



The Vine

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Pastor's Word

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

I was enjoying myself leading the Sunday Service at our Desaru Retreat when out of the blue, I felt pain gradually rising at the back of my right leg. In every step I took, pain shot through my leg. Muscles and tendons tensed up to freeze my movement. Such a thing has never happened to me before. I have always been active and healthy except for a few "thorns in the flesh" which have never bothered me. Unwilling to succumb, I fought the pain and my rebellious leg to bring the service to a close. The fact was that the worship and the message were more powerful than my irritating muscle pull.

When the Service was over, everybody got ready for a photo shoot. Casually I mentioned to Rev Tan about the pain. Rev Tan asked me to sit down, lifted up my legs and, to my surprise, told me that my right leg was shorter than my left by about 1 cm! Hey, how can that be? Dorothy and a few others confirmed the observation. Before I can "Amen", he prayed for me. Right before everyone, my right leg grew by 1 cm! I couldn't see that happening, but I could feel a loosening of my muscle that resulted in a definite soothing and

relaxation in my leg. No ointment could produce that kind of effective relieve. The pain subsided substantially. Although the pain seemed to 'resurrect' later, I received full healing by the end of the day. Praise the Lord!

If I were the only one to experience the power of God, it would not be very convincing. The fact is that on the previous night, Brother Roy and I witnessed similar miracles happening to a number of brothers and sisters as the Lord straightened backs and rotated vertebrae, healing backaches and stiff shoulders. There were testimonies of how accurately God had spoken through Rev Tan's prophecies and prayers for individuals during the ministry time. The word of knowledge and prophecies collaborated with the personal problems and family situations of brothers and sisters. There were deep healing and deliverance for some. Praise the Lord for His mercy towards us!

I have learnt to expect God to do a work of renewal in my own life. I believe you can experience the work of God in your life too. The Holy Spirit wants to revive Jurong Christian Church and He definitely will touch you if you will open your life to His ministry of healing and empowering for witness. The Lord reveals that the key is to rekindle our passion for Him through spending time in prayer. Jesus spent time in prayer despite the demands of others and the busy schedule of ministry work. You and I need to spend extended time - one hour or more - to seek the Lord. Don't be surprised to know that even Christian workers can be

too busy to pray. We can and should follow Christ's model if we wish to experience the holy and cleansing presence of God. That is exactly what so many of us need - to restore our walk with God and to seek reconciliation with our loved ones. We should praise God that this is another opportunity for Jurong Christian Church to renew our spiritual life.

God is definitely doing something in JCC as we see Him raising more labourers to serve Him in His harvest field. As we install our full-time workers - Martin Yee, Anthony Loh and Michael Christian - we rejoice in their commitment to the ministry of God. I exhort you to submit to their ministry as "they keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you" ((Heb 13:17).

As for my ordination into the (LCMS) ministry of the Gospel and the Sacrament, I request your prayers for me to fulfill my calling to preach the Gospel. I am just beginning my fourth year of pastoral ministry with you and there is so much more learning ahead of me. My vision is still to build a community growing in the power of the Spirit and the Word, vibrant in worship, fervent in prayer, warm in fellowship and zealous in outreach.

As we cross into the second half of 1997, our theme of being Witnessing Christians

is being worked out in the programmes of tracting, prayer-walking, training, public forums, mission trips, etc. It is a theme for everybody, not for a select minority. I urge you to be involved so that you will know the joy of soul winning. We will further develop this theme as we evaluate our church plans and strategies for the years ahead. As Rev Philip Tan reminded us, we need to seek God even more to reveal His direction not just to bless our plans. Will you co-labour with me as work with all our hearts to participate in the harvest of precious souls into the Kingdom of God in Jurong and beyond?

Our missions emphasis month - July - will direct our attention to the preaching of the Gospel beyond the perimeter of Jurong Christian Church. We have focused much on our church in our renovation and on our congregational budget. We will balance our vision by looking at the larger world of the lost in Singapore

and other parts of the globe. There is a world of people whom our Lord has died for and He has commissioned us to reach them. I challenge you to release the resources of time, energy, talents and finance God has blessed you with, so that the Gospel can go forth from Jurong Christian Church. Together we can do it, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

In the Glorious Ministry of Our Lord,
Pastor Fredric Lee

“
Obey them
so that
their work
will be
a joy,
not a
burden...”

(Hebrews 13: 17)

The LORD bless you and keep you...



FAREWELL,
DORIS HO



The Choir bid a fond farewell to Doris Ho, who has left to join her husband in the United States of America. The subdued affair was held at Kin Siong's house where there was a potluck party and some fellowship. SPEED was on everyone's agenda and so the conversation only continued during the commercial breaks.

Doris will be back with us in about 1 year's time. Meanwhile, may the LORD bless her and her husband and keep them safe while they are away from us.

CONGRATULATIONS



To our graduates of the 44th Graduating Class of Singapore Bible College, Bachelor of Theology - **Martin Yee and Anthony Loh**, we would like to add our Congratulations and remember, "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion." Phil 1:6

ASK THE AVERAGE PERSON...

Are you an "average person?"

Not in terms of ability or common sense or something that might be quantifiable, but in the sense that your opinions would be more or less typical?

For example, "Ask the average person, and he would say the sky is blue." Or "Ask the average person and she would say she does not have quite enough money (no matter how much she has)." You see? Are you an average person?

Here are some questions for the "average person":

First, which is more important, making money or being devoted to your family? Ask the average person that question and virtually everyone will answer, "Family", without hesitation. But watch how the average person actually lives out his life. See where he really invests his time and energy, and he will give away the fact that he does not live by what he says he believes. He has let himself be persuaded that if he leaves for work earlier in

the morning and comes home tired at night, he is proving how devoted he is to his family by expending himself to provide them with all the things that they have seen advertised.

A story is told of a king who was suffering from a malady and was advised by his astrologer that he would be cured if the shirt of a contented man were brought to him to wear. People went out to all parts of the kingdom after such a person, and after a long search they found a man who was really happy... but he did not possess a shirt.

I have had occasion to spend many hours with folks who are about to die. Not one of them has ever told me, "I wish I had spent more time on my business."

Another question. Which means more, the approval of strangers or the affection of people closest to you? Ask the average person which means

more, and she will not be able to understand why you would ask such a stupid question. Obviously, nothing means more to her than her family and her closest friends. Yet, how many of us have embarrassed our children or squelched their spontaneity, for fear of what neighbours or strangers might think? How often have we poured out our anger on those closest to us because we had a hard day at work or someone else did something to upset us? And how many of us have let ourselves become irritable with our families because we were dieting to make ourselves look more attractive to people who do not know us well enough to see beyond appearances?

One more question.

What does the average person want out of life? The average person will probably reply, "All I want is to be happy." And I believe him. I believe that most people want to be happy. I believe that they work hard at making themselves happy. They buy books, attend classes, change their lifestyles, in an on-going effort to find that elusive quality, happiness. In spite of all that, I suspect that most people most of the time do not feel happy. As Thoreau said, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation."

Oscar Wilde once wrote, "In this world there are only two tragedies.

One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it." He was trying to warn us no matter how hard we work at being successful, success will not satisfy us. By the time we get there, having sacrificed so much on the altar of being successful, we will realize that success was not what we wanted.

There is no one key that will guarantee happiness. Ask the average person and you will hear that we live in a messed up world of tragedies. There will always be low times. In fact, there will be times you get so far down that you cannot remember up. But when those times come, remember this: you are not alone. You've got a friend, one whom Scripture says sticks closer than a brother - Jesus Christ - the same Jesus who issues an invitation that reaches down to us no matter how deep we are and says,

*"Come to me, all you
that are weary...
all who are carrying heavy burdens...
guilt, pain, despair...
all that keeps us from being happy...*

Come, and I will give you rest."

Extracted from a sermon delivered at St. Paul Presbyterian Church, Greensboro, North Carolina, by the Rev. Dr. David E. Leininger on 11/5/95. (<http://www.unidial.com/~stpaul/library.html>)

EVANGELISM

It is important to realize that there are a variety of ways God can use you to draw people to Himself. He has gifted us all differently, and He doesn't expect you to become something you're not in order to be an effective witness or evangelist.

CONFRONTATIONAL

This is the bold style of witnessing used by someone who isn't afraid to speak out for the cause of Christ.

Example: Peter preaching boldly at Pentecost in Acts 2:37-40, "Repent and be baptized ... Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

INTELLECTUAL

This is the wise or knowledgeable person who likes to debate evidence for biblical truth, such as a student who speaks with evidence for creation when the theory of

evolution is presented in class.

Example: Paul reasoning with the Jews and God-fearing Greeks in Acts 17:3, "explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead ..."

TESTIMONIAL

This is often a person who had a fairly dramatic conversion experience and can't keep from testifying to what God has done.

Example: The blind man in John 9:25 & 33 who couldn't help but testify "...One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see! ... If this man ... (Jesus) were not God, He could do nothing."

RELATIONAL

This style involves building a relationship with someone (often a close friend or family member) over a period of time, looking for the oppor-

tunity to introduce them to Jesus. Over 80% of Christians say that a relationship was instrumental in their coming to Christ.

Example: The wife described in 1 Peter 3:1-2, trying to reach her husband and being instructed that he would "be won" as he observed her "behaviour" and the "purity and reverence" of her life.

INVITATIONAL

This would simply involve inviting people to come to something, maybe a Christian event, or even your church service. It is simple and works well for someone who may be hesitant to witness any other way but is willing to bring friends to a place where the Gospel is presented.

Example: The woman at the well in John 4, who went back to her town and told people that they needed to come and hear Jesus.

CULTIVATIONAL

This may not involve sharing the entire plan of salvation but simply "planting a

seed" or sharing a "word of truth". It may involve something as simple as a spiritual word or two injected in your conversation. God may use these little words here and there from different people to eventually bring a person to Himself.

Example: You see the process in 1 Corinthians 3:16 where Paul said, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, God made it grow."

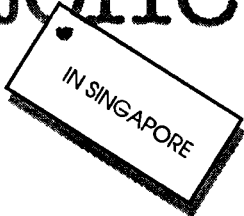
Noting the different styles of evangelism, is there not at least one that fits your giftedness. Perhaps you have an effective style not included in the above list. Whatever it is,

**"Preach
the Gospel
at all times.
If necessary
use words,"**

St. Francis of Assisi

So much talk these days about "Evangelism" is a healthy sign, especially if it is followed by action.

~~about~~ Unreached Groups



Religions of the Grassroots

A census of population in Singapore (1990) shows that it is the younger, better educated, and those from the more prestigious and higher income occupational groups who tend to convert to another religion (which means mostly Christianity). Rarely do those from the "sales and services" (7.8%) and "Production and related" (5.1%) groups convert. Among those with Primary Education, Buddhism has 34.7%, Taoism has 33.5%, Islam has 15.5% and Christianity has 7.5%.

These statistics point to the presence of unreached people groups in our country who have been neglected by the churches. In our churches, only a very small percentage of church membership comprises of those in the grassroots. The perception of Christianity as a Western religion might have prevented these people groups from converting to Christianity, as they see it as contrary to their Chinese culture. As believers committed to

fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ what can we do to be connected to the grassroots?

Some Strategies for Reaching the Grassroots

1. Understand their world view, (usually a fatalistic one) and offer them the hope that is found in Jesus. Render practical help to them in every way possible. Help them with their personal problems.
2. Let them experience Jesus personally rather than intellectually. Offer to pray for them when visiting or meeting them.
3. Plan church meetings to suit their schedule. They work long hours, even on Sundays. Sometimes they have no leave as they are self-employed.
4. Educate outreach workers about their culture and lifestyle as dress, speech patterns, and customs. Dress more often in T-shirts and jeans to identify with them.

5. Network with organisations committed to reaching blue-collar workers such as Project Joshua, Team 2000, and AD 2000 which can provide up-to-date information.

6. Use cassette tapes and videos to present the gospel in the home cells or place of work. Use cassette tape follow-up materials rather than books.

7. Identify potential leaders who may lack formal education, and train them.

8. Have church programs that are people-oriented and community based.

9. Use other means to meet them: e.g. for recreation, at company functions, family get-togethers, etc. After a game of badminton, meet over supper. Remember to "thank God" for the food in full view of them.

10. Reach out to students in technical institutions.

It is possible to preach the Gospel to the grassroots. In my church, we befriend hundreds of construction workers from mainland China. We provide a weekly dinner, followed by a cell group meeting and church service. We arrange for buses to ferry them from their worksites.

We help them with their physical needs like adjusting to our climate and culture. Spiritually, we prepare them to reach out to their oikos or circle of influence when they return to China. In this way we reach many more people groups where direct missionary work is impossible.

I have a regular outreach to factories through badminton, bowling and photography. Contacts are made and we share the gospel with them during these sessions. But we build on relationship, helping them in other areas. Recently, I was invited to their company Family Day to take photographs for them. On delivering the photos, more follow-up and contacts were made.

Let us work while it is still day. The apostle Paul's strategy in reaching the grassroots is found in 1 Corinthians 9:22,23 - "To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings."

This article, by Pastor Kelvin Lim of Bethel Assembly, appeared in SINGAPORE EVANGEL (Jul/Sep 96), a publication of THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD. Reprinted with the kind permission of Pastor Lim. //www.unidial.com/~stpaul/library.html)

WANTED:

Minister for a Growing Church

Must have experience as shepherd, CEO, office manager, educator, salesman, diplomat, referee, writer, theologian, politician, motivational speaker, Boy Scout leader, psychologist, social worker, funeral director, wedding consultant, master of ceremonies, church planter, missionary. Helpful but not essential: landscape manager, interior decorator, musician, minor league athlete, stand-up comedian.

Should have answers to life's tough questions about suffering, dying, God's sovereignty. Must hold firm convictions on every topic, but not allowed to ruffle anyone's feathers. Must think as deeply as C. S. Lewis, preach as passionately as C. H. Spurgeon, listen as sensitively as James Dobson.

Sweet disposition required at all times, even when attacked or simply having a bad day. Must have wisdom and experience of age but energy and glow of youth. Required to attend every potluck dinner, yet remain slim. Twenty-four-hour-a-day availability a must (beeper provided). Must spend quality time with family.

Applicant's wife must be both stunning and plain, quiet yet outgoing. She should keep home immaculate but be available to teach Sunday school, organize socials, and disciple women. Applicant's children must be exemplary in conduct and character, yet no different from other kids; dressed decently.

Salary not commensurate with experience or need; no overtime pay; frequent criticism. Non-smoking, non-dancing, non-movie-viewing environment. An equal opportunity employer.!

We may look at this advertisement and laugh because it is meant to be a joke. But do we secretly harbour such expectations ourselves? Do we expect more from others than from ourselves? Are we so committed to the church that we expect the same from our church workers? Or is it the Maid-Employer syndrome? Read 1 Timothy to clear up the confusion.

MISSIONS AND EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

July 1997

These are the events that we have lined-up for you.

May our challenge to preach His Word, be also yours.

July	Missions Month ' 97 "THE UNFINISHED TASK" Matt 24:14
19th July (Sat) 4.00 pm to 8.00pm	Missions Seminar ' 97
26th July (Sat) 3.00 pm - 5.00 pm	Public Forum: "Parenting In These Challenging Times" By Mrs. Leong King Teng (BA, Dip in Education, MBS) Director of Singapore Bible College (Admission). Please invite your friends.

Laughter is the best medicine

A man: God,
how much is
a million dollars to you?

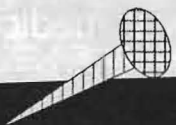
God: It is but a penny.

A man: God,
how long is
a million years to you?

God: It is but a second.

A man: God,
could you please
give me a penny?

God: Sure, just a second.



NOTICE

You may have already noticed some changes in our recent issues of **The Vine** 🌿.

Yes, most of the layout were done with the **🍏 Macintosh system.**

As most of your manuscripts are word-processed with the **PC**, your articles in **discs** should be saved as **Text Only** files for our easy conversion.

Also, always submit a **hard copy** of your articles. While we **trust** in **God** always, it doesn't always work the same way with **computers!** ;)