



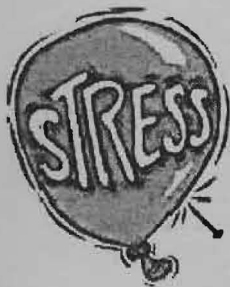
Greetings to all the saints in Christ Jesus. In the last two issues of The Vine, I had expressed some concerns about this ministry's survival. But thanks be to God, one couple encouraged me by telling me that they will be writing an article each for publication, and another dear sister volunteered to be part of the editorial team. I will introduce her to you in the next issue of The Vine. In this issue, John has taken the lion's share of the pages, with his article on "Stress and Service", leaving me with a much lighter load.

While surfing the net, I came across a site which described in graphic details all kinds of torture that were inflicted on the early Christians - amputations, disembowelment, crucifixion and others. It was too sickening to view all the drawings. Practically every single apostle was martyred. I wonder why we think that the Christian life should be a bed of roses when the early church faced such terrible persecution? Even now, in some parts of the world, Christians are being persecuted for their faith. So why do we complain (that includes me) when we have to sacrifice more of our time, more of our money and more of our talents for the service of God? We should be thankful that it is only time, money and talents and not life and limbs that we have to give. Read John's article and then decide where you can serve in JCC for the glory of God.

The Editor.

PC Technician Wanted

Duties : to prepare the Powerpoint presentation for Sunday Worship service. Working hours : 1 Friday night (about 3 hours) a month. Training Provided. Rewards : Matthew 16:27 Interested, please call church office 62652807.



Hooray! Mid-term examinations are over, and it is time for parents of school-going children and the children

themselves to de-stress. But ...wait! I have the feeling that it won't be long before the time of de-stressing gives way again to a time of distress when the examination results are announced. To students

who have done well, their parents and teachers will say, "Congratulations! Keep up the good work and aim for more stars." Since there is always room for further improvement, some parents may dangle juicy carrots in front of their eyes and some teachers will prepare more worksheets to occupy their mid-year holidays from dawn to midnight lest a good one month of precious 'holiday' time will be squandered away at the expense of sweeter examination victory at year end. After all, these scorers are 'A☆' students and they have the capacity to be stretched to their maximum potential – just make sure that instead of being stretched, they are not pushed to the brink all for the sake of improving performance ratings.



Of children who have not done well in the examinations, teachers will say, "Oh, they are capable of doing better. Just need to work a little harder and pay more attention in class and they will realize their full potential." Certainly, parents will read this as meaning "serious action is called for!"— more time for the

children to study, less time for play; more rushing for the parents between office and home to maximize supervision of the children and less time for social activities. Feverish hunting for good tutors to drive the poor child to his/her so-called "maximum potential" level that the school system is unable to do alone without the supplement of private paid educational help adds financial pressure to the academic tension and social strain. It is little wonder that one's life is easily bogged down by stress and distress every way one turns.

Now you compare children who do well in school and those who don't, and compare the stress factors between them and between their parents. Do you see any difference? Whether a child does well academically or does badly, I see very little difference in the level of stress and distress. It all boils down to an attitude of always being dissatisfied with whatever level of performance. At any level, there is always a greater goal to better one's feat. If you have conquered the world's highest peaks, will you rest and feel that there is nothing more for you to conquer? Many in this situation, enslaved by their restless desire for greater personal accomplishment or man's accolade, will always feel the urge to go for something more extraordinary.



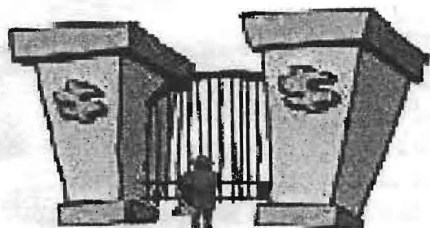
As far as the race for their children's achievements is concerned, parents do not have perfect hindsight, based on their own experiences with their youthful idealism and ambition long ago, that most events in life did not unfold out of one's aspirations and plans but according to some X Factor – the will of God! As a parent myself, I have my share of the same adventures and misadventures in grappling with the nurture of children as any other parent. It would be good that within the community life of the Church, fellow brothers and sisters in Christ who are parents can be mutual encouragers for good performance in children's upbringing as well as mutual good sentinels (in the spirit of Christian love and care) putting a damper on children being overcooked beyond their natural heat threshold.

Beware that stress can kill! Note that at the time of writing, the police are probably still investigating the case of a middle-aged primary school teacher (with many years of teaching experience) who flung a drawing board and caused injury to a Primary 1 pupil. Was it stress at work that caused the incident? Another piece of bad news: "A Unicef survey on students in the Asia Pacific region proves that school ranks highest in the minds of our students, **way above death and disease.**" (New Paper 7th May; emphasis added.)

Yet, it is not only physical killing by stress that occupies my mind, but also the spiritual killing that is ubiquitous for everyone to see. When people are stressed all round – physically, financially, socially, time-wise, etc.

– the natural thing for them to do is to re-prioritize their commitments, use of resources and goals according to worldly imperatives. No prize for guessing why Christians cut back from their Church community relationship, Christian service involvement and, in the extreme, even cut themselves off from their faith in Jesus Christ.

In a recent email correspondence with a former colleague of mine (who brought me to Christ more than 20 years ago), he told me disappointedly, "... many of those I know have died spiritually wrecked by temptations and the cares of the world." He carried on with this advice to me, which I reproduce here as an apt advice for all Christians suffering the common trials and tribulations in life: **"DO REMAIN STRONG IN THE LORD as Moses said to Joshua THREE TIMES in Joshua 1:6-8 Be Strong and of good courage."**



It is so difficult to win a soul for Christ, yet it is so easy for the soul to be lost. Jesus is not unaware of this. Remember what he said in Matt. 7:13-14:

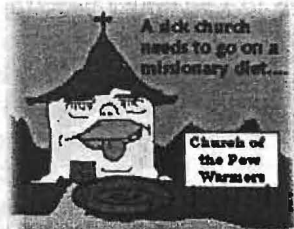
"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."



By no means am I advocating that adults should hope for a totally stress-free life and juniors should hope that their parents would cease impelling them to make academic gains. It has been said that stress in the proper context is good. To me, good stress is like good cholesterol; it does not clog up the blood vessels. Bad stress is like bad cholesterol; it impedes the flow of life-essential blood and exerts harmful pressure on our survival. This said, we have to take stock of the undesirable reality that people are often stressed and distressed because of a very basic attitudinal problem of either individual or society in setting expectations that can only be achieved with

unhealthy trade-offs in both physical and spiritual terms. So stress in itself is not something we endeavour to totally avoid, but it is something we can put in the right (good) or wrong (bad) context. If we set stress on a pedestal to oversee every bit of our activities and have a relentless hold on every aspect of our life, including most importantly our spiritual directions, it is certainly out of place. Stress in the appropriate context can only be good if we make use of it as its master rather than being enslaved by it to our eternal detriment. It is ironical for Christians to complain about stress rebelling against their control when they seek to run away from God – the very source of their strength, sustenance, inspiration and healing against the onslaught. Children go to their parents in times of need, not run away. Likewise, children of God go to the Father with whom they have an inseparable relationship and from whom they can have the assurance of an enduring peace like a river. (Isa. 66:12)

There is another paradox about Christians avoiding Christian service because they are stressed out with their other responsibilities in their jobs, families, etc. A company employee who is addressed as a manager by his own choice of seeking the appointment is not expected to avoid his responsibilities as a manager, neither is he expected to forgo his other responsibilities to his family and society by putting 100% of his time and energy on his managerial job. If he does avoid his managerial duties, how can he be called a manager? If he focuses his all on the manager's job exclusively and cannot spare time for his roles as a parent, spouse, citizen, etc., then common sense tells us that the manager's job has to go because it is not contributing to a healthy life. So, how can a person be called a Christian, a position he himself seeks by his faith declaration, when he consciously tries all ways and means to avoid every duty associated with a Christian?



In his "Observations and thoughts" in the April issue of the Vine, Bro. Swee Leong stated a thought-provoking point, "The 2000 Census reveals that 33.5% of university graduates [in Singapore] are Christians." When we contrast this with the palpable dearth of talents applied to Christian ministries, can we be oblivious to the fact that something is sorely amiss or that many

Christians are acutely remiss? It is routine to find Christian men and women fêted in their circles for overcoming great obstacles to achieve their secular ambitions, but sadly the same determination for achievement and the same spirit to rise above the challenges and hurdles do not prevail when it comes to responding to calls of Christian duty. Plainly, it is not for want of abilities but for a sorry lack of spiritual resolve to break free of the bondage to life's ephemeral idols and re-focus their lives on a vision of eternal security.



Never does the Church ever expect 100% of a Christian's time and energy at the expense of his other responsibilities to his family, social community, career, etc. God never expects every one of us to contribute 100 loaves to feed the hungry if we cannot make available 100 loaves. But if we are not even willing to contribute a few loaves within our means, thinking "How far will they go towards a great need?" (*See John 6:9*), we are not trusting God to multiply the loaves we have. If we care to observe carefully those Christians who have been faithfully serving God in the Church for long years, it will not escape us that they had invariably started off by sharing some small loaves without consciously attaching much value to what they shared, but in the course of time, God not only multiplied their sharing but also added to their own gains in experience, know-how, talents and so forth. Therefore, instead of avoiding service out of misplaced humility like what Moses attempted when first called by God to free the Israelites, or promising to serve after you are done with your stressful life and have received the assurance that there is no suffering in service, all Christians should take note that it is NOW for them to step forward and be counted among God's truly humble servants (not bystanders wearing cloaks of false humility) before time runs out.

Peter learnt his lesson well. We read about him in the Gospels – averse to suffering and impatient for the kingdom of God to be established on

earth. He even took umbrage when told of Jesus' imminent suffering and crucifixion. How changed he was when he wrote his first general epistle (1 Peter) about heavenly hope built on the suffering of the saints in Jesus Christ! The life of Jesus Christ on earth, His suffering, humiliation and painful death on the Cross hold out for us a prototype of Christian life and service. God does not promise blue skies and flower-strewn pathways for his servants all the time. If we do not learn as Peter learnt, we can just wait and wait until the time we are free from stress (after we have finished our studies), free from our mundane responsibilities (after our children are all grown up), free from the tightness of time (after retirement from active career), free from common health problems due to age (as senior citizens with diminishing energy level), free from the care of grandchildren or great-grandchildren and free from any suffering associated with this world! Obviously, this is untenable. We ought not wait to serve, but serve as we pass our time through the days of our youth to the last days of our pilgrimage on earth. Do I hear somebody saying that he/she cannot find any avenue to serve in the Church because he/she is either over-qualified or under-qualified?

Is it too onerous for anyone to find a niche for service? The following are just some examples:



Lay Readers



Church Library



Welcome & Praise



The Boys' Brigade

LEADERSHIP Training

LOCAL



Prayer Meeting



MISSION



How about encouraging the person to come up with an idea on how the Church may start a new service niche that is just right for his/her talents?

We are not expected to serve with perfection, but to serve with a heart of love as God first loved us. This calls for perseverance through thick and thin, through moments of stress and de-stress. Even if we are feeling the lows in our lives, "we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." (Rom. 5:1-5) Perseverance may be defined as follows:

"The steadfast effort to follow God's commands and to do His work. The New Testament makes it clear that faith alone can save. But it makes it equally clear that perseverance in doing good works is the greatest indication that an individual's faith is genuine (James 2:14-26). Indeed, perseverance springs from a faithful trust that God has been steadfast toward His people. Through persevering in God's work, the Christian proves his deep appreciation for God's saving grace (1 Cor. 15:57-58). As a result of perseverance, the Christian can expect not only to enhance the strength of the church, but also to build up the strength of his own character (Rom 5:3-4). In short, he can expect to become closer to God. He learns that he can persevere primarily because God is intimately related to him (Rom 8:25-27) and especially because he has the assurance of a final reward in heaven (1 John 5:13)."

(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright ©1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

I may further add these points:

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” (1 Cor. 10:13 RSV)

Quote

“Only he who flings himself upward when the pull comes to drag him down, can hope to break the force of temptation. Temptation may be an invitation to hell, but much more is it an opportunity to reach heaven. At the moment of temptation, sin and righteousness are both very near the Christian; but, of the two, the latter is the nearer.”

—Charles H. Brent

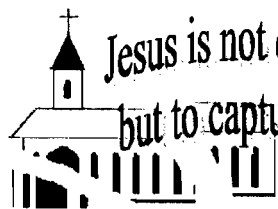
“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matt. 6:25, 27, 34)

Let us encourage one another, that despite the common stress, distress and troubles of each day, each of us is capable of laying out at least one iota of work to build the Church. Imagine that if each of 200 members just contributes 5% of 8 hours per day, it works out to only 24 minutes per person per day, but 80 hours altogether, which is the equivalent of 10 full-time staffs working an 8-hour day. If you think that it is a simplistic equation, I shall leave the sophisticated equation to Jesus who had already demonstrated how He is able to break 5 barley loaves to feed thousands. We should not waste our time doing fine calculus, but **JUST SERVE**, which is well nigh possible for every faithful Christian. A practical illustration is in our K.I.D.S. Church where we have different teachers on roster to serve a period of one month every few months. This is made possible because of the number of members who step forward to serve in teaching. The burden on each teacher becomes less as more share the work.

Similarly, in all other ministries, a lot can be accomplished by the Church with the yoke manageable on every servant's shoulders if we exchange more bystanders for servants. If you lament "I have many things to do", "I have to go here and there", "But I have only 24 hours a day while you have 25", "I am too stressed in my job" and so forth as you feel so overwhelmed that lifting a finger becomes a gargantuan task, I can understand and every other servant in the Church understands. All of us share the same experience of being stressed with many things to do and many places to go. This is more reason for us to be together for one another and for JCC. Different individuals have different capacities for service to God; hence it is up to individuals to decide how much they want to be involved in the work of the Church. Service must be voluntary and with a heart; it cannot be imposed. **For each Church member, a minimum involvement in one ministry should serve as a guide on what is reasonable.**

John Lee

10th May 2002



Jesus is not coming to rapture a ruptured Church
but to capture the heart of an enraptured Bride.

EXAM QUESTION

-author unknown-

A company was hiring new staff. One question in the written exam was:

You are driving your car in a wild stormy night. You pass by a bus station, and you see three people waiting for the bus:

- An old lady who looks as if she is about to die.
- A doctor who had once saved your life.
- A man/woman you have been dreaming to be with.

You can only take one passenger in your car. Which one will you choose?

Please explain your answer. Think about it before you check the answer in the next issue of the Vine.

ATTITUDE DETERMINES ATTITUDE

I have responsibilities to fulfill today. I am important. My job is to choose what kind of day I am going to have.

Today I can complain because the weather is rainy or I can be thankful that the grass is getting watered for free.

Today I can feel sad that I don't have more money or I can be glad that my finances encourage me to plan my purchases wisely and guide me away from waste.

Today I can grumble about my health or I can rejoice that I am alive.

Today I can lament over all that my parents didn't give me when I was growing up or I can feel grateful that they allowed me to be born.

Today I can cry because roses have thorns or I can celebrate that thorns have roses.

Today I can mourn my lack of friends or I can excitedly embark upon a quest to discover new relationships.

Today I can whine because I have to go to work or I can shout for joy because I have a job to do.

Today I can murmur dejectedly because I have to do housework or I can feel honored because the Lord has provided shelter for my mind, body and soul.

Today stretches ahead of me, waiting to be shaped. And here I am the sculptor who gets to do the shaping.

What today will be is up to me. I get to choose what kind of day I will have!

Have a Great Day. Unless you have other plans.

BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a fulfilment of what was prophesied in the Old Testament:

Joel:

"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people." (Joel 2:28)

Isaiah:

"I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants." (Is 44:3) and "till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high" (Is 32:15)

Ezekiel:

"I will pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the Sovereign LORD." (Ez:38:29)

John the Baptist who is the last of the Old Testament prophet prophesied:

"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matt 3:11)

"I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (Mark 1:8)

"I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie, He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Lk 3:16)

"The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will

baptize with the Holy Spirit." (Jn 1:33b)

Jesus himself told his disciples, after his resurrection and before his ascension:

"For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:5)

From these references it is clear that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is promised and it is the distinctive ministry of Jesus.

When were these prophecies fulfilled? Jesus in Acts 1:5 predicted the fulfillment "in a few days." Peter cried out on the day of Pentecost:

"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off for all whom the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:38,39)

Peter assured all who repented, believed and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, that they will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:4, Jesus told his disciples to "wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about" and in the verse following, Jesus clarified that this gift is the promised "baptism with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5). Peter during his

address at Pentecost, said, "Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear." (Acts 2:33). From these verses we can deduced that the believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit which was promised and were thus baptized with the Holy Spirit, whom God poured out on the day of Pentecost.

So, when does the baptism with the Holy Spirit occur? To answer this question, we have to recognize that the Christian life is life in the Spirit, all we have as Christians we owe to the Spirit. Christian life is impossible without the ministry of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given from the moment Christian life begins - with the new birth. The Spirit imparts life as he comes to indwell in our bodies, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit is an initiatory experience; the very concept of baptism is initiatory, signifying the washing away of sins and new life through the bestowal of the Holy Spirit and incorporation into the body of Christ.

Once the Holy Spirit resides in us, he begins the work of sanctification to reveal Christ to us, to form Christ in us as we grow in our knowledge and likeness of Christ. The spirit of our fallen nature is restrained and the fruit of Christian character is produced.

Some may suggest that the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs after water baptism, as a post-conversion experience. To be clear, one needs to study the seven references where Spirit baptism is mentioned. Four references are made by John the Baptist (quoted earlier) and are related to the ministry of Jesus. Two references are made by Peter, one on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38,39) and the other during the conversion of Cornelius in Acts 11:16 which quotes the words of Jesus, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' The sixth reference is the words of Jesus before his ascension in Acts 1:5.

These six references show Jesus as the one who baptizes, the Holy Spirit as the instrument of the baptism, the translation "baptized with the Holy Spirit" is used consistently.

However there is a difference of opinion in regard to the seventh reference found in 1 Cor 12:13, which reads:

For we were all baptized by* one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

The NIV translation quoted above, add a marginal note: *with or in. By reading the verse as "in" or "by" instead of "with" which is used in all

the other references, some argue that 1 Cor 12:13 teaches a different baptism, a post conversion experience of baptism of the Holy Spirit..

Translating the verse to read “baptize in the Spirit” would make the Spirit the sphere into which a believer is baptized into.

Translating the verse to read “baptize by the Spirit” would make the Spirit the baptizer.

In summary, the different translations can be depicted as follows:

Translation		“with the Spirit”	“in one Spirit”	“by one Spirit”
Agent:	by	Christ	Christ?	Spirit
Instrument:	with	Spirit	?	?
Sphere		Body?	Spirit	Body

John Stott asserts, “It is quite unnatural to make Jesus the baptizer in six instances, and the Holy Spirit the baptizer in the seventh.”¹ “If we put the seven references to this baptism together, we learn that Jesus is the baptizer, as John the Baptist clearly foretold. According to 1 Cor 12:13, the baptized are ‘we all’. The Holy Spirit is the ‘element’ with, to, in (Greek:en) which the baptism takes place, And the purpose of this baptism is incorporation ‘into one body’, namely the body of Christ, the Church.”² This interpretation makes the phrase “*baptizo en pneumati*” in the original Greek consistent though the New Testament. John MacArthur asserts “Nowhere in the Bible is the Holy Spirit spoken of as the baptizer. (Charismatic Chaos, pg 231). Nowhere in Scripture are we instructed to seek to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, for the simple fact that all Christians have already been baptized with the Holy Spirit at water baptism. We already have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, the exhortation is to be filled with the Spirit allowing his fullness to transform us that we may lead a holy life.

Conclusion

In summary, it can be stated that baptism with the Holy Spirit is an initiatory Christian experience occurring at water baptism. Jesus is the baptizer who bestows upon all believers the gift of His Spirit, the Holy Spirit and believers are exhorted to continue to be filled with the Spirit. Through baptism all believers are incorporated into the body of Christ, the Church. No particular style of the Spirit’s arrival is normative, he may come quietly and almost imperceptibly or he may come tangibly.

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Tan Swee Leong

End notes

- 1 John R Stott, Baptism and fullness, IVP, 1977, pp 40
2. John R Stott, Baptism and fullness, IVP, 1977, pp 41. 42

WHY JOIN A CHURCH RETREAT?

Why join the church retreat and not go on a family fun-filled holiday elsewhere? Some may say, "We've been there before and there is nothing special about that venue. Anyway, going for a retreat is not cheap either."

I must agree that cost is a valid reason to some families and, apart from this, others may also have their own compelling reasons for being unable to join the retreat this time. Be this as it may, I personally look forward to the retreat with eagerness because this is what God wants his children to do as often as possible – *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – all the more as you see the day approaching."* Hebrews 10:24,25 NIV

I enjoy flipping through photographs taken during past church retreats and, in so doing, would always have fond memories that give me a great sense of gratitude and joy. I could recall the good times and fun we shared, such as worshipping and praising God our Creator, studying and discussing the Word, praying and playing, including having meals together as a community. I thank God that through those retreats, He had used all loving brothers and sisters in JCC to provide opportunities and a meaningful nurturing environment for spiritual development and growth.

As children of God and disciples of Christ, it is only appropriate that we should also be outward and not inward looking all the time. The Lord Jesus himself said that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). By participating in church retreats, we do not expect any luxurious holiday. It is just another special time set apart for God and for us to experience life together in a shared environment, outside the church buildings and away from our individual "comfort" zones. Thus we allow God to use this time (rightfully His time) to further mould and strengthen each of us spiritually for the common good of His community and His ministries.

We are one with our brothers and sisters in Christ, young and "old" ones, who may need encouragement and support to grow in the Lord. If we have difficulties making time for a personal retreat, having a retreat together as a community of God's children is a naturally appealing option. Individually, we can be like the two fish and five loaves of bread that Jesus used to multiply to meet the needs of those around him (Luke 9:10-17), if only we would let God use us. I therefore praise God for the Retreat Committee and all those who have signed up. For by His grace and through these individuals collectively, we can once again look forward to another time of blessing and refreshing at the coming retreat to be held at Sifotel Palm Resort, Johor Baru, in June 2002.

As regards those who are unable to join the retreat this time, I will surely miss their presence. In this context, I look forward to the opportunity of being together with them in another retreat the next time. Meanwhile, I thank them all the same for their indirect support of the current retreat in one way or another (for example, by holding the fort at home here in JCC while the retreat participants are away). All for the Glory of God!

PETER CHEONG

THE 2002 ENGLISH COUNCIL TEAM



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Jim Lee,
Council

THANK YOU 2001 COUNCILMEN
WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR
TERM FAITHFULLY.



Ronnie Lim Chan Yock Meng Leong Kok Hwa James Tan

DISCIPLING MEN

We need men who live in continual dependence on the Lord, who recognise God as their ultimate provider and sovereign governor. We need men who seek to be led by God, who think nothing of their own wisdom and therefore lean not on it. We need men who will not turn to fear or the flesh in the midst of a fight, but who will find their assurance and victory in seeing their mighty God behind an otherwise towering Goliath. We need men who dare to believe the impossible because they know their God loves to do the impossible.

We need men who understand and live the divine paradox - that total dependence on God constitutes true power, not weakness; that prayer and intercession is the first resource, not the last resort; and that the Word presents both a realistic description and an effective prescription for life, not just a neat compilation of unrealistic, utopian ideals. We need men who will cease striving and know that God is God - and let Him be God of their lives.

*extracted from COMPASS - a quarterly magazine of
Covenant Church*