

# The **VINE**

June 99

For limited attention only



The correct answer is shown above. There were no correct answers received so the prize will be carried forward to a future contest.

Reaching  
Out As A

## **CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

Millions now living are already dead! - I mean, spiritually! What is this? Some kind of joke? No, just a way to call your attention to a world-wide problem because statistical facts "bring home" the startling information that 68 million flesh and blood people die every year. Death is a big business with 160,000 people dying every day. It's a deadly and

frightening fact of life.

O.K., so many think they are young - healthy and full of zest! The truth is they're already on the death list. They, like many others, may be dead already. The Word of God declares that millions now apparently alive are actually dead - Spiritually dead.

"And you (believers in Christ) hath he (God) made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (KJV) Ephesians 2:1

It is God who said: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans 5:12 (KJV)



Which means if they have not been born anew, they carry Adam's guilt and corrupt. They may be physically alive but spiritually dead, and therefore, have no contact with God. God in great mercy provided a glorious way out through His Son. Here is His guarantee:

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12 (KJV) "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3:36 (KJV)



"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24 (KJV)

Only by receiving Christ as their Saviour by faith, they will come alive spiritually. They will also come alive in understanding the Bible, God's Word. They will come alive with new desires, Godly desires. They will come alive with a hope burning in your heart of knowing that there will be life after death, life with Christ.

Would we now, cry out to God with intercessory prayer and make witnessing our life's priority?



JCC scored the first goal which stung the TGNC into action. They hit back 6 pass our goalkeeper, who broke his glasses in the defense of his goal.

*Pastor Martin Yee*



# Prayer

Do you realize the Disciples did not ask Jesus to teach them how to *preach, teach* or even to cast out demons, but said unto Him, "Lord *teach us to pray.*"

*"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray. And He said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven: so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."* Luke 11:1-4

## Prayer is Communication: *Hearing and being heard.*

### A. What is prayer?

1. Prayer is simply a talk with my friend. Prayer is not a magic incantation or positive mental attitude, we must understand that prayer is a conversation between us and God.
2. Often we forget that Jesus desires to have a relationship with each of us individually. It is all too easy to rush off and attend to those things that press upon each day...the kids, the bills, work, deadlines even church and ministry can come before we take time out to listen to the precious voice of God.
3. Yet our Lord desires with a passionate longing that we look to Him first! You see it is His deep love for us that purchased for us the privilege to commune with Him and to be transformed by our prayerful encounters with God.
4. Many times our only communications with Him are in times of need and distress: . . . "Help me O! God!" we cry, and true to His mercy and grace he once again answers our prayers.
5. Many of us know that God answers prayer but few truly know the God who answers prayer.
6. Prayer is Powerful. Prayer coupled together with the Name of Jesus is the most powerful force in this present world. Prayer binds the forces of the enemy and can loose the hearts and minds of men to hear the voice of God.
7. *"... and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."* - James 5:16-18
8. Prayer is the sincere desire of the heart made known to God.
9. *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"* Eph. 6:18
10. It is a natural relationship between the Father in heaven and earthly sons. (see Luke 11:5-11)



11. The basic principles of prayer are suggested in Psalm 143.
  - ❖ "Cause me to hear...in the morning" (verse 8).
  - ❖ "Cause me to know the way...I should walk" (verse 8).
  - ❖ "Quicken me...for thy name's sake" (verse 11).



#### B. Why/how should we pray?

1. It is commanded: "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess 5:17).
2. Possessions are "sanctified" with prayer. "For it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer." - 1 Tim 4:5
3. Man needs contact with God like vegetation needs contact with the sun.
4. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them. . ." (Matt. 21:22).
5. The joy of prayer: Praise and joy are also to be a predominant part of prayer. Joy can be evidence of faith and of confidence in God's plan, promise and power. ". . . Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).
6. You pray so that he will send you into the harvest. "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38). Satan does not want you to know your potential in PRAYER. In your prayer life, it is life and death that comes out of your mouth.

This is only a sample of what you can find on the Internet. Source: [http://www:innerlight.com/](http://www.innerlight.com/)

## MORE STORIES REQUIRED

If you have been reading The Vine all these years, you may have realized that the contents have become less personal, less newsworthy and instead mostly extracts from the Internet. Partly to blame is that there are only 2 of us, John Lee and I, struggling against time to bring you an issue each month. We can't be taking photos of everything and so if you have interesting pictures please lend it to us for publishing. We can't be present at every event, eg. the Ladies Fellowship or the Football matches or the BB/GB events, etc. So there are no coverage of these events. Do not fault us for it. We need to have more eyes and ears out there to gather news for us.

If you have an answered prayer, experienced a miracle or a touch from God, do not keep it quiet. Share your story with the rest of the church so that we can all be edified. Otherwise, it would seem that God does not work in JCC at all. All our stories are about other people in other churches. If you think you can be our eyes and ears, please let us know. We need you!



*"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place;..." (Revelation 1:1)*

### Is the world coming to an end?

As we approach the year 2000, there is no shortage of "prophets", big and small, predicting the world coming to an end. On the Internet, whether in the WWW or among newsgroups, you cannot help being bombarded by noises about the imminence of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World War (or the 4<sup>th</sup> World War, counting the foregone Cold War as the 3<sup>rd</sup>) and the Apocalypse.

Even sober Christians are talking about the coming of Christ soon. How soon? Well, it may be tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, ...



With all the opinions flying around in print, in cyberspace and by words of mouth about the end of mankind, it is difficult for anybody to avoid taking a hit. The bold caption "Number of armed conflicts in the world rises" found in the Straits Times of 17<sup>th</sup> June provides good fodder to feed esurient minds with the "vision" of Armageddon and Apocalypse.

Truths and falsehoods are all mixed up in the world. If we shrug off dire warnings and join the scoffers in the last days (II Peter 3:3), then it is to our own peril. On the other hand, if we become weighed down by all the thoughts of perilous times (shortage of life-giving water, Indonesian ethnic unrest...), nuclear wars (between India and Pakistan, if not Iraq against Kuwait, Russia against NATO in Kosovo, or Pyongyang against Seoul?), famines (North Korea?), pestilences (Bird flu, Mad Cow disease, Nipah virus...), earthquakes (resurrection of dormant volcanoes?), etc. — whatever our faculties tell us or doomsayers proclaim — should we then beat a retreat from the chaotic world and head for the peak of Mt Everest to wait for the Lord coming on the clouds?

What should our attitude be towards all this talk about the end of the world? For me, I do not take all the "prophecies" at face value not because I am wise but because they confuse rather than enlighten. Sample these:

- ◆ Nostrademus (14<sup>th</sup> Century French prophet) predicted that the world would come to an end in July 1999. *(Fasten your seatbelt for takeoff in your spaceship!)*

- ◆ Basing on a news story in the 20<sup>th</sup> April 99 issue of the Chinese daily *Lianhe Zaobao*, some may begin to contemplate the possibility of Christ's second advent on 18<sup>th</sup> August 99 when our Sun and its nine planets become aligned in the shape of a Cross.

8月18日世界末日?

## 太阳和九大行星 到时排成十字形

今年八月十八日，太阳和九大行星排成“十字”形，届时将出现“世界末日”。

“十字”是基督教的“十字架”，是耶稣基督受难之象征。早在四千年前，犹太人便相信天人要合一，即天降人，人降天。如今天人要合一，即天降人，人降天。十字形，是“天降人，人降天”的象征。

十字形是基督教的象征，也是犹太教的象征。犹太教认为，十字形是“天降人，人降天”的象征。



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*(You may loosen your seatbelt for a little while more.)*

- ◆ If you believe in Michael Drosnin, the well-known author of the well-known *Bible Code*, World War III will start in the Middle East and the Earth will be destroyed (thanks or no thanks to nuclear power) in 2006.

*(So, you actually have a few extra years to make plans for exit from the Earth before it blows up.)*

Each of the above predictions seems credible to its proponents and believers. To these people, the underlying arguments are backed up by facts or by observable phenomena whether in the cosmos or in the events besetting the world. The problem is not that they are fake predictions, but that since each of them is believable or convincing in its own right, I am unable to tell which one gives the correct date for the world to end. Moreover, if any one of them can be wrong, it may well be that all of them are wrong. (Certainly, it

cannot be that all are correct.) Concerning Nostradamus and Michael Drosnin, both of whom are regarded by many people, I have also been mindful of the following points:

- ◆ "Nostradamus' prophecies were condemned in 1781 by the Roman Catholic Church. Because of their cryptic style and content — commingling French, Spanish, Latin, and Hebrew words — the prophecies have continued to create much controversy." (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*)
- ◆ Regarding the natural planetary formation, a Malaysian astronomer has said that it would not affect the Earth. He said that the world would come to an end in 5 to 6 million years.
- ◆ Michael Drosnin has been denounced by Don Steinberg. The latter has illustrated that by using the same method of skip used by Drosnin, a hidden pattern of messages and predictions could also be found in the innocent-looking software licence agreement for Microsoft Access Developer's toolkit version 2.0. (See <http://www.cnet.com/Content/Voices/Steinberg/071697/index.html>)

Evidently, we should not be too eager to follow every doomsayer, popular opinion or seemingly prophetic pronouncements. If Armageddon and Apocalypse are indeed around the corner, then all the more we have to be wary of false prophets. (Matt. 24:11) Following what the Bible says, I really do not know when Christ is coming again. The Word of God tells us quite unequivocally that it is not for us "to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority." (Acts 1:7) Indeed, since we do not know when He will come, we have to: "Be on guard! Be alert!" (Mk 13:33)

The uncertainty about Christ's coming is beneficial to us. As we are put on our toes — alert and self-controlled (1 Thess. 5:6), we are less inclined to lead a life of decadence, complacently thinking

that we will have time to pick ourselves up the moment we hear a prophet sound the imminent arrival of Christ. The Lord will come like a thief in the night when we least expect Him (1 Thess. 5:2); yet, by being watchful of our life as sons of the light (1 Thess. 5:5), the day of His coming should not surprise us like a thief. (1 Thess. 5:4)

It is interesting to note the 1 Thess. 5:3 mentions this: "While people are saying, 'Peace and Safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly ..." The surprising element is not in the suddenness of Christ's coming, but in the implausibility of the destruction when the world is generally at peace and everybody is happily going about their businesses. This kind of surprise is quite common in many facets of our life; i.e., what we experience is contrary to what we expect based on mistaken presumptions.

Man is famous for making mistakes. Our history has been dotted with man's failures, including failed expectations, anticipations and predictions at the end of the first millennium. Can any ordinary person not truly endowed with prophetic gifts now say with a degree of certainty when the end of the world is going to be?

While I don't know when Christ is coming, I do not dispute that He may come tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, next century, next millennium... There is some merit in Alban Douglas' (author of "one hundred bible lessons") advice that we "ought to plan and work as if He were not coming for another century but live a holy and pure life as if He were to return today."

John Lee

*As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, "Tell us," they said, "... what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"*

*Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you ... You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. ..."*

(Matthew 24:3-6)



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

David Yonggi Cho spoke on this at Church Growth Conference, downloaded from Internet

I want to speak on a very important factor that brings Church Growth. To have Church growth, we must prepare to receive from the Lord. Church Growth does not come naturally. So the number one requirement to have Church Growth is to have massive prayer. Without prayer, you cannot even dream of having Church Growth.

Many people try to bring Church Growth by human gimmickry, but they fail. Church Growth comes by the power of the Holy Spirit, and Church Growth is only available to you through much prayer. We are all created by God so that we can bring praise and worship unto the Lord. Ministry unto the Lord is the first requirement of the Lord. We think that we must pray for our ministry, our families, and all other things and then finally we will pray unto the Lord. That is a great mistake. Ministry unto the Lord should come ahead of anything else in your life. It is why you are called into this world. Regardless, of your many excuses, God wants you to come to Him.

Many say that God is Almighty, and He does not need our fellowship, but that is a terrible lie. God is love, and love has a limitless desire for fellowship. When you love your

husband or wife then you want to spend more time together, because love requires fellowship. God has limitless love for you, and He desires your fellowship. He cannot be satisfied with the fellowship of the angels or the universe. He created you for His pleasure; to have deep fellowship with you. Rev 4:11, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

The number one responsibility in your life is to bring praise, worship and prayer fellowship unto the Lord. Many people tell me that they do not have time to pray because they are too busy. Usually, these people have 500 or 1,000 people in their church, and I don't accept their excuses. I have over 700,000 people, but I still have enough time to pray before the Lord. I have so much work piling up on me, daily. I have 700 ministers under me, 700 office workers in our buildings and in our newspaper, there are 800 reporters in London, Paris, Washington D.C., New York City, Moscow and all over the world, and I must make daily decisions for all of these people. I will never, never tend to these works until I spend enough time with our Lord Jesus Christ. I take time before the Lord and have fellowship with Him until I feel His righteousness, peace and joy, then

He will say "that is enough today". He then fills me with His wonderful joy. Then when I come out of God's Presence: then His presence follows me, and I can minister with great effectiveness and power. By empty ritualism; you cannot really help people. If you meet the needs of people in God's righteousness, peace and joy; then you can really meet their needs. If you just do the motions without the genuine power of God, then you are just using fakery. That is a terrible, terrible travesty. So in order to become a genuine minister of God; you need to at least spend more than one hour in prayer a day.

As a minister, it is a shame to spend only one hour a day in prayer. I tell my ministers to spend more than 3 hours a day in prayer. I say "even though you can't carry out visitation, it is fine with me". If you spend more than 3 hours in prayer, then with the power of God when you go out to minister to the people; you can accomplish more in one hour than you can in 10 hours without the power of God. Spending your time before the Lord will make you genuine. It is wrong to compare the quantity of our work with others' work.

Before God, quantity does not mean very much, but genuine quality means very much. When I was young, I enjoyed comparing my Church

Growth with other churches, but now I never do that. I may have 1,000,000 people in my church, but if I have a shallow Christian standing with God then it means nothing. The more time you spend in the Spiritual realm; the more of the Holy Spirit you will experience in your ministry. You will not work in the power of the flesh, but in the power of the Holy Spirit. When I was a young preacher, I thought that power came from the volume of my voice. I always had a hoarse voice because I was shouting so much. I was shouting on Sunday, early morning prayer meetings, and all-night prayer meetings, but now I realize that I was using a lot of human flesh. When you are really in the power of God; you do not need to shout. When you have the fullness of God in your heart; you have tremendous peace, calmness and confidence. More people will be saved and healed when you spend time with the Lord, and you minister in the mighty power of the Holy Spirit.

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IF YOU MUST SPEED ON THE HIGHWAY,  
SING THESE :

- |         |   |                                |
|---------|---|--------------------------------|
| 45 mph  | : | God will take care of you      |
| 55 mph  | : | Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah |
| 65 mph  | : | Nearer my God to Thee          |
| 75 mph  | : | Nearer still nearer            |
| 85 mph  | : | This world is not my home      |
| 95 mph  | : | Lord, I'm coming home          |
| 100 mph | : | Precious memories              |

## PRELIMINARY REPORT ON JCC RETREAT '99

The retreat that was almost cancelled due to poor response did not prevent the Almighty from reaching out and touching some lives of our JCC members and their friends and families. The long journey up the mountain and back was worth the effort to get a touch from the Lord. Here are some highlights of the testimonies of some of the campers, who came out to share their experience of God's working in their lives through this retreat.

### LUCY TAN

She brought a friend, Jackie Tay, whom she first met at Equatorial Hotel in Singapore. She had been praying for this friend for almost 20 years. Now in Equatorial Hill Resort in Cameron Highlands, Jackie has accepted the Lord. It was a wonderful joy for Lucy as she shared her testimony and the events that lead to the salvation of her friend. There is even the mystery of the person who shared with Jackie the 4 Spiritual Laws. Who was it?

### KHOO EWE EWE

Sister Ewe Ewe shared a very dramatic experience of a touch from the Lord. She experienced healing, prophesy and God writing the word "JESUS" in the silver lining of the clouds. She felt the Lord calling her to full-time ministry and sought confirmation and the Lord was gracious to her. The Lord healed her and also foretold that Jackie would be saved. Finally the Lord wrote His Name in the sky. She shared her visions with sister Se Ping, who confirmed that before anyone knew that Jackie was going to accept the Lord, she was already told. There were many other aspects to her testimony, which I shall reserve for her to share with you at a later date.

These are just two of the testimonies to whet your appetite to hear more. The messages were powerful and the theme song relevant. The weather was fine and cool and the fellowship was warm. Some even karaoke way into the night until the security had to stop them.

I hope to collect more stories from the participants themselves, together with the pictures, to publish a full report on Retreat '99 in the July issue of The Vine.

*Martin Cheah*

# Go Forth

GO FORTH, GO FORTH INTO THE RIPENED FIELDS,  
FOR THEY ARE WHITE UNTO HARVEST;  
THE TIME, THE TIME OF REAPING IS AT HAND,  
FOR SOULS OF MEN TO BE GATHERED IN.  
WHAT WAS SOWN IN TEARS  
SHALL NOW BE REAPED IN JOY,  
THE WORD OF THE LORD SHALL  
NOT RETURN VOID.  
CAST OUT YOUR NET,  
ALL YE FISHERS OF MEN,  
IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT REVIVAL BEGINS!

*Retreat Organising Committees*

 Mr. Wong Secretary	 Mr. Chan Chairman	 Mr. Lee Member
 Mr. Ho Member	 Mr. Tang Member	 Mr. Ng Member
 Mr. Siu Member	 Mr. Lam Member	

# The Crucifixion

## Introduction

The following is a transcription of a talk given by Keith Maxwell, a medical doctor in Asheville, N.C.

This talk is approached from the perspective of how a physician would assess the injuries of Jesus if he were there to see the actual physical trauma he experienced. Dr. Maxwell speaks plainly, with as little medical jargon as possible. His development of this topic began to evolve one night when Dr. Maxwell, in the emergency room, thought to himself, "If they brought the Lord in here, exactly what would his physical injuries be like?"

He hopes through this talk to reveal some things that will make us meditate on the actual suffering Jesus experienced in the last hours of his life. In the notes that follow are his conclusions about the death of Jesus based on his research, experience as a trauma physician and his understanding of scripture.

"You may or may not have thought of some of the things I'll point out to you tonight, but I hope I can share some things with you that will make the life and death of our Savior a little bit more precious.

By the time he was crucified, Jesus had been up about thirty-six hours without any sleep. We know from biblical accounts that Jesus was an early riser. There are several places in the gospels where he arose early and went and prayed. We have no reason to believe that he did anything other than that the day he had his last meal with his disciples. He likely arose early that morning, spent his day, and subsequently had dinner with the disciples that night - the Last Supper in the upper room. He was then taken prisoner in the garden of Gethsemane, was led all about the old city of Jerusalem and was tried at least twice. The next day at about daybreak he was actually hung on the cross, and hung there throughout that day. Between the time he arose and the time he actually died



on the cross, a period of about thirty-six hours had passed, with no sleep or rest.

Something else you may not have thought of was how far Jesus actually walked about the old city of Jerusalem. We know he was led about from the chief priest's house to Herod's to Pilot's during the time that he was being tried, and we know he was led all about the old city of Jerusalem. If you add it up, he walked about two and one half miles that last night. Also, as best we can ascertain from historical accounts, Jesus carried his cross about a third of a mile before he collapsed and wasn't able to carry it anymore. These are some physical exertions that added up, place stress on a person.

### **Sweat Like Drops of Blood**

The next thing I want to talk about is a phenomenon called hemathidrosis. Hemathidrosis is a very rare medical phenomenon that's been reported about twelve to fourteen times in world medical literature and is only seen in people who are under tremendous stress and agony. In hemathidrosis, a person actually exudes blood from every sweat gland in their body. Each sweat gland has a small capillary that surrounds it, and in hemathidrosis, that small capillary ruptures. As it bursts, a person actually bleeds into their sweat glands. Instead of perspiring sweat, if you will, they actually perspire blood. The Bible gives an excellent description of this phenomenon; saying that the Lord's sweat became as great drops of blood. Indeed, every pore of Jesus' body oozed and drained blood.

Now, I believe that Christ was a man just as much as any one of us. But at the same time, I believe that Christ was God and knew the terrible fate that lay ahead of him. He knew the job he had come to this earth to do, the mission he had to fulfill, and I believe the man part of Christ dreaded this agonizing death and torture that lay a few hours ahead of him just as much as any one of us would. We know he prayed in the garden of Gethsemane, saying 'Father, if it be your will, let this cup pass from me.' But he submitted his will to his Father's. There in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was under about as much anxiety and physical stress from an emotional standpoint that a human could experience, knowing that in a few hours he would be delivered into one of the most agonizing and brutal deaths ever recorded in history.

Why didn't the Lord bleed to death if he bled out of every sweat gland in his body? If you've been to Israel, as I have, you know that this time of year you have warm days and cool nights. It was this cool night air that probably cause

the Lord's damp skin, covered with sweat and blood, to chill, causing the capillaries to constrict and stop the bleeding. This same chilling in the cold night air has kept many a drunk and hoodlum who I've seen shot or stabbed and who's then lain in a ditch all night, from dying. It causes the blood vessels to constrict and causes the blood loss to be minimal. But by the time Jesus was taken by the soldiers from the garden of Gethsemane, he probably had a mixture of sweat and blood over his entire body surface. I can imagine this was some sight to behold.

## Scourging

Let's talk about the scourging. Scourging was such a horrible torture that Roman citizens were forbade to be scourged - only slaves and traders could be scourged. It was one of the worst punishments the Romans had to inflict on a human body. Typically, the victim was stripped completely naked and tied by his wrists to a post or wall with his back exposed. He was then whipped from the back of his arms, down his shoulders and back, across his bare buttocks, down the back of his legs and calves, all the way down to his heels by two Roman legionnaires, one on either side, alternating blows. The historical accounts tell us that the traditional scourging consisted of thirty-nine lashes. If you can, imagine two large, strong, burly Roman legionnaires (someone that we would equate to say, a pro football player today) with a wooden handled whip about eighteen inches long that had nine leather thongs, something akin to what we would call a cat-o-nine tails. The nine leather thongs were about six to seven feet long, and at the end of each thong was some lead shod, like a sinker you'd use to go fishing. Attached to the lead shod were pieces of sheep and cattle bone. The idea of those small pieces of bone was that, as the Roman legionnaire would beat his victim, snapping his wrist could cause the weight of the metal shod to dig into the back, while the sheep/cattle bone cut the skin. As the sheep/cattle bone lacerated the skin and actually dug in under the surface of the skin, the skilled and trained legionnaire could whip his wrist and literally lift small shards of skeletal muscle out through the skin, leaving small ribbons of muscle, about two inches long, hanging through the skin."

"When I was working on this, I looked at in the cadaver lab and did some dissection, trying to figure out what one blow like this would mean to you and me. As best I could tell, and from some of the information I was able to gather from the Shroud of Turin exhibit, one lash with this whip - one thong - would make a cut about two inches long and about three quarters to an inch deep. To put that into medical terms, that's a cut that takes about twenty stitches to close. So with one lash, one swing of the whip, a total of nine lacerations could

be inflicted on the victim, each laceration two inches long and three quarters to one inch deep. With one blow, one Roman legionnaire could inflict enough wounds to take one hundred eighty stitches to close. If you multiply that times thirty-nine, those two Roman legionnaires inflicted enough lacerations to take about 2,000 stitches to close. I've seen people who've gone through the windshield of a car or wrecked a motorcycle into a barbed wire fence, and I've still never seen anyone that tattered up in any of my medical experience. This gives you an idea of the amount of the physical trauma that was inflicted upon Jesus just from the scourging.

Again you'd ask why Jesus didn't bleed to death. And again, you have to remember that this was done in the cold night air, the very thing that caused his blood vessels and capillaries to constrict and actually cause the blood loss from this beating to be minimal.

As mentioned, the idea of the lead weight was to lift the skeletal muscle out. Imagine having a cut on your skin with an inch of muscle pulled out through the cut, exposed to the night air. We see this sometimes in stab wounds or when people are stabbed with sharp objects like sticks and the muscles are pulled back through the skin. The purpose this served in the scourging was, that as the victim hung on the cross in the heat of the day, birds could light on him and actually peck and pull at these pieces of muscle, just like a robin trying to pull a worm out of the ground. Frequently, how long a person actually survived on the cross during the crucifixion was determined by how severely he was scourged. Sometimes they would beat a man nearly to death before they put him on the cross and he would only live a few hours. Most of the time, though, the scourging was intended for public humiliation and embarrassment, because it was such an inhumane method of torture.

## **Beatings**

Another thing you may not have considered.... TV has done a real injustice to trauma, depicting men in bar room fights who take blows to the face or head and jump up and beat up three or four men. I can tell you that it's really not that way in real life. If I took any one of the men here, tied his hands behind him and then let any other man of average size and build beat him in the face with his fists open and closed, I cannot begin to tell you the amount of trauma this would inflict on him.

We know that Jesus was beaten in the face and head as he was mocked. I can assure you with all confidence that by the time the Lord was crucified after his



beatings, it's almost certain that both of his eyes were swollen shut and no doubt his nose was pouring blood. I can also tell you that when people are struck in the mouth with a fist, the first thing that happens is that the lower teeth come right through the lip. I've taken care of many people in the emergency room who've come in beaten up in fights with their teeth sticking through their lips, both upper and lower sides. If Jesus was tied and held and beaten in the face by these strong legionnaires, I don't think there's any doubt that his lips were tattered like paper and some of his teeth were knocked loose or maybe even knocked out. You might ask if his jawbones were broken. Normally they would be, but not in Jesus' case, and I'll tell you why in a few minutes.

### **Crown Of Thorns**

During Jesus' trials and humiliation we also know that a crown of thorns was plaited and placed on his head. In Christ's case this was done to mock him as being King of the Jews. Some of you have been to Israel and have seen these thorns. They're about an inch and one half to two inches long, and they're as sharp as an ice pick. The custom was to take a small three or four foot long reed and slap the thorns on top of the head of the victim in order to drive the thorns into the skull. Those thorns laid upon someone's head and then tapped down with a reed were hard enough to penetrate the outer table or the outer bone of the skull. Imagine the bleeding from three or four hundred puncture wounds in the scalp and around the forehead from these thorns.

So, before Jesus' crucifixion ever begins, his face has been beaten to a pulp, no doubt his eyes were swollen shut, his nose is bloodied, and I remind you that every pore in his skin has wept and oozed blood. Every visible surface on the good Lord Jesus, I am confident, was covered and caked with dried blood. And his back and his arms and his



buttocks and the back of his legs were literally torn to shreds from the scourging. This was the shape Jesus was in before they ever gave him his cross to head out to Calvary."

Think one of the things I take issue with from agnostics who I've heard debate this. I do not think the Lord died from shock secondary to blood loss. There is nothing that Jesus said on the cross and nothing in the description of the crucifixion in any of the gospels that gives us any idea that Jesus was in shock before he died. How do I know that? When someone is shot or hit by a car and comes to the emergency room, they're not sitting up talking to you. Their eyes are glassy, their color is pale, their blood pressure is about sixty over nothing and they're barely conscious, if conscious at all. Jesus never lost consciousness. There's nothing in the description of his trials, his scourging or his time on the cross that tells us he was incoherent mentally or lost consciousness.

Something else, physical stress - everything the Bible tells us about the life of Jesus is that he was a healthy, early thirties male who lived a rough life. He didn't have a home, he probably slept outside, and he walked every where he went. He was probably, as we would say, as tough as a pine knot. I think Jesus was a hardy young man, very strong and stout physically, and that there was nothing weak or puny about him from a medical standpoint, prior to the crucifixion. As far as emotional stress, I don't think Jesus had any kind of nervous breakdown. He was certainly under stress in the garden of Gethsemane, but nothing that he said on the cross gave any indication whatsoever that he was decompensating mentally, even during his gravest hours on the cross.

I've also heard cardiac arrhythmia debated as a cause of Jesus' death. When people go into cardiac arrhythmia, if it's ventricular tachycardia or some of the other types of cardiac arrhythmia's, one of the first things that happens is that the heart, even though it beats fast or funny, doesn't function very well as a pump. When it doesn't function well as a pump, your blood pressure drops, and you lose consciousness. Again, nowhere in the gospels do we have an account where Jesus ever lost consciousness until he died.

Look out for the final installment in the next issue of *The Vine*



# In Praise Of My Earthly Father

Dad was a man of few words. But that did not mean that he had few Friends. Instead he had many because he gain their friendship and respect through kind acts, trust and sincerity. I suppose those who have the most respect for him were from his immediate family.

My father came from a poor family in a remote Hakka village in Kwang-Tong Province, China. He grew up during the turbulent period of the early years of the Republic of China. Life was hard then even in a self-sufficient village. At the age of seventeen, like many people at that time, he left his birthplace to look for better prospect in Nanyang. My father worked very hard to earn a living. He worked in a number of trades before deciding that carpentry, eventually leading to construction, was his life-long career. Employment opportunities were scarce and wages were meager in Malaya and Singapore under British rule in the 1930's and 1940's. Despite the harsh economic environment, my dad managed to earn a decent living. My father was living in Singapore when it fell into the Japanese rule. Life was even harder than under the British. But having the necessary skill - carpentry, that the Japanese needed to reconstruct Singapore, my father escape the brutal massacre imposed upon the Overseas Chinese and worked for the Japanese

government for 3 years until the end of World War II.

After the War, my father married and started his family. While his 4 children were still young, his wife died of cancer. For the sake of his children, he re-married my mother in order that his children will be well taken care. My mother further bore him 4 more children. My father also took up the responsibility to bring up a nephew and niece because their parents died while they were still young. Therefore he became the sole-breadwinner for a family of 10 children and one wife. Supporting such a large family single-handedly was no easy task even though the cost of living was much lower then. Besides having to endure the 1950's racial riots and political instability, Singapore's independence and British withdrawal in the 1960's, 2 oil crisis in the 1970's and economic recession in the 1980's, my father persevered all these and put his family in first priority. He ensured that there would always be food on the table and clothes to wear. Owing to his little education in his childhood days, he made sure that his children received formal education as much as they wanted. Because of this obligation, he did not stop working even in his seventies.

My father cared in a special way. He did not verbally proclaim that he loves. Instead he used actions to convey his

affections. In 1990, my mother had a brain operation and needed to be hospitalised for 2 months. My father visited her everyday from morning to night nursing her back to health.

On many occasions, my Christian siblings and I prayed for my father's salvation. We used various ways to share the Good News with him. Bibles, Christian tracts and daily devotional materials were given to him. We even accompanied him to evangelistic dinners and church services. We knew my father understood the Gospel but could not persuade him to believe. We were not discouraged but continued in our prayers and efforts, always trusting God and maintaining hope.

Early this year, his health began to fail. He had a severe abdominal pain and had to be warded in hospital for 2 weeks. After his discharge, he lost his appetite and slept almost all day long. He began to feel weaker. A month later, his abdominal pain relapsed and was warded again. His condition got worse. When the doctors finally diagnosed the root problem, my dad's condition was terminal. The night before he died, Jurong Christian Church prayer chain was activated and Pastor Yee was informed. Pastor Yee visited him that night and my dad express his willingness to believe in Christ and when the sinner's prayer was spoken by Pastor

Yee, he nod in agreement because he had difficulty in breathing. Hence, a soul was saved at the very last minute. So for those who are praying for their parents' or loved ones' salvation, this is my advice: **DO NOT CEASE PRAYING. NOT EVEN AT THE VERY LAST MINUTE! FOR THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE IS NOT OVER UNTIL THE VERY LAST BREATH.**

God has used my earthly father to teach me fatherhood and love. Though my father's name will not be recorded in history books, he will always be remembered and honoured by my family and I. Rest in peace, my father and enjoy the warm embrace of Christ's loving arms.



by  
*CHONG YEW MOI*  
May 1999

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"I really do love Henry," wailed June, "but I could never marry an atheist! Why, he doesn't believe in anything - not even in hell." "Don't you worry, dear," soothed her mother. "You marry him, and we'll convince him."

