheel, but any single missing or non-performing cog may just break the wheel apart.

This month we celebrate another anniversary of the Reformation. May each of us say with conviction “**Here I stand!**” in faith, in understanding of Scripture and in awareness of our important place in the wheel that drives the church.

*John Lee*

# FROM US TO U!

*Pastors' appreciation night*



13 October 2018 – PTL! Praise the Lord for the opportunity to fellowship and encourage one another! As everyone got together at Roy and Juria's place, the function room was filled with echoes of laughter and chatter. As we gathered, Tony started the session with a welcome speech and shared how the Abundance Cell Group (ABCG) grew with stories that brought fond memories back to many around the room.



*"It is not about the quantity of the food, but the quality of it and the importance everyone coming together! No pressure. Let's pray and give thanks for the food! Amen."*

Tony also introduced the new members who have been joining the ABCG for the last year and gave thanks for our guests (Reverend Anthony, Reverend Martin Yee and Betsy, Pastor Andrew and Grace, Deacon Peter and Jessie) that they were able to attend this event.



After Patrick led the group in songs of worship, we indulged in the food and continued the fellowship with one another.

Let us recap what we did the last year for the Pastors' Appreciation. If you can recall, the ABCG posed questions to the Pastors and their wives. The episode was the highlight of that night because we got to know our pastoral team better with questions about their personal lives and heart-felt sharing on their service to God.

For this round, the Pastors were asked to prepare two questions for ABCG. The questions were not shared in advance so that we can achieve the most transparent and candid responses from the ABCG members. Wow! The questions were tough ranging from changes to educational system, Christian living and sharing about ABCG.

This segment had four teams headed by the Pastors respectively. The teams had to draw two questions each to discuss and share after 25 minutes. The Pastors played "Scissors, Paper, Stone" to decide who should start first. 😊

Question 1 – Rev Anthony

Share two lessons that you think the Lord has taught you in 2018. Why you say so?

Question 2 – Rev Anthony

Imagine you meet/ bump into new comers at JCC on Sunday. If you have two things to share with all the new comers in JCC, what will that be and why?

Question 1 – Rev Martin Yee

Fast forward what do you want to see your Christian life in 10 years time?

Question 2 – Rev Martin Yee

What do you wish to hear from the pastor/ preacher in their sermons?

Question 1 – Pastor Andrew

What makes you to take time and trouble to attend Abundance Cell Group? What is the strength of Abundance Cell Group?

Question 2 – Pastor Andrew

What is the most important aspect of Christian living to you? What is life all about?

Question 1 – Deacon Peter

What is Abundance Cell Group's view concerning MOE newly revised educational system i.e. reduction of term tests and less emphasis on exam performance/ marks?

Question 2 – Deacon Peter

What would be possible life challenges facing our nation's Merdeka generation in the 10 to 20 years ahead to stay relevant and alive (heart, mind, body, soul and spirit as Singapore enters the ICT (Information Communication Technology), AI (Artificial Intelligence) and super-duper age?



Thought we should share the questions with all of you. Phew! Not easy right?

This session gave us the opportunity to get to know each other better and how we feel about the things around us. Some of the sharing was personal such as lessons that the Lord had taught us in 2018. Other comments included what we would like to hear from the preaching on Sundays; what would we do if we meet new comers and how we could reach out to them besides welcoming them.

Also, candid answers flowed on the reduction of tests as we focus less on academic performance which many felt that it was just prolonged agony as the tests will still have to be taken the following year. The team knows that it was still important to respect the change which will benefit the students/ children in the short run. So, is learning just having tests or is it about the disciplining of the mind and heart to pace ourselves to think and grow in other aspects such as on the behaviours and values while knowledge is key to the educational system? A few of

us felt that tests may actually help instil that discipline to learn and after all we are all products of the educational system.

On the ABCG, it was good to hear of the unity and care that the group bring to people around us. This draws people to want to be in the CG and to know God better. We give thanks to God!

One particular comment caught my attention during the group discussion and tickled my thoughts. It was nice to know that the appreciation night allowed the mingling of the hearts with one another especially with the Pastoral team and their families. It was a wish that such events could be held more often. It struck me that efforts on such events is also a gift from God as it goes beyond words that brought insight to the work that God has done through His Love and will continue to do in ways that we cannot imagine through the fellowship with Him and one another.

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” Matt 18:20

It was heart-warming to know that we should rely on God and pray in the face of changes and challenges for our nation. All the discussions brought out an important aspect i.e. it takes us back to God.

On hindsight, how does the love of the God propel all of us to do what we need to do in our lives? You will know as we continue to pray for wisdom and direction from God. As a few of the ladies put it, it is important to “Grow, Glow and Go” in our Christian lives no matter what we want to do in the many years to come.

“God’s purpose is greater than our problems, our pain and even our sin.” Rick Warren

God’s grace, love and mercy will be the same forever. We closed the night with another song in awe to God and prayed before we left. Let us continue to remember our Pastoral team; giving thanks to God for them and their families as they need our prayers and encouragement too.

*Joyce Tan*

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2018



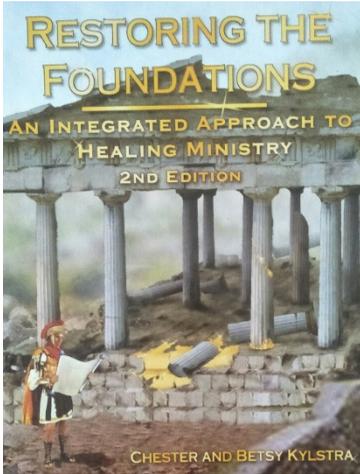
From HKBP (Indonesian Church)

Thank you for the honour of praising God in beautiful Jurong Christian Church. The beauty of the church shows also in the ministry, hospitality of God's wonderful servants at JCC.



# RESTORING THE FOUNDATIONS (RTF)

Seminar @ JCC on 22 Sep 2018



Problems, more problems and seemingly endless problems that always threaten to overwhelm us. How many of us are spared? How many wish to restore their life and relationships?

Early this year, together with a group from JCC, I attended a course based on the book RESTORING THE FOUNDATIONS – AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO HEALING MINISTRY.

It was an enriching experience as course participants gained insights into the causes of life's multitudes of problems and the ways at our disposal to deal with them.

On 22 Sep, another RTF seminar was conducted at JCC, and I was eager to participate again. There was no harm to be refreshed on what I had learned.

The four sources of our problems can be generally categorised as:

- Generational sins and curses (i.e., sins of our Fathers)
- Ungodly Beliefs
- Life's Hurts (Soul-Spirit Hurts)
- Demonic Oppression.



Certainly, it was one thing to read the book; and an entirely different experience with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ gathered together providing the encouragement to engage in mind-opening discussions on identifying the issues and going through

the RTF's approach to victory, healing, hope and freedom.

I even participated in a group role-play item (with a rope) that brought home a message in a lively manner.

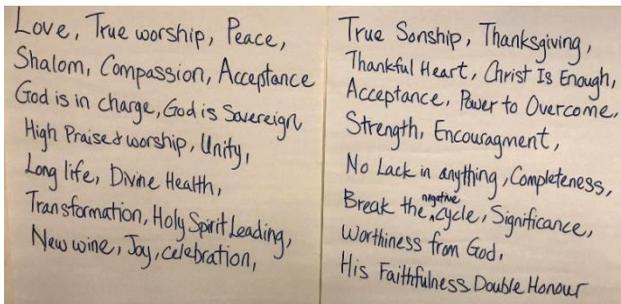
In the first RTF course I attended, there was a time of prayer for cleansing myself and my family when I told the Lord to go to my house (and I gave the Lord my home address). As I was praying, I sang in tongues and the Lord told me: Empty your heart and I will fill you with brightness.

Then I realised that I needed to come to the Lord in emptiness and allow the presence of God to fill me with fullness. It was a nice feeling I experienced.

At the RTF seminar in JCC, when all of us were praying, I told God that I have so many problems, my family members have not known the Lord yet, many issues not solved ... The voice came to me and said: My child, you are not alone; I am walking with you, not in front of you, not behind you but just side by side with you.

Each time I attended the RTF, I experienced a different touch from the Lord

I have attended RTF twice and have been differently touched by the presence of the Lord.



Confessing our sins and the sins of our Fathers; forgiving others, receiving God's forgiveness and forgiving ourselves ... There were so many things taught and learnt – understanding the truths about God's character, His design

and the promises in the Bible – and I need more time to slowly digest them.

The key message is alive: ATL (Ask The Lord)

ATL for a word of encouragement/blessing for yourself and those around you who have problems, more problems and seemingly endless problems that threatens to overwhelm.

*Peggy Tan*

# Stewardship

Last Sunday was Stewardship week and the sermon was titled Lordship & Stewardship based on Matthew 25:14-30 about the parable of the talents or the parable of the bags of gold.

Looking at the AGM report for JCC English Section's 2017 expenses (excluding Salaries and staff related expenses), it came up to \$192,170. That means to say even if we don't have any paid employees/staff, we still need to raise at least \$16,000 a month for running costs alone (including benevolence).

One of the hot topics that always pop up during my conversations with non-Christian colleagues is that of Christians being forced to give to church. My latest was with a Temp boy living just opposite from Shuqun Primary School. He was working while waiting for NS. He claims that he has a school friend who is not earning any income but was asked to give to the church. Of course I was apologetic and told him that churches do not force their members to give unwillingly though perhaps some churches may impress too strongly.

So I had to tell him a parable (I don't know if I have told you before). We sent Debra to Australia for four years to study. During that time, she did not work and therefore did not earn any income. Yet on our birthdays, she would send us presents (a watch or a cake) through online suppliers. How could she do it since she doesn't have any income? Obviously, she had to cut back on some of her expenses. She was using the money we sent her to buy gifts for us.

I explained the parable to him that God gives us the money that we have. We are not giving God money, that is the main point I was driving at. Does God need money from us? However when we give, is it not out of love or appreciation for God, our Father? Did not the Bible say, "*God loves a cheerful giver.*" – 2Corinthians 9:7b? This boy must have thought that people who give must be crazy rich and own big houses, cars and a big fat pay. Perhaps this applies to other religions but not to us.

And if we do not give can God settle the running costs of JCC?

*Martin Cheah*

## **THE INSIDE STORY**

Two days before the Mission Team's departure date, Henry was warded into NTFGH for chest pains. I visited him on Wednesday evening and we talked a while. He was very determined to go for the trip, so I thought he should be trained to pray for people as this was expected out in the mission field. As Peggy's father was in the next ward, we went over to attempt to pray for him. Unfortunately, Peggy's father had a guest then, so I told Henry to go over the next morning before visitors come. However, the next morning Henry was discharged and in the process, forgot to go over to pray for Peggy's dad.

On Thursday night, Henry was all packed and ready to go for the Mission Trip on Friday. When he woke up on Friday morning, his blood pressure shot up to above 150 and his limbs were weak. He checked himself into NUH and missed the flight to Cambodia. By Saturday, he was discharged and on Sunday, he was back in JCC for worship service. We had to give him encouragement as he was quite despondent about missing the trip.

Was this a spiritual attack or just an episode of stress related health issues? On his first mission trip last year, he was also warded in hospital a week before the trip. However he managed to recover in time for that trip. This time the attack was 2 days before the trip and even on the morning itself. Due to the timing of his health issues, it may seem like a spiritual attack. Henry is still considering to go for another mission trip sometime in the future after his health has improved.

We cannot assume that our mission trips are so low key that it does not have any spiritual impact because the evil one seems determined to stop us. Perhaps the impact may not be for the Cambodians but for our own spiritual growth. Whatever it may be, may I suggest that JCC pray for all mission trippers that they will be protected and empowered to make a change in the lives of the Cambodians and themselves.

The next mission trip to Cambodia will be from 7 – 10 December 2018. Who will go for the Lord?



# JCKK Graduation 2018



**27 October  
2018  
@ MPH1**

