

The Vine

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Memory also fades, as we grow older the years seem to pass much more quickly than in the days of our youth. A chemist offers an interesting formula to explain this. A child eight years old remembers about four years back - one year, or 25 percent of the total. By the time he is twelve he remembers eight years, and one year is only twelve and a half percent of the total. As the years go by, this ratio slowly but surely dwindles. At old age a single year becomes but a small fraction of his remembered time. Human memory may fail, but God will remember what we have done with our life for Him and for other fellow men.

Louise E. Schillinger wrote this poem titled: "No Time For Him?" which we can do well to reflect upon in the business of our daily schedule:

We are coming closer towards the end of the year 1998 as well as the millenium itself. Time is precious. There are many things we can lose but then regain, but not time. Once time is gone, it is gone forever and can never be regained. We are stewards also of time that God has offered us to discipline ourselves for the purpose of Godliness. Jesus said, "As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work." In Luke 16:25, the Bible portrays the anguish over a wasted lifetime in the story of the rich man who went to Hades, and Lazarus who went to "Abraham's bosom".

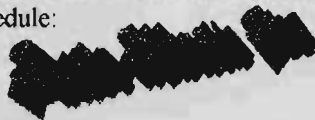
What! No time for Him today?
For Him who travelled all the way
From that solemn Upper Room
To the Garden's stony tomb?

See Him in Gethsemane,
Where great drops of agony
From His brow fall, one by one,
As He prays, "Thy will be done".

Follow Him to Pilate's hall -
Thence to Calvary's bitter gall.
See Him suffer hell's own pangs
While upon the Cross He hangs.

Hear His words - do they decry
Those who led Him there to die?
He prays for those who hate Him most
As He renders up the ghost.

Well I know He willingly
Lived and died - and all for me.
How then can I ever say,
"I've no time for him today?"



The Christian Attitude Towards Possession

by Martin Yee

Living in a fast competitive Singapore society based on meritocracy, many of us fear to lose out in life. A word "kiasuism" has even been coined from the local colloquial Hokkien dialect to describe this morbid fear.

In this time of economic crisis and recession this fear is perhaps further compounded. Losses in stock market and currency exchange, drop in property value, lost of jobs and income ...big companies like NOL and IPC announced huge losses recentlylosses rather than gain seems to be the order of the day...the world seems to be at a lost...

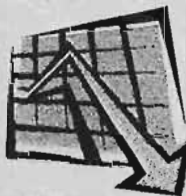
A story appeared in the newspaper not long ago about a man in Bangkok who lost heavily in stock market and who went to a multi-storey car park to commit suicide. Ironically he met another woman who was also contemplating suicide for similar reason in the car park on the same floor. They

shared their griefs and later both leapt to their deaths, leaving a suicide note, which recorded this unusual but tragic encounter.

But as Christians we should not feel at a lost... at least not in the spiritual dimension. However the economic crisis is a stark reminder of the transient nature of possessions and reinforces the need to reevaluate and balance our priorities and aspirations in life. Christians instead have a positive message to bear to the world.

In the National Day rallies in Singapore, people listen with rapt attention as the Prime Minister makes some important statements of the current situation of our society, highlight certain problems and make recommendations to address these problems. In the epistle text 1 Tim 6:6-16, the Apostle Paul also made a very important statement and made some clear recommendations for the benefit of Christians.

Godliness with contentment is great gain,(v6)
(godliness + contentment = gain)



Putting this in another way: "godliness without contentment is a great loss".

Reasons for a Christian to be contented:

- i. For... we brought nothing into the world, it is clear that neither are we able to take anything out. (v7)
- ii. But... if we have food and clothing (basic needs of life) we should be content. (v8)

What is contentment?

Noted Asian Christian Leader Dr Ajith Fernando of Sri Lanka who was in Singapore recently, has this to say about contentment. "It is not a grim determination to survive, and not a fatalistic resignation to the inevitable in life. Rather Christian contentment is a joyous acceptance of every situation of life. A Christian bases his living on the premise that a good and loving God controls his life. We are masters of circumstances because God is master of everything."

This is in line with what the Apostle Paul said to the Christians in the city of Philippi: "...for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I know the secret of being content in any and every



situation, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength." Phi 4:11-12.

The writer of Hebrews said: "Keep your lives free from money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" Heb 13:5

Why people are not contented - possible reasons:

1. Greed - Our Lord Jesus Christ warns us "Watch out! Be on guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possession." Luke 12:15.
2. Media/Sales influence - causes feeling of deprivation/ a sense of alienation/ create wants / fear of losing out if we do not grab the special offer.
3. Comparing with others, catching up with other "Ah Bengs and Ah Lians"
The unintended consequence of meritocracy - continuous dissatisfaction with status quo. The continual urge to upgrade has its side effects. Eg: Jack Neo's movie "Money no enough".
4. Perceived oppression of society - Karl Marx and Frederic Engels in The book The Communist Manifesto said

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles... oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another... Society can no longer live under this capitalist class, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society." This discontentment stirred up resulted in violent struggles and revolutions in various parts of Europe, and Asia. In Indonesia, the discontentment of the masses resulted in the overthrow of the Suharto regime this year.

Consequences of discontentment:

1. Loss of peace - results in great anxiety. Jesus reminds us "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes." Matt 6:25
2. Affects our loved ones especially our children - our children will not see the reality of God's work in their parents life, as their parents are always complaining about their life.
3. Also in the Bible passage in 1 Timothy 6, Paul noted:

Those who wish to get rich, (v9) fall into
a) temptation/enticement to sin
b) trap (of the devil) cf. 1 Tim 3:2; 2Tim 2:26
c) lust/craving which are morally foolish and harmful / injurious (opposite of useful / helpful) James 1:14-15

which (result) plunge / sink / drown people into
a) ruin
b) destruction
i) For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil cf. Matt 6:24 (sinful self-love vs love of God) (v10) some striving for money

a) wandered from the faith (from trust in God and Christ as the central desire of their and love of their life)
b) pierced/impaled themselves with many wounds /griefs/mental distress e.g. Judas (Matt 27:3-5)

Paul's exhortations towards godliness and contentment:

- Flee from these things (above) (v11a)
- Pursue Christian virtues: (v11b)



righteousness - conduct that is in line with God's will and pleasing to him.

godliness - holy life, deep reverence for God, piety, duty that man owes to God.

faith - reliability/faithfulness

love - of others

perseverance - in good works

endurance - attitude of dependence on God and determination to serve Christ
gentleness

- Fight/struggle the good fight of faith - good because it is for God and the Gospel. Struggle inherent because of our faith. (v12a)
- Lay hold of eternal life - cf Phil 3:12, makes ones own, in order to win do not give up half way. God calls - response: confession (v12b)
- Keep the commandment (the whole ethical teaching earlier) v14
 - (i) without stain and blemish
 - (ii) until Christ return - we are accountable to Christ.

Practical applications:

The Bible in Ecclesiastes made this astounding assessment "God made man simple, man's complex problems are of his own devising" Eccl 7:29 (Jerusalem Bible). The

word "simple" can also be rendered as upright/straightforward.

One Christian writer noted "Contemporary culture lacks both the inward reality and the outward life-style of simplicity...One moment we make decisions on the basis of sound reason and the next moment out of fear of what others will think of us. We have no unity or focus around which our lives are oriented...Because we lack a godly centre our need for security has led us into an insane attachment to things...We crave for things we neither really need or enjoy. We buy things we do not need to impress people we do not like..."

Some practical suggestions towards simplicity:

- Firstly, we can purchase things for their usefulness rather than the status attached to them.
- Secondly, do not succumb easily media influence / marketing ploys... develop healthy skepticism... Ask questions.
- Thirdly, do not buy things or maintain leisure that produces an addiction in you.
- Fourth, learn to enjoy things without actually owning them. (cf Jesus' parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man, Luke 16:19-31)

The Christian Attitude Towards Possession

- Fifth, learn to give things away to others who are needy.
- Sixth, beware of the “buy now, pay later” snare....credit card danger
- Lastly, avoid things that distract you from seeking and obeying God’s will and purpose for your life.

May the following words of Jesus be etched in our minds “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matt 6:33-34)

JEST FOR FUN

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL TERMS AND THEIR MEANINGS

AVERAGE EMPLOYEE

Not too bright

EXCEPTIONALLY WELL QUALIFIED

Made no major blunders yet

ACTIVE SOCIALLY

Drinks a lot

FAMILY IS ACTIVE SOCIALLY

Spouse drinks, too

CHARACTER ABOVE REPROACH

Still one step ahead of the law

QUICK THINKING

Offers plausible excuses

CAREFUL THINKER

Won't make a decision

PLANS FOR ADVANCEMENT

Buys drinks for all the boys

AGGRESSIVE

Obnoxious

USES LOGIC ON DIFFICULT JOBS

Gets someone else to do it

EXPRESSES THEMSELVES WELL

Speaks English

METICULOUS ATTENTION TO DETAIL

A nit picker

HAS LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

Is tall or has a loud voice

EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD JUDGEMENT

Lucky

KEEN SENSE OF HUMOUR

Knows a lot of dirty jokes

CAREER MINDED

Back Stabber

OF GREAT VALUE TO THE ORGANIZATION

Gets to work on time

RELAXED ATTITUDE

Sleeps at desk

WORK IS FIRST PRIORITY

Too ugly to get a date

INDEPENDENT WORKER

Nobody knows what he/she does

GREAT PRESENTATION SKILLS

Able to bullshit

GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Spends lots of time on phone

LOYAL

Can't get a job anywhere else



MAKING CHRIST KNOWN

*Alive in Our
Heritage and Hope!*

LOGO WATCH

This is the ELCA logo as found in their website on the Internet.



by
Martin Cheah

Way back during Pastor Terry Kee's time, the Jurong West Care Group was born. Then it was still trendy to call it a Cell Group.

The founding members were Mr & Mrs Khoo, Patrick & Lydia, Nancy, Lucy, Joo See and myself. Over the years, we had played hosts to Mr & Mrs Daniel, Soon Eong & Ewe Ewe, David Tan, Andrew & Bernard, William & Sherine, Woon & Lee Chen, Lowell & Molly Farlow and many others. Some of whom has gone home to the Lord, some have left our family in JCC and others have gone off to form other Care Groups.

Currently, our regular members comprise of Mr & Mrs Khoo, Leong & June, Lissa, James Sum and Joo See and myself. As you can see our group consist of a mix of very old members and very new members. It has room for expansion and we welcome all those who are still looking for a group to join us. If you are staying

around Block 468 @ Jurong West St 41, you will find us very close to you.

FORMAT OF MEETINGS

8.00	Singspiration / Worship
8.30	Study / Sharing
9.30	Prayer / Intercession
9.45	Food / Fellowship



The above is generally what we do during our meetings. There are variations, of course, depending on the circumstances.

Our latest drive is to recruit more members to join our Care Group. One way is to bring the Care Group to them if they do not want to come. So if you are interested, open your house for our Care Group to come and fellowship with you.



We are on every alternate Thursday where there is no prayer meeting in that week. Hope to see you soon.

OLD MAC "CHU KANG"

Ee Ai Ee Ai Ooooo...

And on these farms we saw some quails, pigeons, turkeys, partridges, frogs, crocodiles, fish, rabbits, dogs, goats and green vegetables! But no piggles, though.

No kidding! There were kids aplenty, of the human kind and of the goat kind.

What nonsense am I bleating (meehh...meehh) about?

Well, I am just twittering about the great year-end event that our Sisters' Lego Fellowship organised - a Saturday afternoon family outing to several farms in the Lim Chu Kang area on 3rd October. Sister Lucy did most of the planning with Brother Thomas providing the crucial contacts with 4 farms: the quail farm, goat farm, frog farm and aeroponic vegetable farm. The activity attracted so much interest that on the day of outing, Sister Lucy and other helpers from the Lego Fellowship had 3 busloads of about 100 excited adults and children on their hands.

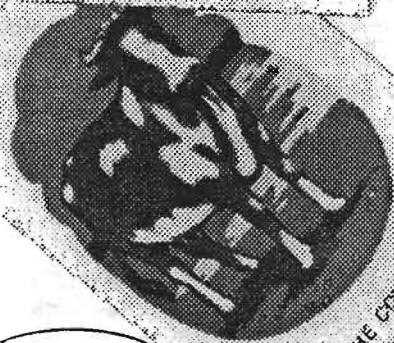
Our first stop was at the quail's farm, which also had pigeons, turkeys and other live poultry. An unmistakable 'pong' greeted us as soon as we got off the bus, but that was soon forgotten with the many interesting sights and sounds to absorb. We learned that quail



THE HORSE



HEN AND CHICKS



THE COW

By Iris Lee

HAD SOME FARMS ...

egg was the farm's main produce. They were not really high in cholesterol as commonly believed. In fact, it has been proven that 5 quail eggs only equal to 1 chicken egg in terms of cholesterol content. We were shown the difference between quail and pigeon eggs. Pigeon eggs are much more expensive because pigeons lay much fewer eggs and are considered an expensive delicacy. We were treated to herbal quail's soup which was quite tasty. The children also dug into the generous servings of hard-boiled quail eggs. However, the best came later, freshly deep-fried quails. The aroma that wafted about was simply irresistible and we were not disappointed. Soon we were treated to piping hot and delicious fried quails. Many of us bought fresh quails and eggs at bargain prices not available anywhere else.

Next stop - Hay Dairies, the one and only fresh goat's milk farm in Singapore. Again, we were first greeted by a slightly foul 'fragrance' when we reached the farm. As before, we quickly got used to it as we tuned in to an interesting commentary on the difference between cow and goat milk, what is really fresh milk, what are goats reared for apart from their milk, etc. It was a real pity that we could not



THE SHEEP

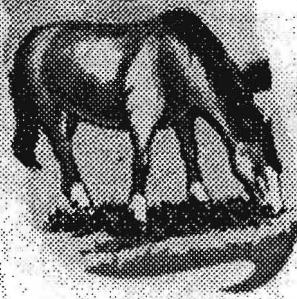


SUGAR B



PIG AND PIGLETS

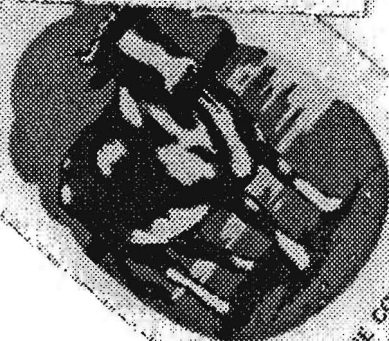
see the actual milking of the goats because they had already been milked in the morning. But there were other treats in store. The children had a great time touching the goats which were surprisingly very friendly and gentle, allowing the kids to stroke and pat them. Cameras were clicking away. We also sampled fresh goat's milk. It is slightly thinner than fresh cow's milk and has a slightly 'nutty' flavour, like hazelnuts. Apparently, goat's milk is not mucus-forming like the cow's. We also bought quite a few bottles, again at discounted prices. Before we knew it, it was time to move on to our next destination - the frog farm.



THE HORSE



HEN AND CHICKS



THE COW

I have never seen so many froggies before in my life. Wow, if only a fraction of them would turn into Prince Charmings! It was very interesting to see the place where they were kept, with quite a few pandan leaf plants around. They also had live snakeheads for sale. Although there was no sampling here, we could buy freshly slaughtered frogs. This farm was more like a mini zoo. We saw rabbits, dogs and even a crocodile there!

Next and last stop, the aeroponic vegetable farm. This is a high-tech farm specialising in growing temperate climate vegetables in air! Well... it is not really just air. Actually the vegetables are placed on trays with the roots at the bottom. Specially formulated nutrients are sprayed onto the roots. No pesticides are used. Insects are attracted to pieces of triangular cardboard boxes that are hung above the vegetables. They get stuck

there by special glue and hence do not get to infest the greens. This farm has successfully grown cold-dimale vegetables like the butter-head lettuce. So we do not have to import so much of them. The best part is that, since they are home grown, we get them really fresh as they do not have to travel from far away countries like Holland. We were given a very informative briefing cum video show about the farm and also sampling of wonderfully fresh, crispy and yummy veggies. We toured the high-tech looking farm and ended as usual buying up attractive bags of packaged veggies.

By the end of the day, we had spent quite a few hundred dollars on fresh produce. It was money well spent and the experience was certainly refreshing. It certainly served as dear testimony of God's grace. While we do not get to see beautiful mountains and green woodlands, we still have plenty of opportunity to appreciate nature in our very urban Singapore.

On behalf of all of us who went on the family outing, I would like to thank the Sisters' Lego Fellowship for organising this memorable event, and special thanks to Brother Thomas who was the key person providing the valuable contacts and directions to these places.

A final question: So when is the next one, huh?



THE SHEEP



SUGAR B



PIG AND PIGLETS

FREEDOM FROM FEAR

By David Wilkerson

October 26, 1998

The economies of the nations are shaking and crumbling, and fear is mounting worldwide. And now, as this shaking continues, we're witnessing Jesus' words come to pass: "...upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity...men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken" (Luke 21:25-26).

Christ is warning us, "Without hope in me, multitudes of people are literally going to die of fright!" For Jesus' followers, however those who trust in God's promises to preserve his children there is glorious freedom from all fear. In fact, all who come under the lordship of Christ never need fear again, if they'll just lay hold of the following secret: True freedom from fear consists of totally resigning one's life into the hands of the Lord.

Resigning ourselves into God's care is an act of faith. It means putting ourselves completely under his power, wisdom and mercy, to be led and preserved according to his will alone. And, if we do so, the God of the universe promises to be totally responsible for us to feed, clothe and shelter us, and to guard our hearts from all evil. Jesus provided the ultimate example of this kind of holy resignation, when he went to the cross. Just before he gave up his

spirit, he cried aloud, "...Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit..." (Luke 3:46). Christ literally placed the keeping of both his life and his eternal future in the custody of the father. And, in doing so, he placed the souls of every one of his sheep into the father's hands.

You may wonder, "But didn't Jesus say he had the power both to lay down his life and to take it up again? (see John 10:18). Since he had the power to 'take up his life again,' why did he resign it into God's hands to be preserved?" The answer is obvious: Jesus did it to set an example for all of his sheep to follow!

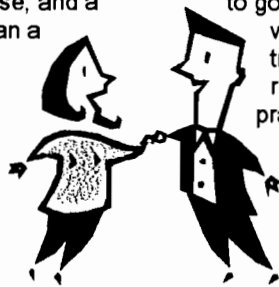
God Has the Power, Wisdom, Willingness and Love to Preserve His Beloved People.

If we're being asked to trust our lives to someone, then we have to know that this someone has the power to keep us from all danger, threats and violence. Otherwise, our trust is in vain. Simply put, our God has to have the wisdom and power to guide us as well as to guide countless multitudes of others through various crises and difficulties. And he must accomplish this guidance of his people in love.

Now, if you know the Lord at all, then you know this is his character. He is almighty, infinitely wise, and a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Indeed, he is the very essence of love. The apostle Paul writes, "...I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12). Paul is saying, "I've put my life in the Lord's hands. And I'm persuaded he won't embezzle my trust. On the contrary, he's going to faithfully keep his word to preserve me because he's both able and willing to do so. That has been my experience with the Lord!" Today, as the storm clouds gather over our nation, our choice is clear: We can either resign our lives into the Lord's hands, or we can be responsible for keeping and preserving ourselves, a task that's impossible when God is shaking everything! The fact is, our peace and contentment always depend on our resignation into God's hands, no matter what our circumstance. The psalmist writes, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Psalm 37:4).

If You've Fully Resigned Yourself Into God's Hands, Then You're Able To Endure Any and All Hardships.

No matter what calamity befalls you, you know it can't be soul-damning,



because you are clay in your father's hands. He desires for you to be able to go about your daily business without fear or anxiety, totally trusting in his care. And your resignation to him has a very practical effect in your life. The more resigned you are to God's care and keeping, the more indifferent you'll be to the conditions around you. If you are resigned to him, you won't constantly try to figure out the next step. You won't even be scared by the frightful news swirling around you.

You won't be overwhelmed as you think about the days ahead because you've entrusted your life, family and future into your Lord's safe and loving hands. I ask you how worried or concerned do you think literal sheep are, as they follow their shepherd into open pastures? They're not worried at all, because they're totally resigned to his leading of them. Likewise, we are the sheep of Christ, who is our great shepherd. So, why should we ever be concerned, disquieted or worried about our lives and futures? He knows perfectly how to protect and preserve his flock because he leads us in love!



Look out for the conclusion in the next issue of The Line.



|| Did Jesus use a modem,
|| At the Sermon on the Mount?
|| Did He ever try a broadcast fax,
|| To send His message out?
|| Did the disciples carry beepers,
|| As they went about their route?
|| Did Jesus use a modem,
|| At the Sermon on the Mount?
||

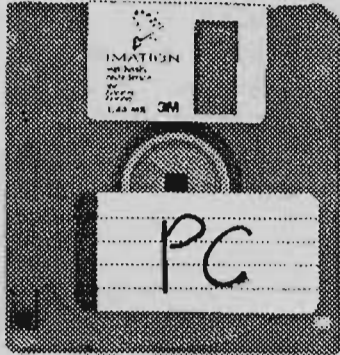
|| Did Paul use a laptop,
|| With lots of RAM and ROM?
|| Were his letters posted on a BBS,
|| At Paul.Rome.Com?
|| Did the man from Macedonia,
|| Send an E-Mail saying "Come?"
|| Did Paul use a Laptop,
|| With lots of RAM and ROM?
||

|| Did Moses use a joystick,
|| At the parting of the Sea?
|| And a Satellite Guidance Tracking
System,
|| To show him where to be?
|| Did he write the law on tablets,
|| Or are they really on CD?
|| Did Moses use a joystick,
|| At the parting of the Sea?
||
|| Did Jesus really die for us,
|| One day upon a tree?
|| Or was it just a Hologram,
|| Or Technical Wizardry?
|| Can you download the Live Action
Video Clip,
|| To play on your PC?
|| Did Jesus really die for us,
|| One day upon a tree?
||
|| Have the wonders of this modern age,
|| Made you question what is true?
|| How a single man, in a simple time,
|| Could offer life anew?
|| How a sinless life, a cruel death,
|| Then a glorious life again,
|| Could offer more to a desperate world,
|| Than all the inventions of man?

Technology?
The Answer is Yes?
Technology?

¶ If in your life, the voice of God,
 ¶ Is sometimes hard to hear.
 ¶ With other voices calling,
 ¶ His doesn't touch your ear.
 ¶ Then set aside your laptop and modem,
 ¶ And all your fancy gear.
 ¶ And open your Bible, open your heart,
 ¶ And let your Father draw near.

¶ Author: Unknown



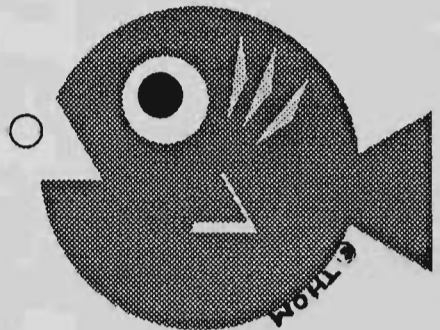
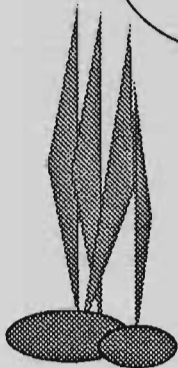
Techno- Technology? logy?

M. David

Vijayaraj S

WELCOME!

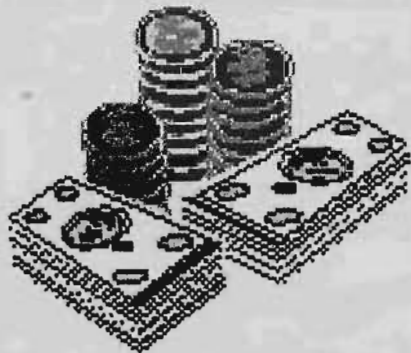
We were glad to meet you
 in October. May we
 continue to share in the
 Lord's blessings as a
 community in Jurong
 Christian Church.



Financial Advice From The Bible

What is the financial counsel of Solomon, the wisest and richest man who ever lived?

Ecclesiastes 5:10-20, TLB. "He who loves money shall never have enough. The foolishness of thinking that wealth brings happiness! The more you have, the more you spend, right up to the limits of your income, so what is the advantage of wealth—except perhaps to watch it as it runs through your fingers! The man who works hard sleeps well whether he eats little or much, but the rich must worry and suffer insomnia. There is another serious problem I have seen everywhere--savings are put into risky investments that turn sour, and soon there is nothing left to pass on to one's son. The man who speculates is soon back to where he began--with nothing. This, as I said, is a very serious problem, for all his hard work has been for nothing; he has been working for the wind. It is all swept away. All the rest of his life he is under a cloud--gloomy, discouraged, frustrated, and angry . . . To enjoy your work and to accept your lot in life--that is indeed a gift from God. The person who does that will not need to look back with sorrow on his past, for God gives him joy."



What does the Scripture say about my monthly bills?

Romans 13:7-8, NIV. "Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law."

Be cautious about countersigning loan notes.

Proverbs 22:26-27, TLB. "Unless you have extra cash on hand, don't countersign a note. Why risk everything you own? They'll even take your bed!"