

MARANATHA MESSENGER

Weekly Newsletter of

Private Circulation Only

MARANATHA BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

19 February 2011

"Present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28)

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Sunday School: 9.45 am

Sunday English Worship Service: 10.45 am Sunday Chinese Worship Service: 6.30 pm

Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8.00 pm

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Jack Sin (HP: 9116 0948)

Pastor's Foreword for 14th MYF Anniversary



Ecclesiastes 11:9, 'Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.'

Praise the Lord for another year and opportunity and privilege to serve Christ and to edify and exhort one another in the Lord .We thank and praise God for the continual ministry of the MYF all these 14 fruitful years ministering to the spiritual needs of the youths in MBPC.

2 weeks ago, Angie Sin, Fong Li Heng, Esther Wong, Joline Heng, his family and I sent Fong Jing Heng off at the airport as he flew off to Beijing for 4 months of academic attachment. Licia and Charmaine Chee have already left us a month for the same reason. It can feel like kind of an empty nest for some of us here.

This will be a special year and I am glad to see the younger MYFers rise up to the occasion and continue to be faithful and steadfast in serving the Lord. Worship and fellowship have an important place in the life of the local church. When MBPC was incepted in October 1990, we started the MYAF first in 1994, and in 1998 the MYF was started with about 7-8 youths and though we were small, we press on for 14 years and we may have to go through this all over again. The YF is a wonderful avenue for our young people to learn to serve, share and to grow together in the knowledge and unity of the Lord. Many elders, missionaries, Sunday School teachers, pastors and deacons have benefitted from the YF of their respective churches including Dn. Terence Tan and us. The Lord has been good to us and blessed the ministry of the MYF over these 14 years and some have moved on over the years to the MYAF. We are to stay relevant and exalt Christ and let our meetings minister effectively to our young members and let every MYFer make an effort to bring new friends to join the MYF as well.

The MYF as a fellowship can be an effective avenue for edifying interaction and also to challenge and encourage youths in the fear of Lord and in the practical understanding of His word, prayer and service. Many of you are still studying and some are coming out to work soon. In the midst of an exacting school or working day, let us remember also to seek the Lord in the days of our youth (Eccl 12:1), in our daily prayer and devotion. Let us also come regularly for the Sunday School class, Sabbath service, fortnightly MYF meetings and meditate, masticate and memorise His word as well (Jer 15:16). Instead of playing computer games, watching TV or surfing Youtube for hours, I would like to urge you to read a Christian book a month and be grounded and rooted in the most holy faith.

We thank God for a newly elected committed Executive Committee led by Scott Ng, and others with a session advisor in Elder Steven Ng working with you in the faithful stewardship of the MYF. It is heartening to see also those who have also stepped in and have taken up new roles in the MYF. We need a continued godly renewal of leadership and stewardship in the YF so that the ministry can go on effectively in the years to come with a renewed commitment by all MYFers too to God to build up a strong and vibrant youth ministry of the church. Let us continue to minister to one another and exhort and strengthen one another in the faith (Heb 10:24, 25). I would like to encourage you to come for the church prayer meeting on Wednesday night at 8pm, Sunday School at 10am, plan to go on a mission trip to CBPCI, serve in the Chinese Worship Service or the church choir. Be actively involved also in the church life in local evangelism and foreign missions (26 June to 3 July 2012 mission trip to CBPCI) and in the support the advancement of God's kingdom. Do pray that you may be able to come for the church camp this year from 13 to 16 June 2012 where, God willing, Dr. John Battle, the president of the Western Reformed Seminary will preach on *Developing and Applying a Reformed Mindset in a Deformed World* at the Bayview Hotel, Malacca, God willing, this year and benefit from the spiritual lessons from His servant and the edifying fellowship.

Our youthful years can be a blessing to others. Let us develop good character and be zealous and devoted to Christ in 2012 and persevere on with the faithful work and glorify Christ and labour for Him in building up the ministry of the MYF as the Lord enables us. Let us heed the words of Paul in Romans 12:10-12, *'Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.'*

May the Lord grant us a Christ-centered and God-honouring 14th thanksgiving anniversary, glorifying Christ our Intercessor and Redeemer who is coming again very soon.

Jack Sin

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Following the Good and the Right Way

"....but I will teach you the good and the right way: only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you" 1 Samuel 12: 23-24

A few days before flying to another part of the world for 6 months was a good time for me to consider my life, in the light of God's commandments. After some thought, it seemed like a good idea to consider my life against what has been termed "the good and the right way".

I will teach you

Preliminarily, one cannot know what the good and right way is unless one is taught it. While I am not strictly from a Christian family, in retrospect I have been extremely blessed to have been brought to church since a young age. This was mostly in Maranatha, but also in other churches as well, including the time when my family was in America.

Throughout this time, there were always people around me who were older and more mature in the faith, who were a Christian example and testimony. There were also many ministers, preachers and Sunday School teachers who were faithful and patient in expounding the Word of God. This included teaching what is good and right. The churches I attended also maintained the decorum that was conducive for this type of teaching. This is something which has continued up to the present day.



Only fear the LORD

Despite this wonderful environment, I was lukewarm a long time. I was interested enough to listen to the various teachers, or to take various tracts and read about various Christian issues, but not beyond that. I had a very weak sense of what it meant for Jesus to be my personal Lord and Saviour, and frequently would decide to be a good Christian then lapse quickly after succumbing to failures and temptations.

Although I did have some head knowledge of how I was to conduct my affairs, the main problem was I was trying to follow the rules, without truly knowing Who had set them. Thus, I was distracted by outside commitments depending on my stage of life, including school sports, academic endeavours, and National Service responsibilities.

In the year that I was due to start University, when a new cycle of the Daily Manna devotional had started, and when a refreshing YF camp had just ended, something God-given happened. There was no dramatic vision or moment, but rather abruptly, there came this renewed resolution to read the Bible and to pray daily, to not lead the previous godless life, but one which was properly accountable to Him.

Things changed very much after that, upon these small steps. Acknowledging God as the centre of my life increased Godly fear. I became much more interested in things pertaining to the church, including missions and evangelism. My attitude towards my secular commitments changed, as did my way of relating to friends and family. Upon meeting problems and questions, I consulted the word and prayer first rather than resorting to them as an afterthought. Although there was still the constant burden of sin, grace and forgiveness abounded even more.

I experienced spiritual growth and maturing upon beginning to fear the Lord. This may be summarised: *“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall”* Malachi 4:2.

Serve Him in truth with all your heart

That an increase in a love of God prompts a greater desire to serve Him is an unmistakable point in Scripture. For me, there were indeed many opportunities to so, as well as challenges. I will mention the challenges related to “with all your heart” first, and then “in truth”.

One facet of serving “with all your heart” is putting all of your efforts into whatsoever you do for the Lord. It is very easy when not seeing results to get discouraged and put in eighty percent, half, or even less of our efforts and prayers. I experienced discouragement very often, in outreach and in seeking to tell people to understand and do what (at least I felt) was right according to the Bible. When things did not work out the way I expected I would become impatient, and then resigned. Yet becoming cold for the work is undesirable, and may God allow us to realise it and ask for forgiveness when it happens to us. One encouragement I had was the written reassurance that nothing we do for the Lord is in vain.

Another facet was to realise serving God with all of one's heart also involves dealing with people in a loving way. This may already be tough for someone of the same age and background as us, but many times, we have to present Christ to people who are younger, older, or of different backgrounds to us. For example, tracting could be at one level a mechanical activity of giving away tracts to the people on the street. But it could also be a considerably more difficult yet God-honouring endeavour, in being able to reach out to and talk to the people at their level, and avoid treating them as just someone else to invite to the latest church event. This is impossible with our old nature, but has to be done aided by the

love of God.

The other challenge was serving Him in truth. Growing up in one church environment, there were many things about Christianity I could take for granted. The correctness and importance of these issues were questioned upon meeting new friends and Christian organisations, and there was a definite pressure to venture outside my “sheltered” environment and to explore the wider world of Christian activity outside.

After over a fairly tumultuous year of seeking to understand the truth of the matter, I finally comprehended the sacred meaning behind the phrase to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints (Jude 1:3-4). Without questioning the sincerity or salvation of other brethren, there was something amiss with the notion in a traditional Reformed church, one should serve God in one way within certain defined Biblical parameters, yet when working together with other Christians, one should suspend these convictions, tolerate a wider set of beliefs and practices, and serve the same God in a markedly different way. These were not merely on isolated, minor points, but were, I felt, on the fundamentals of the faith and the tenets which supported these fundamentals.

Ultimately, the old paths were safer. With the liberation this realisation brought, however, came the burden that not only was this a minority view among the Christian body, it was also not a highly regarded one and a difficult one to share without appearing uncharitable. There were many challenges and setbacks in trying to tell the truth in love, and many of my personal shortcomings in knowledge and character were revealed and tested over this point.

In short, serving God has been a series of ups and downs, and due to a certain ungrateful nature, the downs have always seemed greater. But it is precisely through being God's servants that we come to know Him better: *O LORD God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for what God is there in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?* Deuteronomy 3:24.

Consider how great things he hath done for you

The reason for our indebtedness to God is the magnitude of the things that have been done for us, and I think it is helpful to look at them at three levels.

Attaining the right perspective of God is perhaps foremost. When I was small, I wondered why Christians were always talking about the same thing, and whether that ever became boring. Yet the Gospel message of how a sinful man can approach a thrice holy God, through 1) accepting Christ as Lord and Saviour, 2) believing He died for our sins, 3) confession and repentance of those sins, and 4) dedicating the remainder of our lives to Him, is one of those things we should never become weary of mentioning.

Flowing from that is also the right perspective of the people around us. We learn to be especially thankful for the presence and role of people that God has blessed us with in our lives.

Lastly, which again stems from our perspective of God, is the right perspective of the things around us. I was often in what could be considered a competitive, and to an extent, materialistic, educational environment. However, the contrast between my university and pre-university days is now remarkable for me.

Where previously, success in my endeavours was intricately tied to my sense of self-worth, now, looking at secular commitments through the lens of stewardship, accountability and giving glory to God instead, things are better. I know upon reaching working life, these pressures will become even greater and I hope the pressure to stand firm will be there. I also hope to be more frugal and a better steward of finances.

To round up this section - during a period where I was feeling particularly downcast, someone I knew suggested that I take a piece of paper and list out my blessings. For someone who has difficulty realising the many great things God has done in their lives, perhaps this activity may be helpful. *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad* Psalms 126:3

Conclusion – the good and right way

It seems that there was scarcely an instance of my life where I was ignorant because I had not been

taught. Knowing the good and right way has not been much of a problem.

However, it is the doing that has made all the difference. My personal realisation is that living a life that seeks to follow that good and right way, for all its struggles, has been much more excellent than one without. It is what I hope to continue in my life, including the time away on this exchange period.

For the reader who reaches this point, thank you for your indulgence, and it is my fervent hope that you too are following this good and right way: fearing God, serving Him in truth with all your heart, and considering the great things He has done for you.

Fong Jing Heng

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Oh Come, My People

Psalm 78:1-8

Oh come my people to my law, attentively give ear;
The words that from my mouth proceed, incline yourselves to hear.
My mouth will speak a parable, the sayings dark of old,
Which we have listened to and known as by our fathers told.

We'll from their children hide them not, but tell the age to come
The praises of the Lord, his strength, the wonders he has done.
His word he unto Jacob gave, his law to Israel,
Which He our fathers did command to teach their children well.

That children yet unborn might know, and their decendants lead,
To trust in God, recall God's works, and His commandments heed;
And not be what their fathers were – rebellious through and through,
For they would not correct their hearts, nor unto God stay true.

Oh come my people to my law, attentively give ear;
The words that from my mouth proceed, incline yourselves to hear.
My mouth will speak a parable, the sayings dark of old,
Which we have listened to and known as by our fathers told.

Which we have listened to and known as by our fathers told.

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Saviour on the Cross

Jesus carried his heavy cross to Calvary
It was all because of his great love for you and me
Cruel men did mock him and spit in his face
He endured it all because he was taking our place

It was our sin that put him on the cross that day
Dying for our sins so we would not have to pay
It was his love that kept him nailed to the tree
So we could be forgiven and in Heaven one day be

If he had not paid that tremendous price for us
There would simply be no hope because

It took the blood of the sinless Lamb of God to pay for all
For all the sins of the world since the Adam and Eve fall

If we had to pay for our own sins, we would have to go to hell
It is such a horrible place with fire, that it breaks my heart to tell
That is where there is gnashing of teeth and weeping and wailing
But Jesus paid for our sins and his love is unfailing

When he suffered on the cross and bled and died
"Truly this was the Son of God" some cried
After that he was in the tomb for three days and then arose
The payment did suffice and eternal life to believers he bestows

When I get to heaven I am going to tell Jesus
"Thank you for all you did for me.
I don't deserve to be here
But you saved me mercifully"

Cindy Wyatt

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Non-believers evangelistic class by Song Xi Hai.

Thank God for 60 workers who came for the Chinese Service and heard the gospel preached.



Join us at the Simei NBC at Eddy Tay and Alice's home and Central NBC at Dr. Ho Siew Lan's home.





Fellowship potluck dinner after service with Elder Dr. Lim Yew Cheng and Rev. David Wong at JB Sunset Gospel Hour.

Thank God for the growth of the JB Sunset Gospel Hour and pray for us as we minister there regularly.



Pray for Kai Ling and Kai Xin of Chen Ching Hong and Julia.



Chinese Fellowship cum Bible Study on Saturday led by Song Xi Hai, Chai Chwee, Pancy Siam and Seow Li Fang.

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Theme for the Quarter :
Understanding and Applying the Reformed Faith
Rev. Dr. Jack Sin
The Noahic Covenant (Gen 9:9-17)

[End of MM]