



For Internal Circulation Only



54th NATIONAL DAY

by John Lee



A TESTIMONY OF RYDEN

by Alice Soh

The temporary things of this world never satisfy like God can.
True, lasting contentment
is found only through our relationship with Him.

TRUE CONTENTMENT

by Richard Lee



The Vine This Month

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CG Celebration Night
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HOM Editorial

from a race of woman warriors living on an island where there is no man. On that island, there are older women, like her mother, Queen Hippolyta and younger women like her peers.



Even though women are able to bear children, how do they do it without a man? It is just a fictional story from a comic book, you might say, so logic is suspended.

In the beginning, God made Adam. In Genesis 2:15, *“The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”* And in Genesis 2:18, *The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”* Since Adam had to work and take care of the garden, wouldn't he need Steve to help him? If God had made Adam and Steve, wouldn't it be a great pair to work together?

Logic tells us that if God created Adam and Steve, that would be the end of the story because neither Adam nor Steve could procreate.

So what makes modern man, with centuries of knowledge, wise and learned, people in authority, think that woman married to woman and man married to man will keep the planet going on for another 6,000 years? We are not living in a comic book world, a world of make believe.

According to a CNA report, Singapore's total fertility rate (TFR) dropped to 1.16 in 2017, making it the lowest figure since 1.15 in 2010. What conclusion can you draw from this bit of statistics?

God created them male and female and blessed them. Genesis 5:2

Martin Cheah

54th National Day Celebration

For What Purpose?



This month, Singaporeans celebrate the 54th National Day of Singapore. Year after year, we celebrate our National Day with jubilation. For what purpose?

Pomp and revelry accompanying a celebration is indicative of our joyous spirit. However, there is more to the celebration than joining in the excitement, more than advertising our success as a nation, and more than whipping up feel-good national sentiments. It adds meaningfulness if we also recognize that an important purpose of celebration is to remember.

Remember what? Well, remembering how we came through struggles and were “re-born” as an independent nation.



There were consequences of separation from Malaysia. There are lessons to reinvigorate our “NEVER SAY DIE” spirit when faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges to go it alone in all aspects of survival – economic sufficiency, national defence, sustenance with adequate life essentials (e.g., water), etc.

Someone Whatsapped me a joke circulating in social media, not so complimentarily comparing Singaporean's "KIASU/KIASI" attitude with Malaysian's "BOLEH" attitude and the Japanese's "CAN-DO" attitude. Of course, it is just a gag for us to laugh at ourselves, perhaps to have a light-hearted moment to take a respite from our usual serious-mindedness in most matters as we muse about how the humorous label came to be attached on us.



Serious-minded we were! When under threat of survival, our survival instincts trustworthily came to our rescue. "NEVER SAY DIE" was the spirit, rather than "DIE LIOW", "NO HOPE LIOW" or "KIASU/KIASI". As we celebrate our National Day, we remember.

Remember what? Remember the true grit of our first-generation leaders.

(Since when did our "NEVER SAY DIE" spirit morph into the "KIASU/KIASI" spirit?) 😊

We remember our Pioneer Generation and Merdeka Generation citizens who joined hands with the leaders to wrench survival out of hard-to-survive situations and laid the groundwork for the successive generations.

What for, remember? We remember and reflect.

Are we still as serious-minded as we were? Are the new generations of leaders and citizens (and will the future generations be) on the same page and up to the mark in imbibing the worthy values and ethos of our ancestors who built the nation

from scratch? Think about the marks we deserve. It is a great feeling if we earn high marks. However, while expressing pride with the joyous mood of celebration and captivating shows of how far we have come 54 years from the Day of Independence, let us not be sunken by pride and lose our way going forward.

We need to open our eyes and minds to the realities of the current challenges on a global scale with democracy and good human values under battering. Directly or indirectly, anything that happens elsewhere affects us even if it is not in our area or is half a world away. Singapore may be much more fortunate in comparison to the gloomy landscape in yonder places. However, we cannot take things for granted that “we are too good to fail.” It is a clarion call for more resilience and dedication from a population with an eclectic mix which can be a boon or bane depending on how we harness the good collaborative energy from diversity and manage the friction from fault-lines.



As Christians, how do we look at National Day? What does the Bible teach about patriotism?

We are told in Acts 17:26 that “From one man [God] made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.”

Patriotism is undergirded by our faith in God, as we visualize God as the maker of every human nation and the decider of all land boundaries. There is thus the universality of man’s relationship to God. When we love God, we love the nation where He puts us in, and follow the instruction of His Word.

In this regard, we discern from the Bible that patriotism is imbued with traits of conscience, emotion and faith:

- Of conscience (Rom 13:5) – When we submit to the governing authorities as submitting to God.
- Of emotion and faith (Ps 137:5-6) – The fist-pumping emotional outburst was revealing of how the pious towards his country would feel emotionally afflicted when the country (in the psalmist's case, Jerusalem) suffered. It was also revealing of deep faith and hope in God for the country's recovery to glory when it was in a bad situation.

Patriotism is neither youthful idealism nor a nationalistic movement. Patriotism is a gift by God's grace for service to people that His nation will flourish to His glory.

Doing things to show our patriotism is not the same as conducting ourselves whereby we reveal our patriotism. Therefore, patriotism does not stop at celebrating our National Day with thankfulness for the physical blessings we enjoy in a materially prosperous nation. We should also contemplate about thanksgiving for blessings to the soul for a spiritually prosperous nation.

“NIMBY” (**N**ot **I**n **M**y **B**ack**Y**ard) is an acronym that was coined to characterize opposition by people who rejected things unpleasant in their neighbourhood but would not be bothered if the things were elsewhere not affecting them directly. Another expression of NIMBY in behaviours is: “If it does not affect me, it is none of my concern.”

Patriotism is neither an empty slogan nor a cover for political affairs. Hanging the words “I am patriotic” on one's lips does not make one a patriot. Patriotism is taking it upon oneself to bless the nation, displaying loyalty to the end through conscious

decisions and actions that contribute to the larger good, extending our thoughtfulness to matters affecting the wider spheres of society. We should discourage the NIMBY attitude as we show care and concern in our decisions and actions for the well-being of the nation.

After the National Day celebration, we should welcome the continuing dedication of our people as accountable leaders in all positions, loyal citizens in society, committed workers at workplaces, loving members in families and faithful believers in the Church.

For believers in the Church, patriotism recognizes that the nation is established by God for His glory to be manifest by the comings and goings. Singapore – a special place by God’s will as the Antioch of Asia – an independent nation independently navigating her path forward. The success of the nation hinges on every individual who would cherish year after year of National Day celebrations.

As we celebrate Singapore’s 54th National Day:

- We give praise to God for our blessedness.
- We pray for more good years with capable leaders at the helm.
- We wish all blessings to all Singaporeans to continue the harmonious living we enjoy.

To Christians, we wish them all blessings in Christ as they live out their faith.

Be thankful to God that we have all the good reasons to celebrate with patriotism founded on our faith in God, the maker of this good nation.

John Lee

True, lasting contentment

Extract from: *Our Daily Bread*

15 July 2019



“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” – 1 Tim 6:6-10

Money and material things may promise happiness, but when they take first place in our lives, we walk on dangerous ground. We avoid this trap by living with thankful, humble hearts focused on God’s goodness to us through Jesus: “godliness with contentment is great gain” (v. 6).

The temporary things of this world never satisfy like God can. True, lasting contentment is found only through our relationship with Him.

By James Banks

Loving Lord, You are the greatest blessing of my life! Help me to live contentedly with all that You are today.

Personal Reflection

I recall the time that my uncle's son won the Big Sweep in Ipoh, Malaysia. It was a cool first prize of 1 million ringgit.

He did not heed good advice on how to deal with the windfall. Instead, he foolishly lived a high life – a decadent lifestyle with gambling, drinking and womanising. In just a matter of 2 years, he exhausted his prize money of 1 million ringgits.

Regrets came too late; or was it a just outcome that he inevitably went back to work as an office worker – back to a simple lifestyle.

Yes, easy (money) comes, easy (money) goes, so goes the saying. That's why Christians should not gamble. Rather, work hard as unto The Lord for our provision. Don't work, then don't eat.

Truly, lasting contentment is only found in Jesus – no one else.

Lord, teach us to choose wisely. Amen!

Richard Lee

A Testimony of Ryden

Lynnest was elated to have found out that she was pregnant. The joy was short-lived when she went for a regular check-up at 6 weeks and was told that the foetus had no heart-beat. The family was devastated. Her mother, Alice, who has been worshipping and serving in Jurong Christian Church (JCC) for many years, was heart-broken. She prayed and asked the Gynaecologist to give the situation another week or so before aborting the foetus.



The next two weeks were tormenting for the family. Alice sought the Dialect Leadership team (DLT) for prayers and intercession on the situation. The day came when the follow-up check was done. The doctor found the heart-beat of the foetus!

I hear from many women about their stories and their lives that they risk when they were pregnant with their children. For Lynnest, it was also a close call for her when Ryden had to be delivered two months earlier and Ryden was born on Easter Day. Giving thanks to God!

This is the story of Ryden who is now 4 years old. Alice said she wanted to thank the DLT for the prayers with special thanks to Joo See who was always there for her with a listening ear.



Alice would also like to take this opportunity to thank Deacon Peter and his wife for their encouragement then. It has been a thanksgiving wish that she has held in her heart for 4 years. Glory be to God, our Lord and Saviour!



“When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen. Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest! Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, Teacher, rebuke your disciples! I tell you, he replied, if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.” (Luke 19:37-40)

Alice had approached me on one of the Sundays to share her testimony after seeing Lily's sharing in the Vine. I was heartened to hear from her as it broke the silence of the prayers to have more JCC members write for The Vine or reach out to The Vine members to share their testimony by letting us help you write your story.

My apologies to Alice as it took a while for me to connect with her because of my hectic schedule. It was really a delight to be able to pen her story as an encouragement for all of us; giving thanks and praising God on His wonderful love! This love surpasses our understanding of the life He has for us.
Amen.

May the thanks-giving from your heart sing the praises to God for His Almighty Love! Let your voice be heard! Thank you for this testimony, Alice!

On behalf of Alice,
Joyce Tan

Retaining the Next Generation of Christians The Protestant Church in Sabah (PCS) Support for Pre-Schools

The Protestant Church in Sabah (PCS) is a member of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF – a global communion of Lutheran churches). It is also a member of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Malaysia and Singapore (FELCMS) together with the Lutheran Church in Singapore



(LCS), Lutheran Church in Malaysia (LCM), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malaysia (ELCM) and Basel Christian Church of Malaysia (BCCM).

The church was started by German missionaries in Kudat (near the tip of Borneo). It was established in 1966 and registered with the Sabah government in 1967. PCS has a current membership of 32,000 baptized members in 322 congregations, making it the second largest of the four Lutheran churches in the country. PCS' membership is primarily made up of the indigenous people of the different tribes from the rural interior of Sabah, such as the Rungus, Tobonuvo, Kimaragang, Garo and others.



Majority of its members are illiterate and unskilled so unable to seek good employment in towns and cities. Families live in simple lodging and depend on the jungle for food or from simple cultivation for their own consumption and subsistence.

The church sees the need of education and had started pre-schools to help the children of its members to learn at an early age. However, with limited resources, most of these pre-schools were forced to shut down.

There are many challenges facing PCS's members because with the lack of Christian pre-schools within their reach, many of PCS's members had no choice but to send their children to non-Christian schools. However, they were dismayed when their children came back influenced by the school's religious teachings and practices. They had appealed to the church to restart the pre-schools and are prepared to send their children in order to prevent the church from losing its next generation of Christians to another faith.

PCS is making efforts to restart as many preschools as possible with the most basic of facilities that are within their means – using the church premise, having only one teacher and assistant to cater for the many children from its members and community.

The situations and needs were shared during the mission consultation of FELCMS. Though all churches in Sabah with rural ministry are also facing the same challenges, PCS, with mainly indigenous members, is in much dire need than the others. The maintenance of a pre-school is about S\$2,800 per annum.

In view of the above, LCS had made an appeal to its congregations to support 10 pre-schools in PCS for a period of three years from 2018-2020 -- S\$2,800 x 10 x 3 years. Some congregations had made pledges, but the full support has yet to come in.

We pray that God would touch the hearts of the pastors, mission committees and members of every LCS' congregations and pre-schools to give generously toward this important mission that is in critical need.





10 LADIES ON A MISSION

8 Aug KANDAL – Visit to Kandal ministry with a program of story-telling and children’s activities.

9 Aug TANG KRANG CC – Visit homes (11 families) of those who had eye surgery in June. Also spend some time in children ministry, story-telling and activities.

10 Aug KRUS – Visit homes (10 families) of those who had eye surgery in June by the medical mission team.

11 Aug KAMPONG SPEU – Children’s program at new outreach centre with story-telling and activities for children.

In all about 180 children were ministered to. Out of the 20 plus families visited, 2 sisters prayed to receive Jesus.



August Highlights

4 Aug 2019



Installation of Bro Joseph Hiow



Caleb Lee celebrating National Day in Northern Thailand



Parish Worker for Youth & Young Adults



28 Aug - Dialect Outing (Movie, Makan & Sightseeing)



7 Aug - Mission Team @ Airport

CG CELEBRATION NIGHT

3 AUG 2019



It was a food, fun, fellowship and feeding time as people from the various Cell Groups came together to listen to a talk about **Spiritual Friendship** by Dr Tan Soo Inn.



He suggested that 3 persons, meet for 2 hours over a meal, once a month. He called it the 3:2:1 method.

