



For Internal Circulation Only



TRANSFIGURATION

by John Lee



TAKE COVER

by Alicia Wong



ASK OR MASK?

by Bryan Tay



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HOM Editorial

I came across this article which I think complements John's article last month

about the parable of the Father.

God Is Our Loving Father

Luke 15:11-24

Humanity tends to project its own faulty habits onto God. This is especially true regarding the nature of His love. We think we must barter, plead, or try hard to earn the Lord's favor. But as the prodigal son learned, the Father's love is unconditional.

The wayward son expected his father's love to be diminished. Therefore, he went home hoping for a place among the family servants. Imagine the boy's delight when Dad greeted him with a hug and a celebration. His actions certainly didn't merit an outpouring of affection, but Jesus' parable is all about a Father who doesn't give people what they deserve.

A love based on conduct would keep people guessing, Have I done enough? Instead, God cares for you simply because you're you, and He expects nothing in return. Consider the prodigal's life after his homecoming party. He didn't move into the servants' quarters and get to work. He was reinstated to his place as the second son of a wealthy man, with all of the privilege that entails. In the same way, believers are the Lord's cherished children (2 Cor. 6:18). When God looks at His loved ones, He doesn't focus upon past failures, faults, or sin. He sees the heirs to His kingdom—men and women who love Him and desire to spend eternity in His presence.

No matter how far we may wander from the Lord's perfect will for our lives, we are always welcome back. The Bible teaches that God's love cannot be lost, regardless of sin or poor decisions (though we may have to live with the consequences). Our Father's arms are always open.

The above reading will also complement Alicia's article which follows on the next page.

Martin Cheah

Take cover

Met up with an old friend and the topic of the gravest sins one can commit came up in our conversation. Some of the things we discussed stayed in my mind. I am not sure if it is just me but I feel that as the people around us grow older, the lines between right and wrong seem to blur. Along the way, I hear these...

That's the way I was raised.

Everyone else does it.

He started it.

I was tired.

When I was a student, the lines between right and wrong seem so clear. Once I started working, I realise things work...very differently...

The woman you put here with me-it's her fault!

Sometimes I think we even change the name of the sin to make it sound innocent.

It's not gossip; it's sharing

It's not coveting; it's admiring.

It's not lying; it's explaining.

What did the bible say?

2 Samuel 11:2-4

2 One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, 3 and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite." 4 Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her.

Let's look at another biblical example.

Acts 5:1-4

1 Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. 2 With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

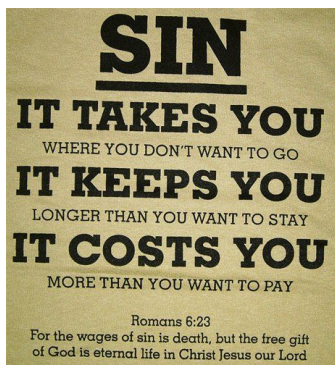
Ananias and Sapphira may have thought that when they lied about their offering to the church, it was not really worth God's notice. They did not commit grave sins such as murder or adultery. Surely God will overlook this small matter?

God's response?

He exposed their sin ([Acts 5:3-4](#)).

We also know the story of David choosing to send for Bathsheba even though she was married. He even planned to have his lover's husband killed in war to make the object of his lust a widow. Perhaps he thought that Uriah's death would redefine adultery. However hard he tried to cover his sin, God did not buy his excuses or his attempts to hide his sin.

God too, exposed his sin ([2 Samuel 12](#)).



All these examples illustrate one thing: even believers can be led into bold, flagrant sin. There is no such thing as believers being more righteous than non-believers or that some sins are small and others are big. Or that if we cover our sins, we can hide it. Maybe we may successfully hide it from others but God *will* expose it as seen in the Biblical examples stated here. There is no way

we can sin and get away with it unnoticed or unharmed.

Sin is sin.

What can we do?

God does not accept excuses but He does forgive sins. He is waiting for us to call it what He calls it – sin. When we acknowledge our sin and repent, God removes sin. In [2 Samuel 12: 13](#), when the prophet Nathan confronted David about his sin, David's **repentance** was **deep and real**. In [Psalm 51](#), he cried out for God's mercy, asking God to cleanse him of his sin, to teach him wisdom and to heal his conscience and his emotions.

David's song of confession and restoration can give us courage to confess our wrongs, no matter how far away from God we feel.

Personal Reflections

A decade ago, I was down with severe depression. To recover from my depression, I managed it the only way I could possibly do - by locking away my emotions. Even then it took me a year before I was ready to enter the work force again. You can say that for over a decade, I functioned mainly by logic. Hence, I pride myself as being a righteous person. How can I possibly make wrong decisions when I don't have the emotions to cloud my judgement? I do note that I am cold, distant and remote but I felt it was a small price to pay for keeping my sanity intact.

When I finally answered God's call to dance, He used arts to heal me, slowly putting fragments of my soul together. During a training session for the Christmas dance item, I rediscovered my emotions. God gave them all back to me so that I can freely dance and express myself. I become warmer and more genuine in my dealings with people. I laugh and joke freely, enjoying the



sensations the emotions bring. However, the richness of the emotions returning also overwhelmed me. It didn't help when things around me were happening (so...much...drama), clouding my judgements. I know the 'me' in the past could easily settle things but try as I might, I struggled.

One night, I surrendered. I confessed that I cannot fight sin with my own might and as much I tried to look at sin lightly, sin is sin. Pride, hypocrisy...a desire for the praises of men..etc..etc...all those emotions...Oh God...Help...so clear it is wrong but...

The very next day, God lifted all those dark clouds hanging over me. It was so simple. Confess my sins, cry out for mercy and let Him take rein over my life.

I.Could.Finally.Breathe.

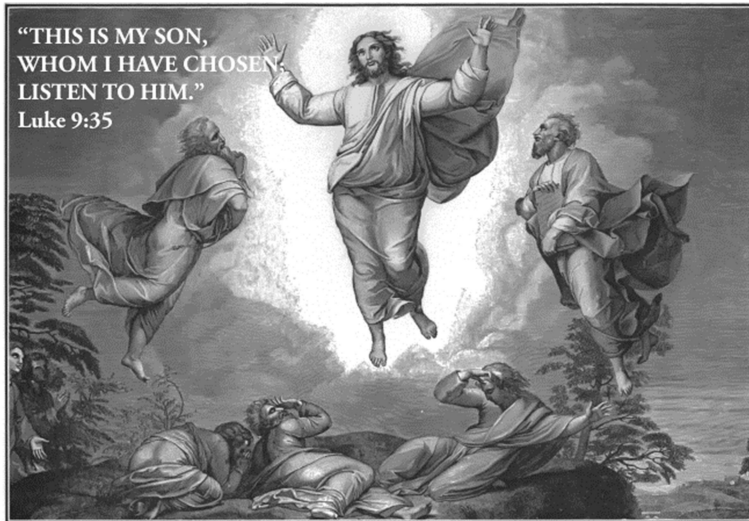
I walked around the next few days, on eggshells, scarcely believing that the complications and situations that troubled me could take such a sudden change. *Did it all just...past?* Truly. God did not test me beyond what I cannot endure and even gave me the wisdom to handle difficult situations and people. Maybe all He wants is for me to be totally reliant on Him, to confess and repent, having Him make me new again. And because I recognise sin as sin and confessed in time about my failings, my weaknesses...I did not fall.

Repentance frees us. Honesty renews us. God's mercy cleanses us.

Have mercy on me Oh God.
According to Your unfailing love
According to Your great compassion
Blot out my transgressions.
Psalm 51:1

Alicia Wong

Transfiguration Of Our Lord



The season of Epiphany begins on 6th January.

On 12th January 2020 (1st Sunday after Epiphany), the Church observes the Baptism Of Our Lord.

Then, on 23rd February 2020 (7th Sunday after Epiphany), the **Transfiguration Of Our Lord** is commemorated.

The Epiphany season runs until the day before Ash Wednesday kicks in as the start of the Lent season. (This year, Ash Wednesday falls on 26th February.)

What is Epiphany? The Greek term for Epiphany means “appearance” or “manifestation”.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, Epiphany commemorates “the first manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles,

represented by the Magi, and the manifestation of his divinity, as it occurred at his baptism in the Jordan River and at his first miracle, at Cana in Galilee.”

“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” – Mt 2:1-2

Separate from the manifestations to the Gentile public, the **Transfiguration Of Our Lord** was a stunningly amazing epiphany (revelation of Jesus’ divinity) to His disciples.

Let’s ponder on the following sequence:

- 1) **FROM** the appearance of Christ as a baby – When “Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.’” – Lk 2:13-14
- 2) **THROUGH** His Baptism – When ‘heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’” – Mt 3:16-17
- 3) **TO** the Transfiguration – “Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” – Mk 9:7
- 4) **INCLUDING** the numerous miracles He performed in the course of His public ministry
- 5) **WE BEHOLD** the unmistakable manifestation of Christ’s divine character!

Peter, by his absurd suggestion (Mt 17:4), was astoundingly obtuse when witnessing first-hand the extraordinariness of Jesus' face shining like the sun and His clothes becoming as white as the light together with the appearance of Moses and Elijah talking to Him. (Mt 17:2-3)

It was only upon hearing the voice of declaration from heaven (Mt 17:6) that Peter realised his inanity whereby he fell down in fear together with his fellow inner-circle disciples of Christ! Before we go too far to occupy ourselves with Peter's inanity, let us see what positive lesson we can gather from Peter.

About a week before the Transfiguration, Jesus had asked His disciples, "Who do you say I am?"

Peter ventured a good answer, "You are the Messiah."

So, before the Transfiguration, Peter already knew Jesus' divine status; or, did he really absorb the fact?

At the Transfiguration, Peter's inane suggestion betrayed the shallowness of his awareness of Jesus' divine status until a voice from heaven terrifyingly brought the epiphany to him about who Jesus is.

We also read in the Bible about how, despite Jesus' many outstanding teachings and many miracles performed during His public ministry, many would still not believe Him as Messiah.

Blessedly, there were also people who despite their initial unbelief finally believed. Nicodemus and Apostle Paul were two Pharisees whose examples of turning to Jesus inspire us. Peter, despite his early unsteadiness in faith, became a rock upon which the Lord would build His church. (Mt 16:18)

- **Are we like Peter** in his ignorance of the Lord exemplified by the inane request he made at the Transfiguration, only to be jolted by an epiphany (a moment of sudden and great revelation or realization) when some extraordinary event happens?
- **Are we like Peter** declaring solid faith with bravado only to deny Jesus (Jn 18:13-27) at the crucial moment?
- **Are we like Peter** who, despite the shortcomings he displayed of his human nature from time to time), recovers from mistakes, keeps faith in Jesus, learns the lesson of gracious forgiveness by the Lord and then becomes humbled as a devoted servant of God?

Which **“Are we like Peter ...?”** question above is most appropriate to receive a **YES** answer?

As we reflect on the Transfiguration Of Our Lord, we can have a few inspiring takeaways:

- The Transfiguration as a manifestation of Jesus’ divinity can be said to be one of the great events in the epiphany season supremely revealing our Lord’s glory and power, and it strengthened the faith of the witnesses to the belief that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, especially when they heard first-hand the voice of God declaring, “This is my Son ...” similarly as it was declared at Jesus’ baptism.
- The vision of Moses and Elijah talking to Jesus regarding “His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem” (Lk 9:31 NKJV) alluded to the death of Jesus in the body and the fact that God would bring Him back to life in the Spirit (1 Pet 3:18) Therefore, not only could the Transfiguration strengthen the disciples’ faith in the resurrection of Christ, it should also strengthen our faith,

with our confidence that Jesus will rule the glorious Messianic Kingdom to come.

- The Transfiguration was a confirmation of the prophetic discourse about Christ in the Bible. Some 30+ years after the Transfiguration, 65-68 A.D., Peter wrote emphatically –

*“For **we did not follow cleverly devised stories** when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but **we were eyewitnesses of his majesty**. He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. **We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.**” (2 Pet 1:16-19)*

The profundity of the Truth conveyed by the **Transfiguration Of Our Lord** happening in the presence of the living disciples with the appearance of Moses and Elijah carried a significant spiritual message that Michael Ramsay (1905–1988), a 20th Century Anglican archbishop, expressed succinctly:

*“[The Transfiguration] stands as a gateway to the saving events of the gospel, and is a mirror in which the Christian mystery may be seen in its unity. Here we perceive that the living and the dead are one in Christ, that the old covenant and the new are inseparable, that the Cross and the glory are of one, that the age to come is already here, that our human nature has a destiny of glory, that in Christ the final word is uttered and in him alone the Father is well pleased. **Here the diverse elements in the theology of the New Testament meet.**”*

Meditate on the great significance of the Transfiguration to our spiritual formation!

John Lee

Befrienders at the CHIT CHAT CORNER



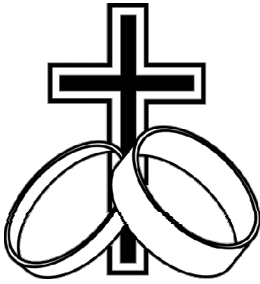
Every Sunday, we welcome newcomers to JCC. The Chit Chat Corner is a friendly place where the newcomers go to for a cup of drink after worship service.

There are 4 teams of befrienders serving the Lord with joy as they take turns at the Chit Chat Corner to welcome our new friends and get to know them.

Their motto: “The joy of the Lord is my strength” – Nehemiah 8:10

If you meet newcomers at our worship service, you may bring them to the Chit Chat Corner for a cup of drink. It is located just outside the sanctuary.

Peggy Tan



HOLY MATRIMONY

On Saturday, 18th January 2020, we witnessed the happy occasion of Rueben Sng and Debra Cheah being united in Holy Matrimony.



Most of us in JCC know Debra Cheah who grew up in JCC; and her loving parents who have been active in serving God in the church for decades.

God has blessed Martin Cheah and Joo See with a beautiful and talented daughter, and we share their happy moments of her wedding day.

As Rueben and Debra begin their new lives together, may they be filled with everlasting joy that shows the world Christ's love through how they sacrificially serve each other with overflowing love!

John Lee

Outreach: Badminton

CNY celebration on 5 Feb 2020



The Badminton Interest Group held its outreach CNY celebration on 5th February 2020.

The usual stuffs: Play, fun, food, games, prizes ...

Through the enjoyable activities, the Interest Group is dedicated to three important purposes:

- Facilitating GREAT FELLOWSHIP attesting to the good Christian testimony that we love one another.
- Promoting FITNESS FOR LIFE.
- The banner you see in the group photo above is placed prominently in front of the church building. It is our purpose to engage the community in meaningful ways to bring blessings to them.



We thank God for giving the outreach team the strength to keep going.

春吉福祿!

Note that the last 2 characters 福祿 rhymes with “fruit”.

It is our prayers that the dawn of Spring releases upon us propitious (benevolent) blessings of fruitfulness (with additions to God’s Kingdom).

Peggy Tan



Obey the Lord and leave all consequences to him

I accepted Christ on 2 Feb 2019 and I am grateful to have the chance to get to know our Lord and to be able to walk with the strength and wisdom He provides. I will always remember the sentence Reverend Anthony told me: "Our Father is knocking on the doors of your heart and it is up to you to open the door to accept Him. Once you let Him in, you will start to see His impact in your life." And our Lord truly delivers. I have been shown the Lord's mercy, strength and wisdom in so many ways.

As we are embarking on the new year, I thought it would be a timely reminder for us to always remain Christ-like in our workplace. As we navigate the challenging and hectic working world, we may be caught in situations where we have to make decisions or execute projects which are not aligned with Christian values.

I have found myself making unpopular decisions, though they are the right decisions to make. I used to be worried about whether my job opportunities might be curtailed or if I might end up in conflicts with my co-workers.

It all changed when I come across this verse:

**"Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and obey it"
(Luke 11:28).**



Obedience can be a challenge, especially when we feel tempted to believe that we can lose more by our obedience than we gain.

When God commands us to obey Him, He is giving us a principle to live by. When we choose to obey God, we take the way of wisdom. His promises of blessing for obedience far outweigh any possible consequences. Our Lord asks us to submit ourselves to Him and leave whatever

happens to His loving care.

This is a truly comforting thought and the reason why I never faltered in my path to be Christ-like in every situation. I know that my Lord will always have my back even when the circumstances are seemingly against me. This allows me to take on each day with courage, grace and wisdom from our Heavenly Father. :)

June Lim



HAVE YOU BEEN ASKING OR MASKING?

Ask and it will be given to you;

Seek and you will find;

Knock and the door will be opened to you.

Matthew 7:7 (NIV)

Have you noticed that starting letters of the action words “Ask, Seek and Knock” form the word “**A.S.K.**” as well? Knowing that nothing happens by coincidence with our God, let us consider the "double" emphasis of the 3-action word "A.S.K." here.

- What does ASKing mean?
- Why ASK?
- What does God promise us when we ASK?

Read the verse again and pause for a minute to consider your thoughts.

- Have I been actively ASKing?
- If Yes, what was the result?
- If Not, what am I trying to prove by not ASKing?

Amidst the COVID19 situation, we are encouraged to wear masks if we are not well. For some, it is better to always wear a mask especially when moving in crowded places. We wear a mask to protect ourselves from harm or to prevent causing harm to others.

Fortunately, in our interaction with God, there is no need to wear a mask, whatever the reasons. We can bare all before HIM. In the “equation” below, perhaps the “M” represents the invisible masks we are wearing that prevent us from boldly connecting with GOD to ASK for blessings.

M. A. S. K. – M. = A. S. K.

WHAT MASKS ARE WE WEARING IN GOD'S PRESENCE?

We are all wired differently and have our own issues to deal with. Perhaps the "M" represents different types of masks in our lives that have to do with the following aspects:

- Me – I am not willing to give up some things in exchange for God's blessings.
- Man – I am not willing to forgive and forget some things that people have done to me.
- Money – I am not prepared to surrender my resources to God's control.
- Methodology – I want to do things my way.



Whatever the M represents, let us drop it. It seems big at the moment and is depriving us of our right and privilege of ASKing. But once we drop it, we are set free and can stand tall before God to start ASKing for blessings in our lives and that of others.

LET US ALWAYS RUN TO GOD FIRST

God's Word is not complicated. His thought is simple. We are His children and He desires the best for us.

- When we LOST connection with Him because of sin, He spoke through human

prophets.

- When we CONTINUED to wallow in sin and reject Him, He sent Jesus in human form to demonstrate His love and power.
- And when we crucified Jesus, He gave us His Word and Holy Spirit to continue to set us free to reconcile ourselves to Him and have eternal life.

ONLY GOD FITS THE PROFILE OF OUR DREAM HELPER

In our everyday life, we ask for things like information, details, plans, help etc so that we have clarity about something and can get something done successfully in good time. In our minds, we hope that the person we go to will possess the following attributes and abilities:

- He is KNOWLEDGEABLE enough to give us a good answer.
- He considers it WORTH his time and energy to help me.
- He is WILLING to entertain my request.
- He is POWERFUL enough to influence people and things to solve my problem.
- He offers me help UNCONDITIONALLY.

There is only one person who satisfies your dream "HELPER" profile. He is GOD!

So why do we run helter-skelter, all over the place, when God is making **AN OFFER WITH A PROMISE** to us? He is waiting for us.

LET US MAKE A SIMPLE RESPONSE TO A SIMPLE PROMISE

Let us enjoy ASKing:

1. To A.S.K. is to acknowledge His Lordship over us, His Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence. We ask by simply going to Him in prayer and opening our mouth to verbalise our request. **IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, EVERY TIME.**

2. We A.S.K. because He delights in our well-being as His children, living the abundant life as joint-heirs with Christ. He has given us His Son's precious life to redeem us. What else will he withhold from us? **WE ARE HIS BELOVED CHILDREN.**
3. If we A.S.K. according to His will, he hears us. And if He hears us, the answer is well on the way. We just need to persist and wait for His good timing to make all things beautiful. **HE HAS PROMISED IT.**

Bryan Tay

God's treasure cove of blessings and answers to our prayers may still be full of backlogs because we are not ASKing and claiming them fast enough for our lives and to bless others.

A testimony of God's Healing in Marriage

Dear Brethren and Sisters, Greetings in the most precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Thabitha and I had the privilege to graduate from **'Navigating your finances God's Way'** – a small group study founded by Howard Dayton in October 5th, 2019. This study spanned for 9 weeks and was a transformational experience for both of us. This course emphasized on Biblical perspective of wealth contrary to what we hear in this world every day. I would like to share this testimony of how Jesus used this course to heal our marriage and changed our view of wealth building in a God-centric way.

My Dad often used to say, "If you don't take care of your money your money won't take care of you", so like most kids from middle-class Indian families, I tried to be frugal with the pocket money that my parents gave me every month. After I started my first job and became financially independent, being frugal was out and to-splurge was in. Financial discipline was out of the door.

Deep with-in my heart I knew that I had to correct my ways regarding finances. After few years in our marriage and after being blessed with two kids, I realized how careless I have been with my finances all through my adult life. No much savings to fall back on.

Like most other married couples, Thabitha and I had very different opinions on ways to save and build wealth for our kid's future. We tried doing budgeting on smart apps, used envelopes system of budgeting and many other ways but we failed, miserably. Sitting down and agreeing on a budget and sticking to it seems like most difficulty thing to do. Tempers flared, not-so-nice words spoken (mostly by me I should confess) and every time this happened our marriage cracked and suffered. This anger stemmed from deep insecurity and hunger to control what is not ours.

After nine years into our marriage and coming to terms that finance will always be sour spot in our marriage ...we both prayed and gave-up. But God makes things beautiful in His own times...When registration for 'Navigating your finances God's Way' was announced, we both registered without each other's knowledge. A sign that God had a healing in waiting for our marriage.



The course started with a break-through that everything belongs to God and we are to be good stewards. Week after week through the homework exercises, group discussions and most importantly through heart-piercing verses Jesus spoke to us in a still small voice. We started to align on vital aspects of marriage, finance and lot more things that we previously never agreed. There was peace that pass all understanding when we let both let go of control and trust Jesus in areas where we are weakest. Through those nine weeks God healed us emotionally , spiritually and more importantly financially.

I would like to share top 5 things I will remember from the courses (for the rest ... have to refer to the textbook 😊)

1. **Our attitude toward money:** The Master tells us to “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you”. We must not allow physical possessions to become so important that pursuing them dominates our lives. Wealth can become intoxicating and enslaving. *“Do not wear yourself out to get rich; be wise enough to desist”* (Proverbs 23:4)
2. **Wealth comes through diligence:** The surest way to financial security is through hard work. *“He who tills his land will be satisfied with bread, but he who follows frivolity [chases fantasies] is devoid of understanding”* (Proverbs 12:11).
3. **Properly manage what you have:** Once you earn money, you must properly manage your income. Otherwise it will soon be gone with little to show for it. *“Be diligent to know the state of your flocks and attend to your herds; for riches are not forever...”* (Proverbs 27:23-24).
4. **Exercise financial self-discipline:** It’s important to control our wants. “Death and destruction are never satisfied, and neither are the eyes of man” (Proverbs 27:20, NIV). There will always be something to want. Once one desire is fulfilled, the eyes will turn to something else. *“The desire of the lazy man kills him, for his hands refuse to labor. He covets greedily all day long...”* (Proverbs 21:25-26).
5. **GOD is our true security:** There is no real lasting security in wealth. *“He who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish...”* (Proverbs 11:28). So many unforeseen events can wipe out material wealth overnight. The only real lasting security is a right relationship with our Maker. *“Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death”* (Proverbs 11:4).

I would encourage everyone to take the course and experience how our Father inspired writers to include hundreds of verses in the Bible about how to handle money and possessions. Managing finance God’s way is an adventure you don’t want to miss.

Anil Robertson

JCC Dialect Baptisms, Transfers and House Cleansing – Feb 2020



put off your..... former manner of life and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.
Ephesians 4:22-24