

The VINE

Vol 159 Jan 99
In search of another day

Dear JCC members,

Grace to you and peace from God. Blessed New Year 1999! As we come to the beginning of another year 1999, we face new challenges and opportunities as a

community of God. Let us dedicate ourselves afresh to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and ask Him to take our life this year and use it for His glory. May the hymn *"Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee"* reverberate in our mind.

Let us pray that He will keep us from sin, from anything that will bring dishonor to His Name.

Let us be teachable by the Holy Spirit. We want to move forward for God. Don't let ourselves settle in a rut. Indeed, *"He must increase; I must decrease."* The glory must all be to God.



Jeremiah 10:23.

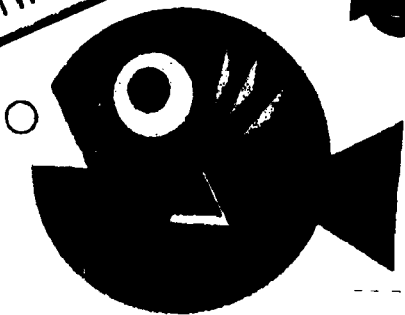
Let us make every decision a matter of prayer. Let us not lean on our own understanding. *"I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps,"*



May we die to the world and even to the approval or blame of loved ones or friends. Let us have a single, pure desire to do the things that please God's heart. *Amen.*

Pastor Martin Yee

Yuk Inn Huam



WELCOME!

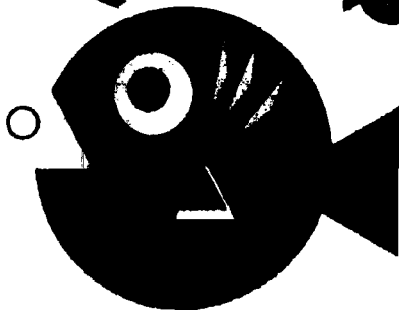
WELCOME!

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

Raymond Lim



Vincent Pui





Many people get the terms "religion" and "salvation" confused. It's easy to understand why -- one looks so much like the other on the surface. May I share just four differences between the two? I hope you will take a serious inventory of yourself because it can make all the difference in the world.

Religion emphasises "DO" while

salvation emphasises "DONE". You can find many good religions that emphasise good works, moral living, rituals, etc. There is nothing inherently wrong with these things -- God knows we could use a lot more moral people. But such outward deeds are man's futile efforts to make himself acceptable to God. The Bible tells us that even our righteousness looks like a filthy rag in His sight, so NO ONE can make himself acceptable to God through his/her own efforts. We can be saved only when we realise that Christ already DID what was required for us. He lived the perfect life we cannot possibly live. He fulfilled God's requirements. When He said "It is finished" on the cross, He spoke of the fact that all that was needed for our salvation was DONE. Nothing else we can do is needed, indeed it is not even acceptable. Once a person chooses to accept what Christ has DONE, changes towards such qualities as

goodness, humility, patience, love will be evident in their life. But it is not these qualities that will cause the person to be heaven-bound; it is what Christ has DONE.

Religion emphasises "BE" while salvation emphasises "BEEN." Be a good person, be a church member, be confirmed, be baptised. What matters most to God is what we have BEEN, not what we are trying to BE. Without Christ, we have already BEEN condemned (John 3:18). It is not that we will be condemned some day if we end up being more bad than good. When we receive Christ, the Bible tells us we have BEEN justified. The relationship with Christ is a done deal. It cannot be reneged, undone, or improved upon by anything we try to be or do.

Religion speaks of GETTING. Salvation speaks of RECEIVING. Some well-meaning people think a

person has to GET a certain feeling or emotion inside before he/she is saved. Though emotions may play a role in our relationship with God, they do not determine whether or not we have that relationship. John 1:12 tells us that salvation is RECEIVING. Man can produce emotional responses, but he cannot generate salvation of his soul through any emotion or feeling. Feelings and emo-

tions are fickle. Salvation is firm and forever.

Religion puts emphasis on EXPERIENCE. Salvation is based on a RELATIONSHIP. External EXPERIENCES--whether a vision, dream, or some other ecstatic event -- do not necessarily prove a RELATIONSHIP exist between God and us. The fact that you belong to a particular earthly family is not



based on any experience you have in that family. Your membership in your family is based on your birth into that family. It is exactly the same spiritually. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," Jesus said. "As many as received Him, to them He gave the power [authority] to be the children of God."



When we, by faith, realise Jesus has already DONE everything required for our salvation, when we RECEIVE that salvation and have thus BEEN justified, we have a RELATIONSHIP with Him. That is salvation. Anything short of this is just "religion." Whatever religious tag or denomination you claim, have you realised what Jesus has DONE for you? Have you RECEIVED Him by faith and BEEN

placed into His family? Do you have a personal RELATIONSHIP with Him today?

If you desire to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, simply pray this suggested prayer, and Christ will come into your life:

"Lord Jesus, I need You. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and re-

ceive You as my Saviour and Lord. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person You want me to be. Amen."

ONE OF YOUR HUMP JOKES AGAIN?!?

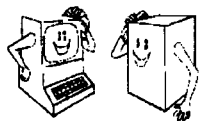


Err...
MAYBE
I SHOULD
GO
VEGETARIAN...

Mt 23:24 You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

What if God had voicemail?

I have learned to live with voice mail as a necessary part of modern life. But I have often wondered: What if God had voice mail?



Imagine praying and hearing this:

“Thank you for calling My Father’s House. Please select one of the following four options: Press 1 for requests. Press 2 for thanksgiving. Press 3 for complaints. Press 4 for all other inquiries.”

Press 3 for complaints. Press 4 for all other inquiries.”

What if God used the familiar excuse:

“All the angels are helping other customers right now. Please stay on the line. Your call will be answered in the order it was received.”

Can you imagine getting these kinds of responses as you called on God in prayer?

“If you would like to speak with Gabriel, press 1. For Michael, press 2. For any other angel press 3. If you’d like King David to sing a psalm for you, press 4. To find out if a loved one has been assigned to heaven, enter his identity reference. For reservations at My Father’s House, press J-O-H-N followed by 3-1-6. For answers to nagging questions about dinosaurs, the age of the earth, and where Noah’s ark is, wait until you get here.”

“Our computers show that you have called once today already. Please hang up immediately. This office is closed for the weekend. Please call again on Monday after 9:00 a.m.”

Thank God, you can’t call Him too often - you only need to ring once, and God hears you. Because of Jesus, you never get a busy signal. God takes each call and knows each caller personally.

Then you will call and the Lord will answer, you will cry for help and He will say, “Here I am.” Isaiah 58:9

Thank God I have never called Him to be told His computer was down.

Author: Unknown





Christmas Caroling

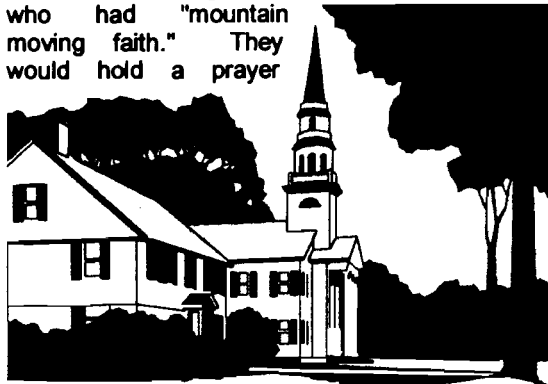


on 23rd & 24th Dec 1998



Faith to Remove A Mountain

A small congregation in the foothills of the Great Smokies built a new sanctuary on a piece of land willed to them by a church member. Ten days before the new church was to open, the local building inspector informed the pastor that the parking lot was inadequate for the size of the building. Until the church doubled the size of the parking lot, they would not be able to use the new sanctuary. Unfortunately, the church with its undersized lot had used every inch of their land except for the mountain against which it had been built. In order to build more parking spaces, they would have to move the mountain out of the back yard. Undaunted, the pastor announced the next Sunday morning that he would meet that evening with all members who had "mountain moving faith." They would hold a prayer



session asking God to remove the mountain from the back yard and to somehow provide enough money to have it paved and painted before the

scheduled opening dedication service the following week.

At the appointed time, 24 of the congregation's 300 members assembled for prayer. They prayed for nearly three hours. At ten o'clock the pastor said the final "Amen." "We'll open next Sunday as scheduled," he assured everyone. "God has never let us down before, and I believe He will be faithful this time too."

The next morning as he was working in his study there came a loud knock at his door. When he called "come in," a rough looking construction foreman appeared, removing his hard hat as he entered. "Excuse me, Reverend. I'm from Acme Construction Company over in the next county. We're building a huge new shopping mall over there and we need some fill dirt. Would you be willing to sell us a chunk of that mountain behind the church? We'll pay you for the dirt we remove and pave all the exposed area free of charge, if we can have it right away. We can't do anything else until we get the dirt in and allow it to settle properly."

The little church was dedicated the next Sunday as originally planned and there were far more members with "mountain moving faith" on opening Sunday than there had been the previous week! Would you have shown up for that prayer meeting? Some people say faith comes from miracles. But others know: **MIRACLES COME FROM FAITH!**

source : Internet e-mail

Legends of the

Apostles



MATTHEW - suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia, killed by a sword wound.

MARK - died in Alexandria, Egypt, after being dragged by horses through the streets until he was dead.

LUKE - was hanged in Greece as a result of his tremendous preaching to the lost.

JOHN - faced martyrdom when he was boiled in huge basin of boiling oil during a wave of persecution in Rome. However, he was miraculously delivered from death. John was then sentenced to the mines on the prison island of Patmos. He wrote his prophetic Book of Revelation on Patmos. The apostle John was later freed and returned to serve as Bishop of Edessa in modern Turkey. He died as an old man, the only apostle to die peacefully.

PETER - was crucified upside down on an x-shaped cross, according to church tradition because he told his tormentors that he felt unworthy to die in the same way that Jesus Christ had died.

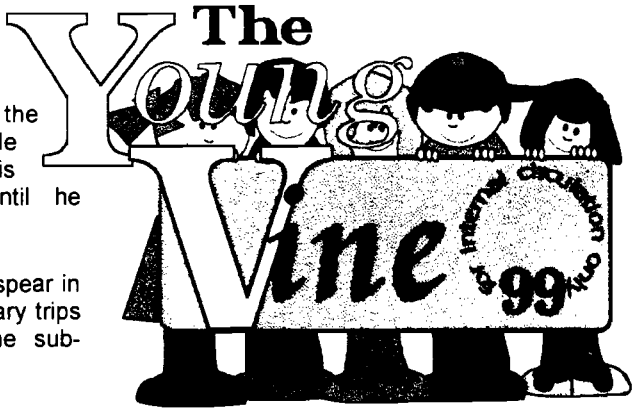
JAMES THE JUST - the leader of the church in Jerusalem, was thrown over a hundred feet down from the southeast pinnacle of the Temple when he refused to deny his faith in Christ. When they discovered that he survived

the fall, his enemies beat James to death with a fuller's club. This was the same pinnacle where Satan had taken Jesus during the Temptation.

JAMES THE GREATER - a son of Zebedee, was a fisherman by trade when Jesus called him to a lifetime of ministry. As a strong leader of the church, James was ultimately beheaded at Jerusalem. The Roman officer who guarded James watched amazed as James defended his faith at his trial. Later, the officer walked beside James to the place of execution. Overcome by conviction, he declared his new faith to the judge and knelt beside James to accept beheading as a Christian. In another word, the Roman officer became Christian & willing to die for Christ.

BARTHOLOMEW, also known as Nathanael - was a missionary to Asia. He witnessed to our Lord in present day Turkey. Bartholomew was martyred for his preaching in Armenia when he was flayed to death by a whip.

ANDREW - was crucified on an x-shaped cross in Patras, Greece. After being whipped severely by seven soldiers they tied his body to the cross with cords to prolong his agony. His followers reported that, when he was led toward the cross, Andrew saluted it in these words: "I have long desired and expected this happy hour. The



cross has been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it." He continued to preach to his tormentors for two days until he expired.

THOMAS - was stabbed with a spear in India during one of his missionary trips to establish the church in the sub-continent.

JUDE, the brother of Jesus, - was killed with arrows when he refused to deny his faith in Christ.

MATTHIAS - the apostle chosen to replace the traitor Judas Iscariot, was stoned and then beheaded.

BARNABAS - one of the group of seventy disciples, wrote the Epistle of Barnabas. He preached throughout Italy and Cyprus. Barnabas was stoned to death at Salonica.

PAUL - was tortured and then beheaded by the evil Emperor Nero at Rome in A.D. 67. Paul endured a lengthy imprisonment, which allowed him to write his many epistles to the churches he had formed throughout the Roman Empire. These letters, which taught many of the foundational doctrines of Christianity, form a large portion of the New Testament.

It is a reminder to us that our "sufferings" as Christians here are indeed minor compared to the intense persecution and cold cruelty faced by the apostles / disciples during their times for the sake of the Faith.

source : Internet e-mail

The editors would like to rekindle the Young Vine for 1999. If you have articles for the BB, GB, DTP or Sunday School, please submit them for consideration.

Articles should include pictures of the youths, children and their activities so that they will be proud to bring home a copy of The Vine.

Our objective is to cater to our young audience and at the same time when they bring The Vine back home, their parents will get a chance to read the articles inside, perchance to get to know about Christianity better.

We appeal to those in charge of the various youth groups for their support, without which we cannot realize this plan.



Martin Cheah



Children's
Tambourine
Dance



CHRISTMAS BLOCK PARTY

on 12 Dec 1998



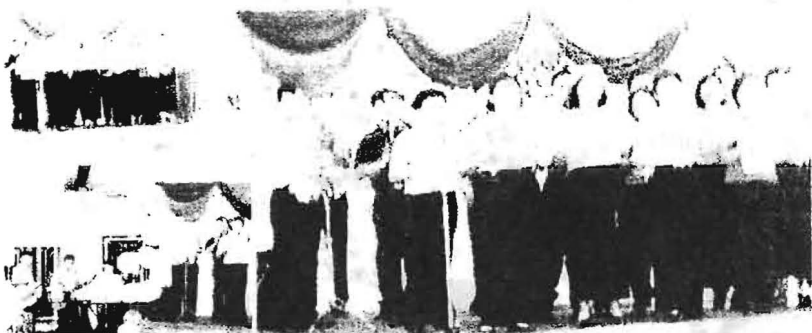
Last minute rehearsals



Pastor Martin Yee
receiving a gift from MP
Ravindran

Pastor
Martin Yee
among the
VIPs





English Choir & Music Ministries
presenting Christmas in songs



Other contingents from Tamil Methodist and JCC Chinese Section





On 6th December 1998, with the festive spirit of the Christmas season in the air, the *Befrienders* had the privilege of hosting a fellowship gathering at the home of Wong Mui & Beng Lay.

It was a time for good cheer as we made good use of the opportunity to get to know some of our new friends who worship with us at JCC. With the ice-breaking game "Who Am I" played with enthusiasm, our wonderful guests should have acquainted themselves with the *Befrienders* as much as the *Befrienders* enjoyed sharing with them the JCC hospitality and fellowship in Christ.

The air was warmed up by the interactions and by the heat from another source — the delicious Myanmar noodles with curry chicken for dinner.

After the stomachs were filled, everyone had more energy to carry on with their pet conversations and sharing for *getting-to-know-ye-more* before it would be too late and time for *goodnight*.

Well, to the *Befrienders* and their guests, the *goodnight* farewell would not be the end but the beginning of *getting-to-know-ye-yet-more* in the weeks and months ahead. We are hopeful that those who are presently new to JCC will soon settle down and feel at home with us as a community in Christ, sharing in love and care. To this end, the *Befrienders* encourage JCC members to continue in their loving effort of stepping forward to lend their support in spreading the warmth of family.

We can love because Jesus Christ first loved us. Let *LOVE* stay put as the hallmark of the JCC community in Christ.

The Befrienders

Church of the Covered Dish

(c) 1998 by Thom Tapp



Sometime The Answer's "NO!"

We often ask for selfish things
that we don't really need,
But God has never promised
He would satisfy our greed.

We can't all be rich and famous
and live in luxury.
Someone must wash the dishes
and paint the apple tree.

Everybody loves a winner
who captures first place,
But no one can remember the
others in the race.

Sometimes the things we pray for
were never meant to be,
And because we don't receive
them, we doubt His love, you see.

God hears every prayer we utter
where ever we may go,
And if He does not answer
it could mean the answer's "NO!"

by Clay Harrison

TIME IS MONEY!

Imagine there is a bank that credits your account each morning with \$86,400. It carries over no balance from day to day. Every evening deletes whatever part of the balance you failed to use during the day. **What would you do?** Draw out every cent, of course!!

Each of us has such a bank. Its name is TIME. Every morning, it credits you with 86,400 seconds. Every night it writes off, as lost, whatever of this you have failed to invest to good purpose. It carries over no balance.

It allows no overdraft. Each day it opens a new account for you.

Each night it burns the remains of the day. If you fail to use the day's deposits, the loss is yours. There is no going back. There is no drawing against the "tomorrow". You must live in the present on today's deposits.

To realize the value of ONE YEAR, ask a student who failed a grade. To realize the value of ONE MONTH, ask a mother who gave birth to a premature baby. To realize the value of ONE WEEK, ask the editor of a weekly newspaper. To realize the value of ONE HOUR, ask the lovers who are waiting to meet. To realize the value of ONE MINUTE, ask a person who missed the train.

To realize the value of ONE SECOND, ask a person who just avoided an accident. To realize the value of ONE MILLISECOND, ask the person who won a silver medal in the Olympics.

Treasure every moment that you have!

Author unknown.