

THE VINE

For Internal Circulation

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Pastor's Word

World View

Were you ever touched by the life and work of Mother Teresa? Thousands of people have been changed by the sacrificial service of this missionary whom many regard as a saint. The international impact of such a small woman lies in the root of her great conviction of the call of God. She had said *We can do no great things; only small things with great love.* I believe it is the love for her Saviour who came to serve, to seek and to love.

God always raise up His servants to meet the need of the time. Once it was Martin Luther to reform the inner life of the Church. Then

it was Mother Teresa to reach outside the Church to touch the poor. Yet, God calls people like you & me to do His work albeit in a quieter and lower profile but still eternally significant.

*If we pray, we will believe;
if we believe, we will love;
if we love, we will serve.*



MOTHER
Teresa
1910-1997

Do you know that there is a highly significant and powerful movement in Singapore? No it is not the movement of the haze from Sumatra to Singapore, pervasive it may be. This movement among a group of watchful people will not be noticed by the newspapers or the T.V. But those people who claim to follow Jesus Christ as the Lord will be aware of this national and global

movement. You and I have the privilege to flow with the move of the Holy Spirit to pray for the salvation of precious souls in these last years of the millenium. *Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance...*¹

This global movement to pray unreached peoples into the Kingdom of God has been gaining momentum this decade. The Joshua Project 2000 Network has designated the month of October **Praying Through The Window III: The Unreached Peoples**. This is in keeping with goal five of our Singapore Vision 2001, which is: each local church to adopt at least one unreached people group for on-going prayer, on-site prayer-and-profiling, pioneer church-planting.

VISION 2001

Uniting the Body
Serving the Community
Prayer Cell in Every Block
7 Wave Harvest
Missions to Unreached People

So in October, if Christians in your school or workplace approach you to join them in prayer for an unreached people, you know what

is happening. Join them in united prayer. If there is no such prayer group among your schoolmates or colleagues, you can invite them to join you to pray for one unreached people in October. Form "Window Watch" groups at school or at work to pray once a week with the theme **A Church for Every People**.

Prayer resources include *The Unreached Peoples, 30-Day Prayer Calendar, Open Highways & PrayerWave Asia* available at 475-2124 (AD2000 United Prayer Resource Network), 299-4377 (SCEM) & 460-1304 (Joshua Project 2000). Such united prayer groups are high impact spiritual forces expanding the Kingdom of God in the unseen realm.

Local Scene

How's your prayer life growing? This is a second call to Congregational Prayer & Fasting (CPF) on Sep 27th. The target group: Members of Jurong Christian Church.

Prepare yourself to seek God with fasting, which means that you will not eat, e.g. dinner. Please don't make up for it by eating a heavy lunch or going for supper unless it is usual for you to have supper or you wish to break your 2-3 meal fast.

At this CPF there will be testimony time when you can give thanks for

¹ Ps 2:8

answers to prayer or share how your prayer life has grown. Some of our leaders will also lead us in praying for the significant areas and needs of the church. *Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.² Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.³* Come to worship, come to pray, come to be touched by the presence of the Lord.

² Luk 18:1

³ Luk 11:9

This leads us to our series of Revival Meetings in October 24th & 25th. Many of you who were at the Church Retreat have experienced the dynamic impact of Rev Philip Tan from Christ Lutheran Church, K.L. I believe God has a special word for you through the theme **Revive Me, O Lord!** Let us be ready to hear what the Holy Spirit has to say.

Grace & peace to you in Jesus Christ!

Pastor Fredric Lee

BEFRIENDERS LUNCHEON FELLOWSHIP

Sunday, 7th September 1987

All invited new worshippers/guests turned up, except one. Everyone had a great time getting to know one another. They were very appreciative of the church's organised effort to help them get to know the congregation members and the pastoral staff. All 15 adult guests and their 4 children attended the fellowship lunch which lasted about one and a half hours.

Praise God for the good turnout and the wonderful fellowship time. Thank God especially for the following brothers and sisters who have participated in the fellowship:



LEE KIAN CHEONG / LOW POH
KIAT / AMOS:
BENJAMIN LAI / LIANG YEN /
SARAH / :
THOMAS TOH:
MARGARET / AIDA PUI:
HARRY JEE / ALICE / PEGGY:
CHOO YONG PENG:
GILBERT / AMANDA LIM:
FLOSSIE:
IRENE.



Love must be completely sincere. Hate what is evil, hold on to what is good. Love one another warmly as Christian brothers, and be eager to show respect for one another. Share your belongings with your needy fellow Christians, and open your homes to strangers.

Romans 12: 9-12, 13

Oh no, we are out of drinks. If only we could turn water into wine.



WHAT IS SUCCESS? A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Success is a hard word to define. It means different things to different people. This article attempts to take a look and see what the Bible has to say concerning success. The methodology employed here is to look at the various occurrences of the word "victory" in the New Testament. Next is to look at the watershed events in Christ's ministry to see how it contributes towards understanding success.

Victory in the New Testament

The word "victory" occurs 33 times in various verb and noun forms in the New Testament. The noun "victory" (*nikos*) appears in 4 places (3 times in 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 and 1 time in Matthew 12:20). The verb "to be victorious" (*nikao*) appears 28 times (10 times in Revelations especially in the phrase "he who overcomes"). As such this victory is connected with perseverance in difficulties. Seven times in Revelation it is in connection with apocalyptic images; e.g. the Lamb (Christ) "overcame" the little horn (which represent the Anti-Christ), see also Rev 12:1 1; 13:7; 15:2. The adjectival noun form *nik* appeared in 1 John 5:4 as "the victory".

At the baptism of Jesus, a voice from heaven said "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt 3:17. These words have allusion to Psalm 2:7 "you are my son" and Isaiah 42:1 "My servant ... in whom I delight". This therefore is a conflation of the Sonship and Servanthood of Jesus. As an example of fulfillment of His mission, let's look at Matthew 16:1-4. Here the Pharisees and the Sadducees came to Jesus and requested a sign. A sign for what? A sign to prove that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. But Jesus rejected their request. Instead the Transfiguration narrative followed in Matthew 17:1-23. Note especially Matthew 17:12 when Jesus said "the Son of man is going to suffer...". Apparently Jesus' idea of success is not what

we normally think. To Jesus success lies in the victory over the temptations for power and wealth. Similarly Mark portrayed the turning point of Jesus' ministry in Mark 9. After this chapter, Jesus talked more and more about his impending death and suffering. Philippians 2:8-9 succinctly portrayed the success of Christ: "he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on the cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place." Yes, true success comes from being obedient to God (cf. Joshua 1:8).

Looking at the above instances, what is success? It is not in terms of power, signs, wonders, status or wealth. It is the ability to overcome the lure of evil, the lust for power, and the greed for wealth. Those who do so will receive the final victory when Christ comes again.

Success - Proper perspective needed

The Old Testament indicates that many of the patriarchs like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had great success in acquiring land, livestock, servants and descendants. As such many Christians feel that if they are poor, there is something wrong or sinful in their life, that is why God did not bless them. Many are affected by the "health and wealth gospel" purveyed by some groups. For example they think that if you are not prospering or healthy there must be something wrong with you spiritually. But Jesus and his disciples were certainly not a success as far as wealth was concerned. Paul and Timothy were plagued by illnesses (see 2 Cor 12:7-9; 1 Tim 5:23). Were they not spiritual? It is important to realise that there were also many Old Testament people who were seemingly unsuccessful as far as material things are concerned such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Elisha, Samuel etc. Spirituality does not automatically result in material prosperity or health. Job suffered terribly with sores. God in His grace allows some to have more possessions or more sicknesses than others within His sovereign will. But each is accountable for his own lot. The apostle John noted that signs and miracles do not always create faith (John 12:37). In fact they are wrought in a historical-

redemptive context. Success also takes time, faithfulness and perseverance in godliness as illustrated in the life of Joseph and king Josiah.

Wealth and money are not bad in themselves. But "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs". (1 Timothy 6:10). Jesus warned against letting money becoming our master (Matt 6:24). However, on the other hand, the Book of Proverbs 24:33-34 counselled against being lazy and slothful resulting in poverty — "a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest — and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man". Christians are to be hard working and industrious. In fact the Protestant Work Ethics has been linked to the economic success in America in the past. Paul warned that those who do not work should not eat (2 Thess 3:10).

Conclusion

Jesus advised us not to store up for ourselves treasures on earth (Matt 6:19). We are not to be anxious over material and physical needs but to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to us as well (Matt 6:33). Jesus said "I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 19:23). What does Jesus mean? Probably He is saying that we should have the perspective that true victory lies in the future with God and this perspective should transcend our problems and desires of this world. For those whose hearts and minds are on the treasures of this world it hinders greatly their entrance into the kingdom of God. They need to cast aside this "baggage" — the rich young man was counselled by Jesus to sell all his possessions (Mark 10:21). Possessions is not the real problem, but if it affects our perspective of success and eternity then it should be set aside. For true success lies with the Eternal God and His purpose for man. *Soli Deo Gloria*. Amen.

Pastor Martin Yee

Continued from the previous issue of The Vine :

THE ACEHNESE CHURCH

We left the island of Nias the next day, on a domestic flight back to Medan where Benjamin was at the airport to meet us. Early the next morning, Jimmy became

seriously ill with food poisoning and was taken to a nearby hospital for treatment. He remained at Medan and was

given the opportunity to minister to Benjamin's congregation, while the rest of the team proceeded on to the second phase of the trip.



With only a few hours of sleep, the team departed for the Christian community in Aceh. At the bus terminal, the team was introduced to Rev. Johannes Mahmud, his wife and Pastor Pedros Hussien and together made a trip, by coach, to Lhokseumawe, a city in the Northern Sumatran province of Aceh, a fundamental Muslim area. Rev. Mahmud, an Acehnese, is the "small bishop" of the Acehnese Church at Medan called "Gereja Kristen Protestant Anugerah". It has about 50 Acehnese Christian members and 6 church workers. Rev. Mahmud was a former

Islamic teacher and for more than a decade, he has been fervent in preaching the gospel to the Acehnese. He had served a one and half year jail term for preaching the Word of God.

On arrival, we were introduced to a small community of Batak Christians many of whom are working at the nearby LNG refinery, and also to an Acehnese who was recently converted to Christianity. We were told by Rev. Mahmud that he will be baptizing a couple of

Acehnese on Christmas day, at Medan. Before leaving Lhokesumawe, the Reverend requested that Churches in Singapore would join them in praying for the ministry to the Acehnese. He asked us to be a partner with them in the extension of God's kingdom in that state. His son presented to the team the autobiography of Rev. Mahmud and the Acehnese Church. We are giving a copy to the Singapore Centre for Evangelism and Missions.

The next day, 13th July, the team departed from Indonesia on a Garuda flight back to Singapore.

In our post-Nias mission trip meeting which was held about one

week later, we thanked God for enabling the team to see the vast "harvest field" of Indonesia and also to witness the penetration and the preservation of the Gospel in this Islamic nation. We were also thankful that He had provided people (Muslims) to assist us when we had encountered difficulties. As for the expansion project of the Nias Orphanage (Panti Asuhan), we sincerely believe that we ought to assist the BNKP in this program. We have seen and heard of many children coming from families way below the poverty line who, through financial and other circumstances, are being denied of education, daily meals and medical aid.

Our approach to this project is in two phases. Firstly, to raise \$22,000 for the restoration of the dormitory at Tohai, Gunong Sitoli. Upon its completion, it will be able to accommodate up to 60 children. We hope to raise the financial support through the Lutheran Church of Singapore and also through individuals. The BNKP has invited, from the Lutheran Church of Singapore, an English Language teacher, to teach in their schools. We agreed to accept the invitation only if we are able to raise the money for the dormitory, which is our priority, and apparently the one who goes to Nias will also monitor the project,

thus covering the accountability aspect.

The second phase is the sponsorship program. Here again, we intend to do so through the congregations of the LCS and individuals.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Gal 6:9-10

As for the Acehnese Church, Rev. Mahmud has had invited us to witness the baptisms at Medan this Christmas, and he also asked if the churches in Singapore could conduct training sessions for his leaders, at his church. We are considering his request and hope to work closer with the Christians there to enhance the preaching of the Gospel in Aceh.

"...One sows, and another reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labor." John 4: 37b-38

Submitted by : **Michael Christian**

How I came to know Jesus Christ



I was brought up in a Taoist ancestral worship home. When I was a child I used to follow my grandmother to the Kao Wong Yeh temple. I remember the fearsome countenance of some of these idols. In my parents' home there were many altars of various idols. One day I sketched a portrait of one of these idols; I fell sick for a couple of days after that and I thus feared them.

I attended the St Gabriel's mission school and occasionally joined a Christian fellowship group organised by Scripture Union. I learned about the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ but I did not believe in Him fully due to pride.

After my secondary school, while fixing up an aerial wire on the roof of my house, I accidentally tuned into a Gospel radio broadcast from Manila called FEBC. Touched by the messages I heard and the songs, I wrote in for literatures and learned how much God loves us in the Gospel.

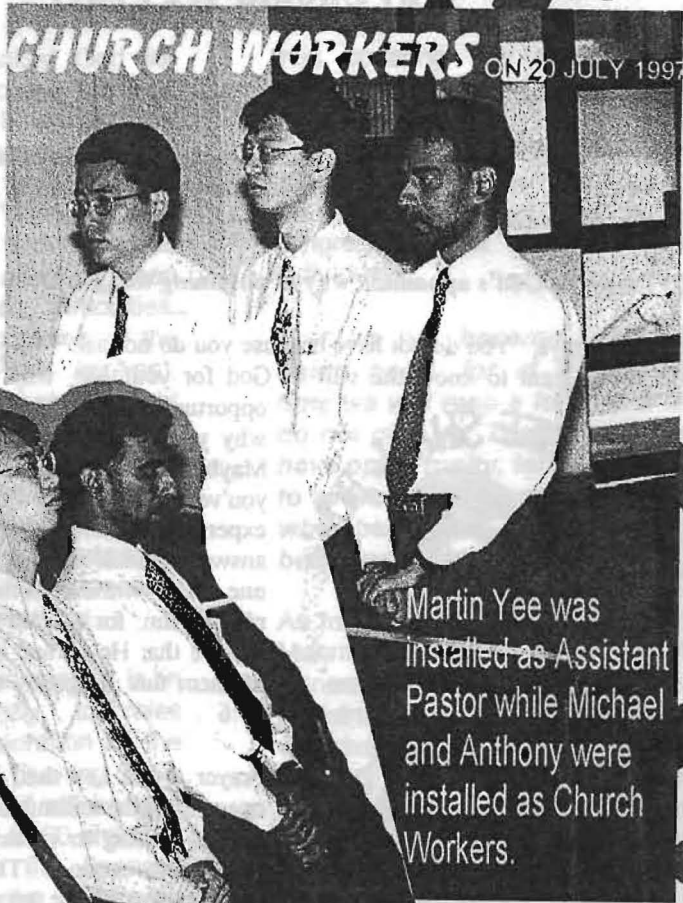
The Gospel is God's Good News for mankind. We are separated from God because of what we have done wrong and God is Holy. We are condemned to die because of our wrongs. But God loves us and sent His Only Son Jesus to die on the cross to pay the penalty for our wrongs. So if we believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins, and turn from doing wrong, and accept Jesus Christ as our Master then we will live forever.

So I decided to believe in Jesus and accept Him as my Master. I read his teachings in the Bible, prayed to Him and worshipped Him regularly in a church near my home with other Christians. I was baptised and now I am sure when I die I will be with God forever. Now my life has real meaning and I know where I am going.

Pastor Martin Yee

▲ INSTALLATION OF CHURCH WORKERS

ON 20 JULY 1997



Martin Yee was installed as Assistant Pastor while Michael and Anthony were installed as Church Workers.

1st boy : "I know why Martin Yee was installed as Pastor and not Anthony Loh!"
2nd boy : "Why?"
1st boy : "Because God said, "...and Loh I will be with Yee even to the end of the age"

Why Should We Pray?

#1) Jesus told us to pray.

Luke 18:1 says, "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart." We should pray simply because Jesus told us to and emphasised it in His life and teaching.

#2) Prayer is God's appointed way of obtaining things.

James 4:2 says, "You do not have because you do not ask." Do you ever wonder why you never seem to know the will of God for your life, why you never have any opportunities to lead others to the Lord, or why you always seem to be "scraping" by? Maybe you haven't seen answers because you've failed to ask God. God wants us to experience the blessings of seeing our prayers answered, such as the salvation of a loved one. "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6



answer some of our faithless prayers, it would astonish us. When we go to God in earnest, blending faith with our perseverance in presenting our petitions, answers will come. But we first have to ask.

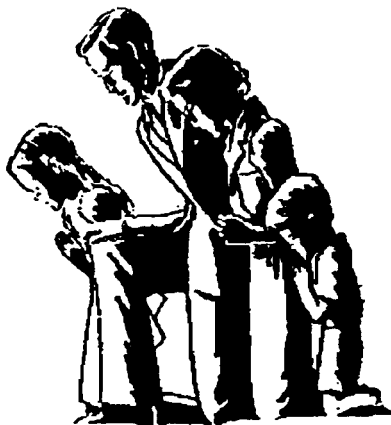
Prayer is the key that, in the hand of faith, opens to us the unlimited resources of heaven. God is willing to reveal Himself to us in a remarkable manner. The reason, however, that we do not see greater evidence of His power is that we lack faith. Were God to

#3) Prayer is the way by which God helps us to overcome our anxiety and worry.

Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

#4) Prayer is one of the ways we make ourselves ready for the return of Jesus Christ.

Luke 21:34-36 says, "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will be as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." As believers living in the last days, our lives should be characterised by watchfulness and prayer (see also Mark 13:32-33).



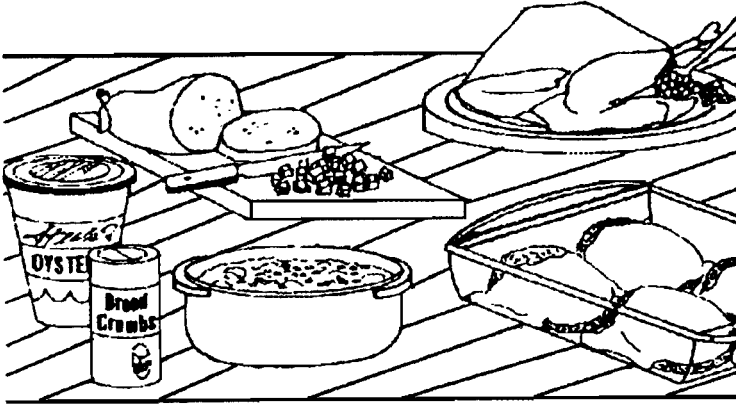
Here are some more passages of Scripture that provide you with more reasons to pray:

- ✓ So the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:6,7
- ✓ To build yourself up on faith (To overcome the world.) Jude 1:20, 1 Jn. 5:4
- ✓ So that the Father may be glorified in the Son Jn. 14:13
- ✓ To be saved Acts 2:21, Phil. 1:19, Psalm 116:3,4
- ✓ To pull down strongholds of demonic powers & vain imaginations 2 Cor. 10:4
- ✓ That the evil thoughts of our heart may be forgiven Acts 8:22
- ✓ For God to lead us forth by the right way Psalm 107:7
- ✓ Lest you fall into temptation. Mat. 26:41

Whatever concerns you may have at this moment, it is always time to pray! Remember, Scripture tells you to "[cast] all your care upon Him, for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5: 7).

Why Should We Fast?

Few Christians today practise the discipline of fasting.



Why?

By nature, every one of us is inclined to take the path of least resistance. To say that we often avoid pain at all cost cannot be far wrong.

Students shortcut their assigned reading by reviewing study notes. We look for easy exercise programs that won't make us perspire too much. Some people go to the extent of seeking out diet pills that will help them lose weight while they enjoy fattening foods.

When it comes right down to it, most of us do not like hard work. Even in those areas that we recognise are in our best interest--like study and exercise --we avoid developing disciplines to help us.

This is especially true when it comes to the spiritual discipline of fasting and prayer.

For all its spiritual benefits, fasting is not always the easiest godly discipline to practise. For those unaccustomed to it, going without food can be a struggle--a tug of war between the spirit of a person and his flesh (see Gal. 5:17). Many have acknowledged a battle in their soul when setting out to fast.

The mental and emotional battles that may break out when we fast can sometimes be unsettling. Veteran fasters say this is a sure sign of the need to abstain from food and draw close to God. It means that the natural man, with His appetites and will, is trying to gain ascendancy over the spiritual man and the inner work of the Holy Spirit.

All of us would acknowledge the critical importance of regular fellowship with God, but very few Christians everywhere would express a natural inclination to include prayer and fasting in their spiritual discipline.

Yet, down through the years, godly people who have done mighty things for God have testified to the necessity of prayer with fasting. John Wesley, who shook the world for

God during the Great Awakening that gave rise to the Methodist Church toward the end of the 18th century, is representative of such great spiritual leaders.

The roll call of other great Christian leaders who determined to make prayer with fasting a part of their lives reads like a hall of fame: Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, Jonathan Edwards, Matthew Henry, Charles Finney, Andrew Murray, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and many more.

Why were they so convinced of the need for fasting and prayer? And how does fasting cause the fire of God to fall on the life of the individual and the church?

Our Need to Fast

Throughout the Old and New Testament eras and during the last 2,000 years, fasting has been a primary way for people to humble themselves before God. In Isaiah 58:5, the prophet describes fasting as "a day for a man to afflict his soul." In Psalm 69:10, David says he "chastened" his soul with fasting. And in Psalm 35:13 he says, "I humbled myself with fasting."

"A broken and contrite heart--these, O God, You will not despise," the psalmist wrote (Ps. 51:17). The New Testament speaks often of the importance of humility before God (see Matt. 23:12; 1 Pet. 5:6; James 4:8-10). God will hear us and respond to our cry when we come before Him in humility and brokenness--acknowledging and repenting of our sins, and asking Him to cleanse us by the blood of Jesus and to fill us with His Holy Spirit.



The writings of Scripture authors, the church fathers and many Christian leaders of today offer biblical insights into other reasons for fasting, as well. For example:

- Fasting brings revelation by the Holy Spirit of a person's true spiritual condition, causing brokenness, repentance and change.
- It helps us better understand the Word of God by making it more meaningful, vital and practical.
- It transforms prayer into a richer and more personal experience.
- It can result in dynamic personal revival, so that we are led by the Spirit and regain a strong sense of spiritual determination.
- It can restore the loss of one's first love for the Lord.

Fasting Calls for Sacrifice

We cannot truly humble ourselves before God without personal sacrifice. Humility and self-denial are two sides of the same coin...Jesus' greatest calling [for us] to deny ourselves came when He stated: 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me' (Matt. 16:24). By fasting as unto the Lord we answer His call to deny ourselves for the sake of the cross."

The apostle Paul, who said he was "in fastings often" (2 Cor. 11:27), also said: "I discipline my body and bring it into subjection" (1 Cor. 9:27). Through such sacrifice, the Holy Spirit provides the fire that purifies the soul.

Martin Luther, known as "an inveterate faster," said that when he abstained from food for spiritual reasons, his "flesh was wont to grumble dreadfully."

Fasting Brings Power

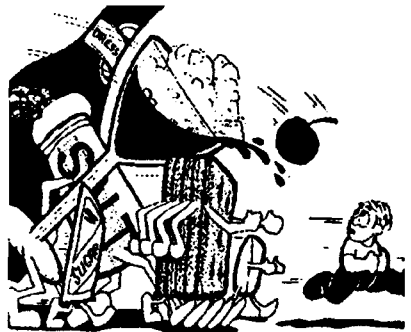
God's Word declares that fasting and prayer is a powerful way to cause the fire of God to fall again in a person's life. This fire produces the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control—but especially the fruits of righteousness and spiritual power over the lusts of the flesh and the lies of the enemy.

As fasting brings surrender of body, soul and spirit to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, it also generates a heightened sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit. It creates a fresh, clean joy and a restored determination to serve God. In short, it brings personal revival.

And that can lead to revival on a broader scale. Spiritual power does not lie in money, genius, anointed plans or dedicated work. Rather, power for spiritual conquest comes from the Holy Spirit as people seek God's face in consecrated, diligent prayer and fasting.

In fact, fasting is the only discipline that meets all of the conditions of 2 Chronicles 7:14. We could read the Bible, pray or witness for Christ without repenting of our sins.

But when we fast, we humble ourselves; we have more time to seek God's face; and certainly we would turn from all known offences. We cannot enter a genuine fast with pure hearts and not meet the conditions of this passage.



AUG 97

Rev. Terry & Sally Kee
Phra Khanong, Bangkok 10110

Dear loved ones in Singapore

Greetings to you in the Name of the Lord who loved us with everlasting love.

A letter we received in June encouraged us to share our difficulties and frustrations so that prayers can be offered on our behalf. We appreciate their loving concern. As we thought about it, we realized that God's grace had so overshadowed those little difficulties that we hardly felt it. Yes, there are the inconveniences of floods during the rainy seasons and the heat during the hot seasons. We have to battle with insects and mosquitoes during our frequent visits to the villages. One day, while in the Northeast with the Bedok team, Terry even had the shock of having a 10-inch lizard-like creature run up his trousers. However, at the present, our greatest frustration is having to speak or preach within what we are able to say rather than what we want to say. But through it all, **GOD'S GRACE IS MORE THAN SUFFICIENT.**

We are back to school after two months of full time ministries' exposures. In these two months, Terry had the opportunity to lead a Bible Study in the Men's Prison with prisoners from China, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore. We visited members who returned from Singapore in the province of Ubon Thani. While there, we experienced the leading hand of God leading us to a member who was feeling very discouraged and in need of encouragement. Let me elaborate:

"We were just talking about this member and was wondering how she was doing since returning to Thailand. Boonma (the evangelist in Udon) told us that he had lost contact with her since she left Bangkok and was making preparation to work abroad again. Shortly after, while we stopped at a traffic junction, we saw this member driving pass on a motorbike with her sister. She had just returned to her home in Udon that very morning and will be going on to Bangkok again the very next day. We were overjoyed to see one another and thanked God for His perfect timing. We ministered to her and introduced her to a Lutheran Church near her place

in Bangkok. We have visited her a couple of times and was glad to know that she had renewed her joy and strength in the Lord. We strongly believe our meeting her is not coincidence but the soveriegn act of God."

We had a wonderful visit from the Mission Team from Bedok and we visited Buriram, Sisaket, Ubon Ratchathani and Siikiu together. We were much challenged by what God is doing in their midst.

PRAYER POINTERS

1 We are back to school. While our spoken abilities have improved, we had forgotten some of the spellings. Pray for us as we prepare for the Government examinations to be held on 6 December. The examinations will consist of Dictation, Essay, Letter and Oral (Reading and Conversation).

2. Pray for safety in our travel. We have to minister in Chanthaburi (330km away) once a month and there are many reckless drivers on the highways.

3 Sally is involved in the Sunday School of Ladprao Church which has an average of 50 children every Sunday. Pray for her preparations, teachings and for the salvation of many of the children.

4 From the month of August, Terry will be doing a series of Bible-study in the Church on 1 Samuel. Pray that God will guide him in his preparations as he teaches.

May God our heavenly Father bless you richly according to His wonderful Grace. May your light so shine that men may see your good works and glorify our Heavenly Father. Amen.

Yours in Christ's love,

Rev. Terry Kee & Sally

Sunday - 28th September 1997

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER



FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

The World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) is sponsoring an International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church to be held on Sunday, September 28, 1997. The goal is to have evangelical churches all over praying on the same day for believers who are persecuted because of their faith.

This will be an annual event to be held on the last Sunday of September each year.

In calling for this special day of prayer, Dr Augustin Vencer, International Director of WEF said, "We are calling on believers everywhere to express their solidarity with Christians being persecuted for their faith by setting aside specific prayer time, especially during the congregational service. We know that this minor spiritual duty is just one important way we can show our support for those who are the targets of oppression."

PRAYER REQUESTS FROM PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

- Pray for the faithful witness of persecuted believers.
- Pray for the availability of Scripture and other Christian literature in areas where the Gospel is restricted.
- Pray for more leaders among the persecuted church, that they can continue to lead new believers into greater maturity.
- Pray for new and creative ways of evangelism in countries where persecution is occurring.
- Pray for the oppressors of Christians that they may experience salvation.
- Pray for the church in the Islamic world that laws of apostasy will be abolished which forbid the renunciation of Islam and that new converts can live without fear of repercussions.

- Pray for the Church in Communist lands that they can be strong in the face of governmental oppression.
- Pray for the Evangelical Church in Latin America that their growth will not intimidate Catholic church or governmental leaders.
- Pray for the church in the former Soviet Union that new political and legal freedoms will be preserved and that believers will remain steadfast when encountering discrimination and harassment.



Activities for week of Sept 28

1. Integrate an intentional time of prayer for the Persecuted Church into the Sunday service on September 28 (suggested prayer themes can be found overleaf)
2. Integrate reflections on persecution into the sermon or service. Sunday School classes, Bible study groups or small home groups can review and discuss the implications of selected scriptural references
3. Fast and pray for a meal or a day on behalf of the Persecuted Church.

Suggested Activities after Sept 28

1. Personally and in your family pray regularly for the persecuted church around the world.
2. Form a regular prayer group in your church (or encourage prayer for the persecuted in existing prayer groups).
3. Contact religious liberty advocacy agencies to get regular and updated material on the state of religious freedom around the world. Be sure to seek reputable counsel so that your actions will help and not hinder those in need.
4. Write letters to governmental, community and media leaders in your area about the issue of Christian persecution.



Facts about Persecution

† There have been more people martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ in the 20th Century than in all the previous nineteen combined. *Source: "By Their Blood", by James and Marti Hefley.*

† According to *World Mission Digest* there are some 100 million martyrs in this so called modern 20th Century.

† More people have died in circumstances related to their faith in this century than in all the 20th Century wars combined. *Source: Statistical research of the WEF Religious Liberty Commission.*

† One of the main reasons for the rise in persecution, especially over the past several years, seems to be the exceptional growth of Evangelicals in places such as Latin America, sub-Sahara Africa and Asia. Not surprisingly, these are the same areas of the world where Christians are experiencing discrimination, harassment and persecution at the hands of those with power.

† Reported incidences of persecution have actually increased since the fall of Communism in the former USSR.

† Believers around the world feel they have been silent too long and because they feel a new sense of support from fellow Christians they are now publicly stating their belief in Jesus, willing to risk the repercussions from such public declarations.

